



Desk study on aid and democracy

Benin

Swetha Ramachandran*

February 2024

This study is part of a series of ten country-focused desk studies on aid and democracy prepared under the project [The state and statebuilding in the Global South](#). They are prepared under the guidance of Rachel M. Gisselquist as background to a broader research effort on aid, governance, and democracy promotion. The studies follow a common template and each draws on the research literature and selected cross-national sources to discuss regime type and timeline, findings from the literature on democracy/democratization, findings from the literature on aid and democracy/democratization, aid flows and sources, and specific aid examples. This study addresses the case of Benin, from independence in 1960 and with focus on the post-Cold War period.

Key words: foreign aid, democratization, Benin, statebuilding, development

* The Graduate Institute Geneva (IHEID), Switzerland, swetha.ramachandran@graduateinstitute.ch

This study has been prepared within the 'Statebuilding and local legitimacy' component of the UNU-WIDER project [The state and statebuilding in the Global South – international and local interactions](#).

Copyright © UNU-WIDER 2024

<https://doi.org/10.35188/UNU-WIDER/NOUG6336>

Information and requests: publications@wider.unu.edu

United Nations University World Institute for Development Economics Research provides economic analysis and policy advice with the aim of promoting sustainable and equitable development. The Institute began operations in 1985 in Helsinki, Finland, as the first research and training centre of the United Nations University. Today it is a unique blend of think tank, research institute, and UN agency—providing a range of services from policy advice to governments as well as freely available original research.

The Institute is funded through income from an endowment fund with additional contributions to its work programme from Finland and Sweden, as well as earmarked contributions for specific projects from a variety of donors.

Katajanokanlaituri 6 B, 00160 Helsinki, Finland

The views expressed in this paper are those of the author(s), and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Institute or the United Nations University, nor the programme/project donors.

Contents

1	Regime type and timeline.....	2
	1952 to 1961 (V-Dem outcome: reverted liberalization).....	3
	1964 to 1966 (V-Dem outcome: regressed autocracy).....	3
	1970 to 1973 (V-Dem outcome: regressed autocracy).....	3
	1990 to 1995 (V-Dem outcome: democratic transition).....	3
	2015 to 2016 (V-Dem outcome: deepened democracy).....	4
	2018 to 2020 (V-Dem outcome: democratic breakdown).....	4
2	Findings from the democracy literature	4
2.1	Origins of democracy and key institutions.....	4
2.2	Key actors.....	5
2.3	Gaps in empirics and literature.....	6
3	Findings from the aid and democracy literature.....	6
3.1	Gaps in empirics and literature.....	7
4	Aid flows and sources.....	7
4.1	Available data.....	7
4.2	Aid flows.....	7
4.3	Gaps in empirics and literature.....	10
	References.....	11

1 Regime type and timeline

Benin currently scores 0.3 (out of 1) in the liberal democracy index (Papada et al. 2023). The Regimes of the World typology (Lührmann et al. 2018) qualifies Benin as an ‘Electoral Autocracy’ as of 2022, which implies that multiparty elections for executive offices exist, but there are insufficient levels of fundamental requisites such as freedom of expression and association, free and fair elections. The country scores 0.45 (out of 1) on the electoral democracy index, which captures to which extent political leaders are elected under comprehensive voting rights in free and fair elections, and freedoms of association and expression are guaranteed. The table below summarizes how Benin performs on the major democracy and freedom indices:

Table 1: Benin’s performance in major democracy and freedom indices

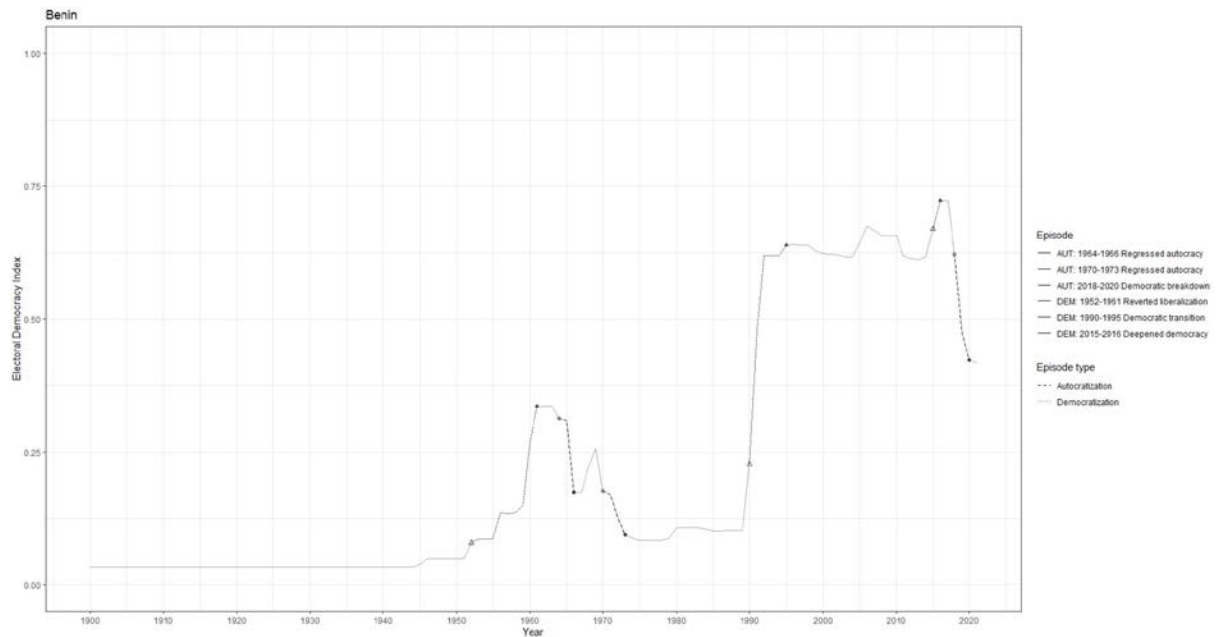
Country	Benin
Liberal democracy index	0.3 (in 2022)
Electoral democracy index	0.45 (in 2022)
Regimes of the World typology	Electoral Autocracy
Freedom House	Partly Free

