

Security Sector Reform and Development Assistance: Explaining the Diffusion of Policy Priorities among Donor Agencies

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Abstract This paper employs a world society theoretical framework to examine the recent trend among foreign aid donors to focus on security sector reform as an aid priority. Through a comparative qualitative case study based on interview data collected from aid officials and development workers in Canada, Sweden, and the United States ($n=41$) in 2006–2007, this paper finds that the extent to which the security sector reform agenda is integrated into donor policy and programs is mediated by catalytic policy processes linked to intergovernmental organizations and the degree of donor agency autonomy from the rest of government. These findings are used to illustrate how common processes of globalization in world society shape similar approaches to foreign aid among donor agencies despite disparate domestic contexts. These processes lead to convergence of donor policy around security issues and at the same time can account for decoupling of practice from world society policy models.

Keywords Security sector reform · Donor agencies · Development assistance · Globalization · World society theory · Decoupling

Introduction

Before the 1990s, bilateral foreign aid donor agencies of the major Western governments mostly eschewed issues of security and conflict. When countries experienced conflict and insecurity, development assistance programs were suspended, and the focus of international donors shifted to humanitarian assistance to stem crises. In the wake of the Cold War, the growth in intra-state conflict in much of the developing world required aid donors to re-examine the approach to dealing with societies in conflict. Indeed, an entire approach to addressing issues of security and conflict in development assistance has appeared in international development discourse. Approaches to human security, and later to security-sector reform, have become a distinct priority for donors and other international

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organizations. The similarities among diverse donors on this issue of security and conflict in development are striking. The influence of organizations like the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development's Development Assistance Committee (OECD DAC) and the United Nations' development arm—the United Nations Development Program (UNDP)—(OECD 2004a, c; UNDP 1994) seem particularly strong. Despite these similarities, this approach to security and development is applied to different degrees by each donor because of the different experiences of social processes and mechanisms at work within each donor context.

Why have donors' different domestic and foreign policy contexts led to convergence around approaches to security and development in the bilateral aid sector? What social processes facilitate global influence on the nation-state to shape donor policy? What accounts for this variance in implementation of aid and security approaches by donors? This paper will examine these questions using a world society theoretical framework and a comparative, three-country case study of bilateral aid agencies. The focus here on bilateral aid is intended to examine state-level aid institutions so as to better understand the relationship between states and world society. Interviews with donor and civil society representatives from Canada, Sweden, and the United States are analysed to identify common mechanisms and processes at work in mediating the influence of world society on the nation-state and donor approaches to integrating security sector reform into their development assistance programs. I argue, despite experiencing convergence stemming from common social processes of globalization at work in each case, that the divergence of implementation of security sector reform frameworks results from the interplay of those processes with donor agency structure and each country's specific context.

Background

Competing Explanations for the Diffusion of Aid Priorities

Why do bilateral aid agencies in the major western democracies act and talk alike despite different domestic political contexts? What explains the convergence around specific policy priorities in the foreign aid sector? Few studies currently address the issue of the globalization of aid policy and the growing uniformity of aid institutions globally. Possible explanations of this convergence and the diffusion of aid priorities can draw on competing theories of the motivations for the provision of aid. Two common perspectives here would be (1) realist views that aid is primarily about promoting donor national self-interest and foreign policy objectives (Morgenthau 1962; Alesina and Dollar 2000); or (2) neo-institutionalist views that aid is shaped by international norms of humanitarianism, solidarity, and development (Lumsdaine 1993; Lancaster 2007). Realist explanations of policy diffusion would offer that the priorities adopted merely served donor interests. Given convergence of donor support around a constellation of aid priorities at present this narrow theory of self-interest would appear to lack strong explanatory power for why donors with very diverse sets of domestic political contexts and foreign policy interests would adopt common positions. In contrast, the institutionalist explanation would suggest that donor policy priorities are linked to global political culture and institutional models of legitimate donor behaviour in support of international norms of development and humanitarianism championed by international actors like the World Bank, the United Nations, and the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development's (OECD) Development Assistance Committee (DAC). Indeed, forthcoming quantitative research suggests that

isomorphic donor policy on issues of women and gender can be attributed to the influence international actors have over donor agencies (Swiss 2011). Given the limited purchase of the realist perspective in explaining global diffusion of common aid policies, this paper instead explores the phenomenon from a world society institutionalist perspective.

