

Development Cooperation Partnerships: *Forging an EU-India-Japan Trilateral in Africa*

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This paper explores a tripartite mode of cooperation in Africa between India, the EU and Japan as development partners. Such a partnership could be built drawing on the liberal values that the three actors hold in promoting development cooperation on the continent. We argue that this tripartite cooperation is attractive strategically, leveraging the strengths of each of the partners – for example, in presence, funds, and competitive edge – while ensuring that limited capabilities are effectively spent.

All three actors have been active on the African continent for some time now. For instance, India is fast emerging as an economic actor in the region that Africa could benefit from. Through the establishment of a Pan-African network, India had provided access to lines of credit of around US\$ 8 billion for numerous projects in 44 African countries by April 2017. Likewise, the EU has a strong presence in the continent, especially France and the United Kingdom – the impending Brexit notwithstanding – because of their deep colonial legacy. By 2016, the total foreign direct investment stock from the EU into Africa was €290 billion; and in 2017 the EU was the largest trading partner with a share of 36 per cent of total African trade. The EU has also taken a lead in helping millions of people to get access to basic education in Africa. Japan's presence in Africa has mostly based on official development assistance. It is now seriously considering expanding in order to build new quality-based infrastructure to revive its traditional presence.

The EU-India-Japan- trilateral cooperation rests upon a grander inter-continental structural complementarity that converges liberal-democratic values on issues like promotion of human rights, pluralistic societies, espousing peaceful and dialogue-based conflict resolution mechanisms as well as state institutional capacity building. Further, all three are free market economies propelling the basis of comprehensive economic partnership. Therefore, such a trilateral cooperation has the potential to usher in a new era of developmental cooperation in Africa which needs assistance in all these areas. Based on these arguments, we offer the following policy recommendations to EU and Indian policy makers.

Policy recommendations

Non-Traditional Security (NTS): (i) While India-EU-Japan are involved in peace building in Africa through UN Peacekeeping Missions, they can contribute further outside the purview of UN missions. The existing India-France strategic partnership can be the base for **India-EU-Japan NTS cooperation in Africa**. There is a strong case to be made that this partnership can be further leveraged to the hinterlands of Africa. This is viable because of the large presence of French troops across Africa historically and India's experience in dealing with NTS issues like religious extremism and ethnic violence; (ii) African NTS experience can benefit from India, EU and Japan's rich history in successfully dealing with disaster management in response to repeated climate – and nuclear disasters. With regards to **climate disaster management**, the trilateral can conduct joint personnel training, engage in material resource contribution and help architect the integrated response mechanism for the necessary stakeholders such as security forces, technical experts and first responders. The same applies to **nuclear disaster management**. This is recommendable as several African countries are planning on installing nuclear plants for sourcing green energy.

Human development: (i) With India-EU-Japan increasing their focus on expanding their **tourism industries** and the African tourism industry the second fastest growing in the world, the trilateral along with Africa can build on their tourism industries for better people to people connectivity. Simplification of visa approvals by making use of schemes like e-Visa and visa on arrival along with highlighting tourist friendly destinations can lead to mutual growth in tourist exchanges. As the EU is one of the world's major tourist destinations, its policies in dealing with both intra-bloc and foreign tourism can serve as a reference for African countries in formulating tourism guidelines; (ii) **Student exchanges** can also be furthered by proposing easier educational visa guidelines; India and EU can be cost-effective study destinations due to their geographical proximity to Africa. The increase in number of scholarships by the trilateral grouping for potential students from Africa must be a priority; (iii) **Healthcare** is a major gateway for ensuring a strong presence of the trilateral in Africa. Providing access to quick, affordable and quality healthcare while promoting development of medical skills of African practitioners can be a key source of human resource development; (iv) The trilateral can share the **industry specific technical know-how** with African countries in developing skills of people by training them to become employable. This is very crucial for labour-intensive manufacturing industries where skilled manpower is the backbone; (v) The trilateral should take the initiative in promoting ideas with Africa that were crucial for cost-effective and incentive-based financial inclusion in India with complementary assistance from the EU and Japan with regards to issues such as data protection and cybersecurity surrounding such a financial system.

Economic/Continental development cooperation: (i) Agendas under forums like India's IAFS, Japan's TICAD and EU's AU-EU can potentially collaborate in a purposive manner under this trilateral grouping; (ii) **Streamlining the funding** by the EU, Japan and India in a coherent way for infrastructure projects relating to connectivity, power plants, energy parks, digitalization, etc., will help in scaling up the plans to fill infra bottlenecks for Africa in cost-effective manner; (iii) While the EU and Japan can aid in highly technological and value-added industries for Africa, India's role becomes crucial in sharing its know-how in propelling sectors such as information technology and pharmaceuticals, especially to produce low-cost generic medicines that is crucial for affordable health in Africa.



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