Source: author’s compilation based on the indices listed the first column.

Varieties of Democracy’s (V-Dem) Episodes of Regime Transformation (ERT) dataset (Edgell et al. 2020) marks six main episodes in Benin’s history of democracy, as illustrated in Figure 1. Before examining each episode in greater detail, I provide a brief backdrop of the country context.

Benin gained independence from France in 1960. Its first decade was tumultuous, as the country experienced 11 presidents and five successful coups within 12 years of independence (Bierschenk 2009: 348). Army major Mathieu Kérékou, who rose to power through the last coup, eventually stayed in power for the following two decades. However, as the economic conditions exacerbated, invoking mass protests and strikes, the ‘Conference of the Nation’s Living Forces’ was held in 1990 (Allen 1992: 48). The Conference dismissed the then-ruling government, and a new constitution was formed. This marked the beginning of the ‘democracy experiment’ in Benin. Thomas Boni Yayi won the elections in 2006 and 2011, but both his terms were marred with corruption scandals and infighting. More than 150 ministers were reportedly appointed and resigned under his presidency (Boko 2016). The cotton millionaire, Patrice Talon, subsequently took office in 2016 and has been in power since. However, his authoritarian drift over the past few years has caused many observers to worry about the potential return to military rule and the broader erosion of democratic consolidation in the region (Ògúnmodédé 2023).

Figure 1: Episodes of regime transformation in Benin



Source: author's construction based on ERT.

Against this brief background, the ERT dataset (see Figure 1) marks the following six episodes as turning points in Benin's democratization process:

1952 to 1961 (V-Dem outcome: reverted liberalization)

In 1958, Dahomey transitioned from an overseas territory of France to a 'self-governing' territory. Dahomey gained independence in 1960, and Hubert Maga, leader of the Parti dahoméen de l'unité, won the first elections (Dossou-Yovo 1999: 60).

1964 to 1966 (V-Dem outcome: regressed autocracy)

In 1963, following widespread protests by workers in the South, President Maga was deposed in a coup led by General Christophe Soglo, who was the chief of staff of the army at the time. He served as the interim head of state in a coalition government, although this was met with resentment in the North. A provisional government was subsequently formed in 1965, but the army intervened again with General Soglo leading charge (Dossou-Yovo 1999: 61).

1970 to 1973 (V-Dem outcome: regressed autocracy)

Following political turmoil (including the unrest in 1967, attempt to return to civilian rule in 1968, and other coup attempts), a 'triumvirate experiment' was attempted in 1970. It was decided that three political veterans—Ahomadégbé, Apithy, and Maga—would act as the head of state in rotation for a two-year period (Decalo 1997). This experiment ended abruptly when Mathieu Kérékou led a military coup in 1972 and deposed the leadership. In 1974, Kerekou launched Marxism-Leninism as the official national ideology and initiated a complete overhaul of the country's administrations and companies (Dossou-Yovo 1999: 63).

1990 to 1995 (V-Dem outcome: democratic transition)

Following widespread protests in 1989 and worsening economic conditions, a National Conference was held in 1990. Dossou, the opposition leader turned Cabinet member, helped negotiate the membership to the conference, which included civil society representatives, political parties, and the army. The

Conference created a new 'conseil' to write a new constitution and serve as a transitional government until the next elections (Nwajiaku 1994). The Conference marked the beginning of a 'democratic renewal' in the country, and the country's return to multiparty elections.

2015 to 2016 (V-Dem outcome: deepened democracy)

The years 2015–16 marked another round of presidential elections. Since the incumbent Thomas Boni Yayi had already served two terms, he could not run for office again. Patrice Talon won the elections by defeating Zinsou, who was backed by Yayi. Talon entered the political arena as an entrepreneur who had gone from humble beginnings to one of the most powerful business persons in Benin (France24 2016).

2018 to 2020 (V-Dem outcome: democratic breakdown)

Since coming to power, Talon has undertaken a series of reforms to entrench his position. These reforms aimed to eliminate legitimate political opposition using tactics such as creating a new judicial body to target political rivals, appointing personal favourites to the country's top positions, and reforms to electoral codes (Hirschel-Burns 2021).