World Society and State Security as a Global Model

The world polity/world society neo-institutional perspective on globalization describes world society as a collection of organizations, states, and individuals which create and enact globally applicable models of behaviour which are translated into policy and institutions throughout the world (Boli and Thomas 1999; Lechner and Boli 2005; Meyer 2007; Meyer et al. 1997). World society theory holds that the similarity of these institutional models explains the isomorphism between states and organizations in terms of citizenship, justice, educational systems, scientific advancement, and other institutions. The international and intergovernmental organizations of world society influence nation-states, domestic organizations, and individuals to enact common scripts and models of behaviour. This influence leads to a convergence of policy and institutional forms based on a common “world culture” (Boli and Thomas 1997; Lechner and Boli 2005; Meyer et al. 1997). Beyond influencing the adoption of these models, world society actors and the wider acceptance of norms or models also encourage active implementation of models and diminish instances of loose coupling or decoupling that occur when a model is adopted but not implemented to the expected degree (Swiss 2009; Clark 2010). Deeper understanding of how this decoupling question has emerged helps extend our understanding of how institutions and norms diffuse not only superficially, but also in terms of implementation. Though criticized for its weakness in addressing power imbalances between states, organizations, and individuals (Finnemore 1996; Keck and Sikkink 1998), this perspective offers arguably the most convincing sociological explanation for the isomorphism of states and organizations in the era of globalization.

The prescriptive norms and expectations of statehood espoused by world society shape what it is to be a state and how the state should be structured and develop (Kim et al. 2002; Meyer 2007; Meyer et al. 1997). In keeping with Jepperson et al. (1996) earlier research on world society’s influence on state security policies, I will argue that security policies and institutions of the state—including militaries, police, legal-judicial systems, and correctional systems—stem in part from common frameworks or scripts of world society. Ineffective implementation of these structures, and therefore the presence of intra-state conflict, has long been an explanation for the existence of weak states throughout the developing world (Holsti 1996; Jackson and Rosberg 1982; Migdal 1988). It is in this context, therefore, that state security and the security of individuals in society (human security) have become another focus of the world polity. World society has addressed security in the broader context of not only war, militaries, and the police, but also legal/judicial and correctional/penal institutions. The discourse on human and national security has evolved over a long period, and in recent years—particularly following the end of the Cold War era—has been absorbed into the broader discourse on international development and development assistance.

Security as a Development Assistance Concern

Until the 1990s aid was not commonly directed to areas of insecurity or conflict. The sharp increase in intra-state conflict in the developing world in the 1990s was a driving force for

the re-evaluation of the relationship between development and conflict or insecurity (Smith 2001; Woods 2005). Donors began to consider the potential vulnerabilities that might emerge from increased conflict in the developing world (Nef 1999), and some research even implicated development assistance as a contributor to the violence and insecurity (Andersen 2000; Uvin 1998, 1999).

Human security frames security as an issue that dealt with people and their lives as a broad spectrum of security concerns, rather than focusing on traditional security concerns of states, territories, and militaries (UNDP 1994). Human security touched upon most aspects of people's lives, making it difficult to specify what interventions donors should pursue. This lack of precision would play a substantial role in the failure of human security to gain wide acceptance in the development assistance sector globally. Critics of human security suggest the concept was motivated largely by the development community's desire to obtain a part of the substantial political and financial resources traditionally dedicated to the conventional security sector (King and Murray 2002; Paris 2001). Despite efforts by several "middle power" states such as Canada to craft their foreign policies around a human security agenda and to establish a vibrant international community working on human security initiatives, human security failed to become a major contributor to new directions in development programming (King and Murray 2002).

The next trend in the evolving relationship between development and security has been a focus on Security-Sector Reform (SSR) in the developing world (Smith 2001). The OECD DAC defines SSR as seeking to "increase partner countries' ability to meet the range of security needs within their societies in a manner consistent with democratic norms and sound principles of governance, transparency and the rule of law" (OECD 2004b). Typical SSR initiatives might include: working to disarm and demobilize combatants, police training, judicial and legal reforms, professionalization of militaries, reforms of the intelligence sector, improving overall security policy coherence, and strengthening civilian control over police and militaries (OECD 2004b; Smith 2001). Though SSR was already underway in parts of the developing world in the 1990s (Jean 2005), it was not until the United Kingdom's Department for International Development (DFID) began working on SSR in the late-Nineties that the issue was more widely acknowledged as a priority by donors (Ball and Hendrickson 2005; Brzoska 2003; Jean 2005; Smith 2001).¹ In 2001 the DAC first began to focus on SSR as a priority, culminating in the DAC High Level Meeting of 2004 which yielded a donor statement on SSR and Development Assistance (OECD 2004a, b, c). This consensus statement on development assistance and SSR was followed by a set of DAC Guidelines on how donors should best address SSR in their programming. Indeed, the aim agreed to by all DAC donors within these guidelines is to "promote peace and security as fundamental pillars of development and poverty reduction" (OECD 2005).