2 Findings from the democracy literature

2.1 Origins of democracy and key institutions

The democracy literature sets out how structural factors and diffusion effects can be strong predictors of whether a country will successfully democratize. However, as Gisselquist (2008: 790) notes, 'Benin in large part made the transition to democracy and consolidated a minimal democracy despite the predictions of these theories'. She adds that while 'Benin's transition is unusual in terms of its level of economic development, if less so in terms of its later growth rates, it is even more striking when neighbourhood effects and diffusion are considered' (p. 791). Not only was Benin among the first countries in the region to hold multiparty presidential elections after a period of authoritarianism, but its transition also involved the first National Conference in francophone Africa. This eventually became a model for other countries in the region including Gabon, Togo, Zaire, and Chad (Godjo 1994).

The origins of 'modern-day democracy' in Benin can be traced back to the crisis in 1989 when the country was virtually rendered ungovernable following severe economic shocks and crises under the leadership of Kérékou. In November 1989, civil servants and teachers, who had not been paid for months, threatened a general strike until their salaries in arrears were paid immediately. The cash-strapped Kérékou government denounced Marxism and accepted the principle of a 'multiparty' government days later. A member from the opposition was appointed the Minister of Economic Planning to lead the National Conference's agenda and composition. These steps were pivotal in moving Benin towards 'democratic reform' (Heilbrunn 1993: 285–86).

The National Conference lasted nine days. Delegates presented solutions to rebuild the country. Kérékou accepted the conference's declaration of sovereignty in exchange for being pardoned of the crimes committed. In 1991, the first competitive and open elections were held for mayors and city chiefs after 17 years (Heilbrunn 1993: 294). In a referendum held in December 1990, it was decided that the constitution would have a presidential system which required the President to be between the ages 40 and 70, be elected by two rounds of voting, and serve for five years (Saga 1991). Additionally, decentralization laws were passed to encourage participation at the grassroots level. These reforms marked the 'democratic renewal' in Benin.

However, Bierschenk (2009: 350) argues that 'the institutionalization of a pluralist democracy and the rule of law triggered by the "democratic renewal" have remained in important respects incomplete'. He adds that the Beninese national political system is biased in favour of the executive branch. The system

is further influenced by the presence of clientelist networks, informal politics, and lower regulations which render the implementation of government decisions difficult. Adding to these constraints is the highly fragmented nature of political parties in Benin. Since 1991, the number of political parties in the country has increased from 38 to over 122 (PNUD 2000). Furthermore, Benin's democracy is characterized by the decisive influence of ethno-regional cleavages on voting patterns, party strategies, and the structure of party systems. The interaction of these cleavages with the electoral system has prevented any single ethnic group from imposing its political domination. Instead, political coalitions have emerged as the most straightforward means of securing victory in competitive elections (Creevey et al. 2005).

The democratic reforms have manifested in unique ways at the local levels. As Bierschenk (2006: 554) argues: 'Democratic decentralization in Benin has meant that there are about 1,000 new political posts – council seats – to be filled in the country, and many of them have gone to young people [...] It is also striking that many of those who entered local politics with the advent of decentralization are businessmen, tradesmen, or hold mid-level salaried positions'. Entry of business persons in Beninese politics is intrinsically tied to the general rise in party financing and election campaigning. This type of 'rent-dependency' of businessmen is also a major contributor to institutionalized corruption in the country (Blundo and Olivier de Sardan 2001). The intersection of business and politics is especially crucial within sectors such as cotton, which accounts for a major part of the exports, taxes, and manufacturing output. Businessmen-turned-politicians used their strength and influence within this sector to transition to politics. In fact, the Talon group (previously led by the now-President Patrice Talon) had acquired a quasi-monopolistic position within the cotton sector in Benin (Banégas 2014).

Benin's political trajectory since Patrice Talon took office has been a cause of concern. For instance, changes in eligibility requirements in 2019 left only two political parties on the ballot, both allied with incumbent President Talon. The government reportedly suppressed large protests with violence and restricted interest access. Widespread boycotts also led to the lowest voter turnout on record (Paduano 2019). The Afrobarometer survey of 2019 indicates that, while most civilians demand democratic practices in Benin, many are dissatisfied with the way their current democracy was working (Scheller and Lazar 2019).

2.2 Key actors

In addition to the internal political actors and parties, international organizations have significantly influenced the democratization process in Benin. Bulgrin and Sayed (2023: 918) bring up excerpts from their interviews with officials from the Decentralization Ministry in Benin: 'Since the 1990s, decentralization has been a requirement of the *Bretton Wood institutions* and the development partners... The international environment makes decentralisation a requirement for [Global South] states and is even a condition for obtaining development aid [...] Because African countries are not autonomous as such, most of the policies are externally implemented. You allude to *France-Africa*, your *Bretton Wood institutions*... The same thing happened with the *SAPs (Structural Adjustment Programs)*'. Thus, the conditionalities imposed by multilateral organizations seem to be directly linked to the decentralization policy in Benin. Additionally, Bulgrin and Sayed (2023) note that the devolution policy in the country was developed through a Tripartite Cooperation Agreement between the Beninese government and the French and German governments, represented by the French and German development agencies, respectively. The French consulting firm, Institutions et Développement (I&D), also reportedly played an important role in formulating the decentralization policy in Benin (Bulgrin and Sayed 2023).

In addition to outside actors, non-state actors within Benin have also been crucial in its democratization processes. For instance, the informal network of 'Quartier Latin' (which refers to the high percentage of educated elites) within the region closely collaborated with the religious authorities in Benin to decisively impact the National Conference of 1990 (Kohnert 2004). Civil society organizations also played a crucial role in the 1990 Conference but have increasingly been co-opted in the recent times, which has

weakened their key purpose as a watchdog vis-à-vis formal politics. Furthermore, it is being increasingly enmeshed with popular politics, blurring the lines between civil society and the government. Case in point is the Citizens' Alternative civil society coalition, led by Professor Joseph Djogbénou, which has become a political party in Benin and played a major role in the last parliamentary, local, and presidential elections (Bertelsmann Stiftung 2022).

2.3 Gaps in empirics and literature

- While Benin is sighted as a 'success story' of democratic consolidation, the exact pathways and reasons for why the consolidation was successful within Benin and not in other countries that experienced a relapse warrants further research. While there exist several speculations in literature, the exact causal mechanisms are largely unknown.
- How one measures 'sliding back' (as in the case of Patrice Talon's recent policies) and its impact on democratic outcomes in Benin remains under-researched.

3 Findings from the aid and democracy literature

Following the 'democratic experiment' or 'democratic renewal' in 1990, the role of external aid became very prominent in Benin. Joekes et al. (2000) note that over the period 1992–97, aid financed 30% of total public expenditure and over 80% of public investment. This increased inflow of external aid was, in part, driven by the country's good democracy and human rights track record. This phenomenon was dubbed the '*democracy bonus*' in Benin. Following the 'good democracy' conduct, donors such as France withdrew a large part of its demands for debt repayment as early as 1990 (Bierschenk 2009). As of late 1990s, Benin was in fact considered 'over assisted' as the country was unable to absorb all external aid committed (République du Bénin 1999).

While it is generally difficult to ascertain the link between foreign aid and democracy outcomes, the linkages are relatively more apparent in the context of Benin. As Gazibo (2005: 10) notes: 'The provision of budget support has enabled Benin's central institutions to become sufficiently strong to avoid a democratic breakdown. By allowing the government to pay its civil servants and provide students with bursaries, budget support has helped avoid mass mobilizations and social instability'. The author adds that 'donors' aid and influence can be observed with regard to the creation and support of the High Commission for Concerted Governance. The very creation of this institution in 2007, following the election of Yayi Boni, was in part a response to donors' expectations'.

Donors have also been active in promoting civil society, which has been important for shaping dissent and political attitudes in Benin. While the Marxist regime between 1972 and 1990 incorporated all groups and associations within the single party structures, protests and unrest were still widespread. Post 1990, the civil society continued to flourish as donors began funding democracy, governance, and rule of law programmes (Gazibo 2013). However, it is not simply NGOs which benefited from this funding but even donors themselves, who could cite Benin as a 'success story' to demonstrate their own impact. In fact, USAID's annual performance report in 2000 singled out Benin and stated: 'USAID's support to civil society organizations in Benin helped introduce key electoral reforms, including helping amend the electoral code and helping the autonomous national electoral commission gain permanent status. These efforts helped reduce electoral fraud, contributing significantly to the successful legislative elections in 1999 (McMahon 2002).

Additionally, donors have played an active role in the elections themselves. For instance, given that the electoral register has been at the forefront of several election controversies in Benin, the computerization of a permanent voters' list in Benin evolved into a large-scale donor effort including USAID, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), and the Danish aid agency (McMahon 2002). However, it must be noted that despite extensive donor support, not every election was

perceived equally legitimate. For instance, the elections in 2001 were widely seen as having failed to produce a president despite donor support for the process (McMahon 2002).

Furthermore, international financial institutions (IFIs) such as the World Bank and IMF have been prominent players in Benin's economic trajectory. The IFIs invested heavily since the mid-1980s to improve public finance management and manage corruption in the country (Bierschenk et al. 2003). However, as Matthieu (2001) notes, these efforts have been systematically sidetracked from their original aims and may even have increased corruption in some instances. He argues that the IFI-led efforts did not stop one of the biggest corruption scandals of the last few years or the privatization of SONACOP (the state petroleum company).

Despite the setbacks, the IMF provided a Structural Adjustment Facility Commitment to the country as early as 1989 and has since provided six rounds of extended credit facility between 1993 and 2020 (IMF 2022).

Non-western donors such as China, India, Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates, Kuwait, and Brazil have also been active in Benin. China, for instance, has reportedly spent more than 100 billion West African CFA francs (F.CFA) since 1972 in support of economic co-operation projects in Benin. Chinese aid is not associated with governance or pro-democracy programming at all, owing to its funding policy based on 'mutual respect' (Gazibo 2013).

3.1 Gaps in empirics and literature

- While Benin benefited from a democracy bonus, whether this 'positive reinforcement' behaviour led to more efficient democracy and/or developmental outcomes remains an empirical question.
- There is also limited research on how the Beninese government perceives aid by Western donors (who place a premium on 'good governance' indicators to condition aid), relative to non-traditional donors who may have different criteria for providing aid.

4 Aid flows and sources

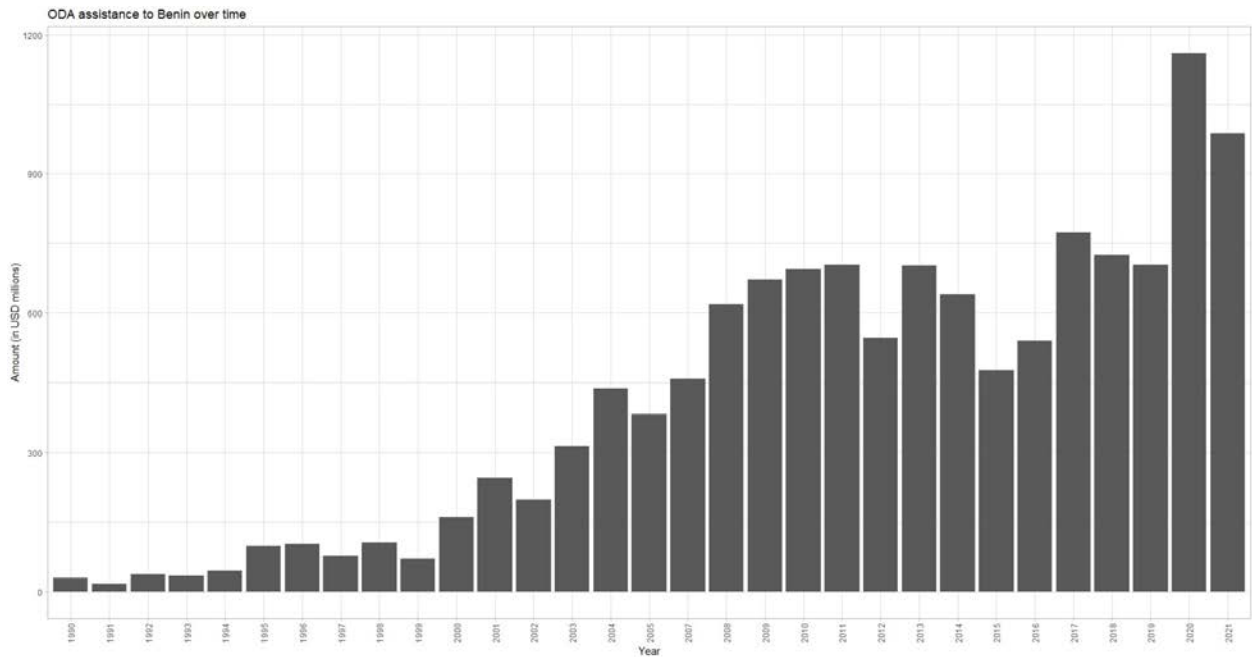
4.1 Available data

Detailed data on development assistance to Benin are best captured by the OECD-CRS (Creditor Reporting System) dataset (OECD 2023). The CRS includes data on bilateral and multilateral aid (official development assistance [ODA]), aid from private sources, and some other resource flows to developing countries. The data are mainly reported by the 32 members of the OECD Development Assistance Committee (DAC), some international organizations such as multilateral development banks and funds, and select non-DAC members (Atteridge et al. 2019).

4.2 Aid flows

Since 1990, the average ODA reported by DAC donors has been increasing (see Figure 2). Smaller spikes are observed between 2009 and 2011, while 2020 witnessed a major spike with over \$1 billion provided in ODA. The 2020 spike could be attributed to emergency assistance provided by a range of actors in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic. For instance, the IMF provided close to \$280 million to Benin that year under the Rapid Financing Instrument (RFI) and the Rapid Credit Facility (RCF) (IMF 2020).

Figure 2: ODA funding volume to Benin



Source: author's construction based on OECD-CRS.

In terms of top donors over time, France emerges as one of the most prominent bilateral donors (see Figure 3). This is anticipated given its status as the former colonial power. Canada, Belgium, and Spain are also influential bilateral donors, although their scale of funding is relatively smaller compared to France. Emerging donors such as Saudi Arabia have also started funding smaller projects (in the range of 1 to 10 million) since 2015.

When it comes to multilateral donors (Figure 3), EU institutions emerge most prominent and fund projects between 11 and 100 million annually, and occasionally even exceed the 100 million mark. Similarly, the scale of funding by the International Development Association (IDA)/World Bank is consistently large, exceeding 100 million in ODA annually since 2013. The African Development Bank and UN agencies (including UNICEF, UNFPA, and UNDP) are active donors.

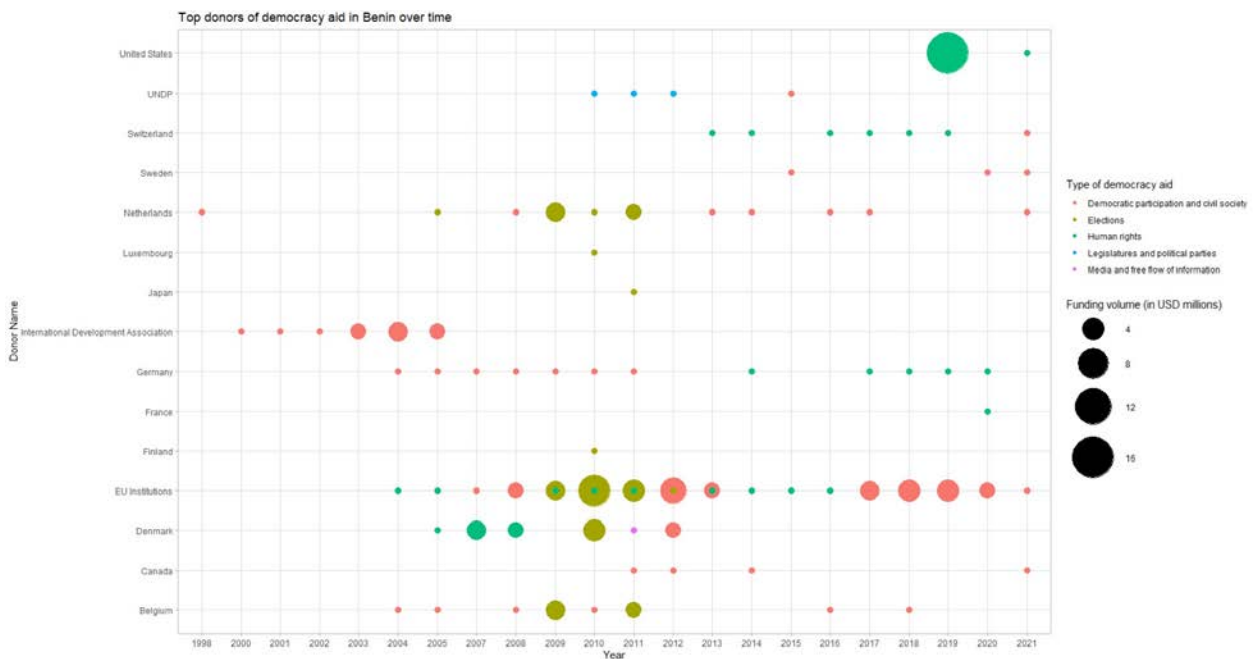
Figure 3: Top ODA donors to Benin over time



Source: author's construction based on OECD-CRS.

Figure 4 shows how the composition of top donors varies if we only consider democracy aid instead of overall ODA. Interestingly, EU emerges as a dominant player with extensive funding for 'elections' and 'civil society'. The US provided funding for several large-scale projects in the domain of human rights in 2019, but we do not observe a consistent funding pattern. Belgium and Denmark also provided funding towards 'elections' between 2009 and 2011. Overall, democracy aid as a proportion of overall ODA still appears to be rather small, warranting further research about donor priorities within Benin.

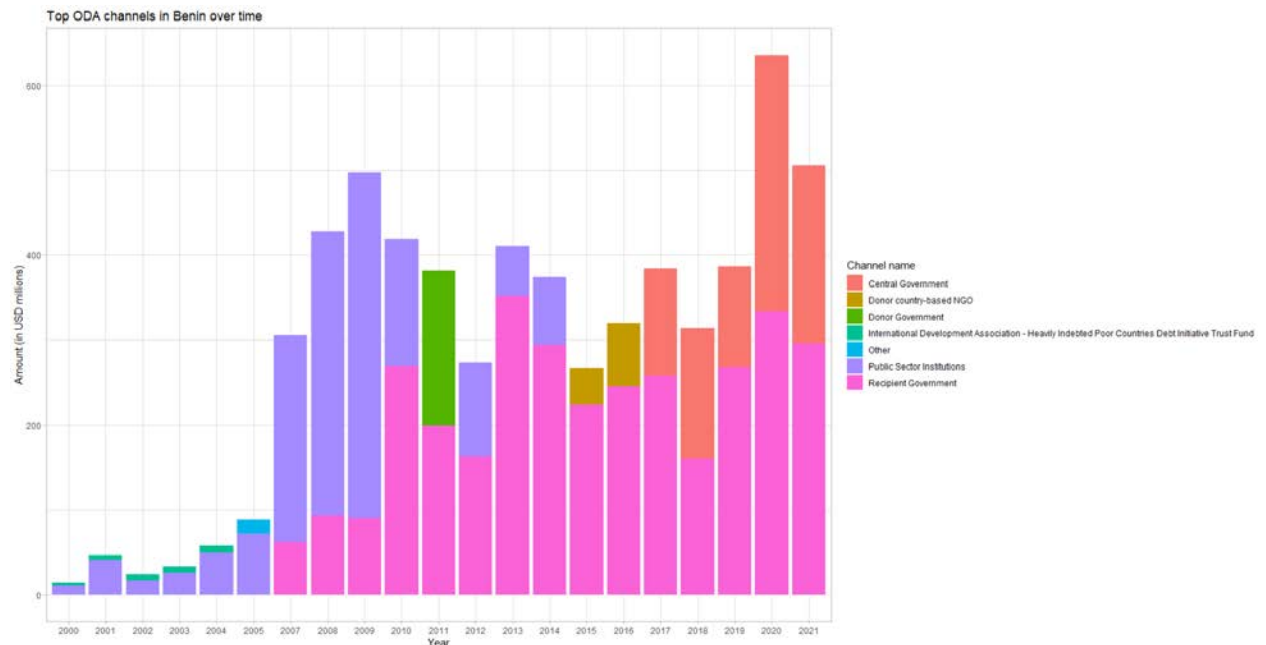
Figure 4: Top donors of democracy aid to Benin over time



Source: author's construction based on OECD-CRS.

In terms of channels through which ODA funding is disbursed within Benin (see Figure 5), I map the top two recipients each year. The Beninese state emerges as a major player since 2010, receiving a big portion of the donor funding. This funding may be subcontracted to other international actors, but any level of transfer beyond the first level is unfortunately not captured by the data. One can also see that the central government has been playing an active role in channelling ODA since 2017. While public sector institutions were prominent in early 2000s, their role seems to have diminished over time.

Figure 5: Top ODA channels in Benin over time



Source: author's construction based on OECD-CRS.

4.3 Gaps in empirics and literature

- Given the lack of data on subcontracting, which actors maintain real 'control' over ODA funding remains largely unknown. Further empirical research in this space would be beneficial to understand the influence of different donors and channels in Benin.
- Owing to the lack of data on aid provided by non-traditional donors, it is hard to ascertain the relative importance of DAC donors versus other donors in Benin.

References

- Allen, C. (1992). 'Restructuring an Authoritarian State: "Democratic Renewal" in Benin'. *Review of African Political Economy*, 19(54): 42–58. <https://doi.org/10.1080/03056249208703952>
- Atteridge, A., G. Savvidou, S. Sadowski, F. Gortana, L. Meintrup, and A. Dzebo (2019). *Aid Atlas*. Available at <https://aid-atlas.org> (accessed in October 2023). <https://doi.org/10.1093/afraf/adu043>
- Banégas, R. (2014). 'Briefing: Benin: Challenges for Democracy'. *African Affairs*, 113(452): 449–59.
- Bertelsmann Stiftung (2022). *BTI 2022 Country Report — Benin*. Bertelsmann Stiftung's Transformation Index. Gütersloh: Bertelsmann Stiftung. Available at: <https://bti-project.org/de/reports/country-report/BEN> (accessed in November 2023).
- Bierschenk, T. (2009). 'Democratization without Development: Benin 1989–2009'. *International Journal of Politics, Culture, and Society*, 22: 337–57. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10767-009-9065-9>
- Bierschenk, T. (2006). 'The Local Appropriation of Democracy: An Analysis of the Municipal Elections in Parakou, Republic of Benin, 2002–03'. *The Journal of Modern African Studies*, 44(4): 543–71. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0022278X06002084>
- Bierschenk, T., Thioléron, E., and Bako–Arifari, N. (2003). 'Benin'. *Development Policy Review*, 21(2): 161–78. <https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-7679.00204>
- Blundo, G., and J.-P. Olivier de Sardan (dir) (2001). *La Corruption au Quotidien en Afrique de l'Ouest: Approche Socio-Anthropologique Comparative: Benin, Niger et Sénégal*. Étude financée par la Commission des Communautés européennes et la Direction du développement et de la Coopération suisse (DDC). Rapport final. EHESS, IUED, and IRD.
- Boko, H. (2016). 'Bénin: La Cruelle Fin de Mandat de Thomas Boni Yayi'. *Le Monde*, 24 March 2016.
- Bulgrin, E., and Sayed, Y. (2023). 'Discourses of International Actors in the Construction of the Decentralisation Policy: the Case of Benin'. *Discourse: Studies in the Cultural Politics of Education*, 44(6): 913–26. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01596306.2023.2211742>
- Creevey, L., Ngomo, P., and Vengroff, R. (2005). 'Party Politics and Different Paths to Democratic Transitions: A Comparison of Benin and Senegal'. *Party Politics*, 11(4): 471–93. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1354068805053213>
- Decalo, S. (1997). 'Benin: First of the New Democracies'. In J. F. Clark (ed.), *Political Reform in Francophone Africa*, pp. 43–61. New York: Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9780429498183-4>
- Dossou-Yovo, N. (1999). 'The Experience of Benin'. *International Journal on World Peace*, 59–74.
- Edgell, A. B., S. F. Maerz, L. Maxwell, R. Morgan, J. Medzihorsky, M. C. Wilson, V. A. Boese, S. Hellmeier, J. Lachapelle, P. Lindenfors, A. Lührmann, and S. I. Lindberg. (2023). 'Episodes of Regime Transformation Dataset (v13.0)'. Varieties of Democracy (V-Dem) Project. Available at: www.github.com/vdeminstitute/ert (accessed in November 2023).
- France24 (2016). 'Businessman "Wins Benin's Presidential Election"'. *France24*, 21 March 2016. Available at: <https://www.france24.com/en/Benin-presidential-elections-mark-victory-Talon> (accessed in November 2023).
- Gazibo, M. (2005). 'Foreign Aid and Democratization: Benin and Niger Compared'. *African Studies Review*, 48(3): 67–87. <https://doi.org/10.1353/arw.2006.0015>
- Gazibo, M. (2013). 'Beyond Electoral Democracy: Foreign Aid and the Challenge of Deepening Democracy in Benin'. In D. Resnick and N. van de Walle (eds), *Democratic Trajectories in Africa: Unravelling the Impact of Foreign Aid*. <https://doi.org/10.1093/acprof:oso/9780199686285.003.0009>
- Godjo, A. E. (1994). 'Les Conférences Nationales en Afrique Noire: Apparition et Diffusion d'une Innovation'. Mémoire de DEA Université René Descartes (Paris V), Faculté de Droit. Paris.
- Heilbrunn, J. R. (1993). 'Social Origins of National Conferences in Benin and Togo'. *The Journal of Modern African Studies*, 31(2): 277–99. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0022278X00011939>
- Hirschel-Burns, T. (2021). 'Benin's King of Cotton Makes Its Democracy a Sham'. *Foreign Policy*, 8 April 2021. <https://foreignpolicy.com/2021/04/08/benin-election-democracy-sham-patrice-talon/> (accessed in November 2023).
- IMF (2020). IMF Executive Board Approves a US\$ 177.96 Million in Emergency Assistance for Benin to Address the COVID-19 Pandemic'. IMF Press Release 20/385, 21 December 2020. Washington, DC: IMF Communications Department. Available at: <https://www.imf.org/en/News/Articles/2020/12/21/pr20385-benin>

- [imf-executive-board-approves-us-million-emergency-assistance-covid-19-pandemic](#) (accessed in November 2023).
- IMF (2022). 'Benin: History of Lending Commitments as of February 28, 2022'. International Monetary Fund. Available at: <https://www.imf.org/external/np/fin/tad/extarr2.aspx?memberKey1=65&date1key=2022-02-28> (accessed in November 2023).
- Joekes, S., Houedete, T., and Serra, R. (2000). *Creating a Framework for Poverty Reduction: Institutional and Process Issues in National Poverty Policy in Selected African Countries. Benin Country Report*. Brighton: Institute of Development Studies (IDS).
- Kohnert, D. (2004). 'Are Non-state Actors Better Innovators? The Ambiguous Role of Non-state Actors in the Transition Process: The Case of Benin and Madagascar'. Invited paper for the VAD-conference *Africa in Context: Historical and Contemporary Interactions with the World*, session 2, *Social Movements and Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) in Comparison: Africa, Central and Latin America*. Hannover. Paper available at SSRN. <https://doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.917332>
- Lührmann, A., M. Tannenbergh, and S. I. Lindberg (2018). 'Regimes of the World (RoW): Opening New Avenues for the Comparative Study of Political Regimes'. *Politics and Governance*, 6(1): 60–77. <https://doi.org/10.17645/pag.v6i1.1214>
- Matthieu, M. (2001) 'Une Approche Comparée de la Lutte contre la Corruption en Afrique Subsaharienne (Sénégal, Niger, Bénin)'. Draft research report. Marseille (mimeo).
- McMahon, E. R. (2002). 'The Impact of US Democracy and Governance Assistance in Africa: Benin Case Study'. Center On Democratic Performance Department Of Political Science, Binghamton University, New York.
- Nwajiaku, K. (1994). 'The National Conferences in Benin and Togo Revisited'. *The Journal of Modern African Studies*, 32(3): 429–47. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0022278X00015172>
- OECD (2023). 'Creditor Reporting System: Aid Activities (Edition 2022)'. OECD International Development Statistics (database). <https://doi.org/10.1787/049be6d5-en>
- Ògúnmodéḍé, C. O. (2023). 'Benin Continues Its Authoritarian Drift Under Talon'. Briefing, *World Politics Review*, 25 January 2023. Available at: <https://www.worldpoliticsreview.com/benin-elections-west-africa-politics-democracy/> (accessed in November 2023).
- Paduano, S. (2019). 'The Fall of a Model Democracy'. *The Atlantic*, 29 May 2019. Available at: <https://www.theatlantic.com/international/archive/2019/05/benin-west-africa-model-democracy-fall/590377/> (accessed in January 2024).
- Papada, E., D. Altman, F. Angiolillo, L. Gastaldi, T. Köhler, M. Lundstedt, N. Natsika, M. Nord, Y. Sato, F. Wiebrecht, and S. I. Lindberg (2023). *Defiance in the Face of Autocratization*. Democracy Report 2023. Gothenburg: Varieties of Democracy Institute (V-Dem Institute), University of Gothenburg. <https://doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.4560857>
- PNUD (2000). *Rapport sur le Développement Humain au Bénin: La Gouvernance*. Cotonou: Programme des Nations Unies pour le Développement (PNUD).
- Gisselquist, R. M. (2008). 'Democratic Transition and Democratic Survival in Benin'. *Democratization*, 15(4): 789–814. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13510340802191078>
- République du Bénin (1999). *Rapport sur l'État de l'Économie Nationale. Développements Récents et Perspectives à Moyen Terme*. Cotonou: Cellule macro-économique de la Présidence.
- Saga, H. (1991). 'Chaillot n'est pas La Baule', *Jeune Afrique*, 1613, 27 November–3 December 1991.
- Scheller, C., and Lazar, M. (2019). 'Is Benin's Democracy Living Up to its Reputation?' Dispatch 321, *Afrobarometer*, 10 September 2019.