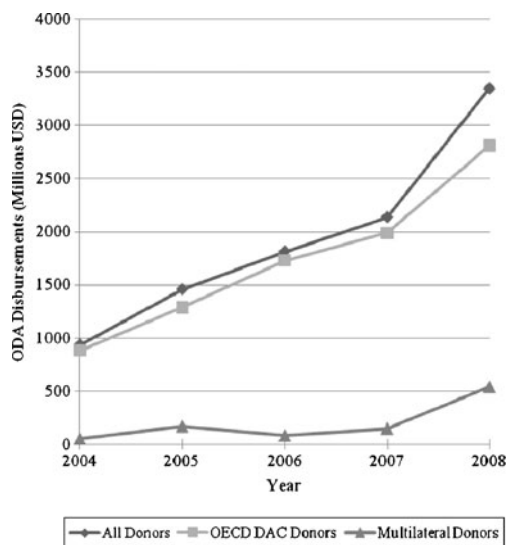
Alongside this SSR agenda emerged renewed calls for the development community to examine the impact of violent conflict on development efforts. Such examinations entail approaches to "conflict sensitive development" and the mainstreaming of conflict analysis into aid programming and planning (UNDP 2005). Approaches to collective security have led donor nations to not only support development in conflict situations, but also to

¹ Some might be surprised to learn that it was not the United States who instigated the adoption of the SSR agenda, especially given the context of the Bush Doctrine and the rise of the post-2001 "Global War on Terror." Instead, the research literature refers to the critical role played by the UK in placing SSR on the donor agenda. An influential and innovative donor, the UK's DFID was seen as the agency spearheading donor convergence around SSR. Although the United States was the largest donor by volume of aid dollars and had a longer history of engagement on security programming than some other donors, the U.S. was not perceived by the donor community as the prime movers behind this shift in the global aid policy agenda.

integrate development activities into broader military and diplomatic efforts in states for post-conflict reconstruction and peacebuilding; Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRTs) in Afghanistan are a prime example of this approach (Maloney 2005). This whole-of-government approach to security involves not only donor agencies, but also militaries and ministries of foreign affairs, and has been lauded by the donor community's SSR agenda as the most effective way to address security issues in development (OECD 2004b, 2005).

Security concerns have become an integral component of development assistance discourse in the Twenty-First Century and reflective of world cultural values shaped by international actors of world society—in this case, the UN and the OECD. With this crafting of an identifiable model of security and development in world society comes the diffusion and adoption of such a model by development assistance donors. The spread and institutionalization of security and development approaches among bilateral development assistance donors in recent years has been striking. The institutionalization of this model is evident in the change in Official Development Assistance (ODA) funds dedicated to the security priority. The OECD DAC tracks annual aid flow data and categorises aid flows to a range of sector codes. Following the 2004 DAC statement on SSR, the OECD aid statistics database began tracking aid flows dedicated to the broad sector code of “Conflict, Peace, and Security” (OECD 2010). The sharp increases in ODA dedicated to this priority are reflected in Fig. 1 above. This figure demonstrate that not only the OECD DAC donors, but also Multilateral donors (a category consisting of the World Bank, the IMF, all the regional development banks, and all the major UN agencies) experience a sharp jump in aid spending on the security issue in the years immediately following the DAC agreement. Total DAC aid in this sector jumped almost 258% from nearly \$883 million to \$3.35 billion in a five year period (OECD 2010). The multilateral donors experienced an even sharper increase of more than 900% from a mere \$52.3 million to nearly \$538 million in the same period (OECD 2010). Not only are volumes of aid dedicated to the security priority increasing, so is the overall share of aid dedicated to the issue. The total percentage of DAC bilateral ODA dedicated to security nearly doubles in this period from 1.43% to 2.85% and the multilateral donors' percentage of aid dedicated to security increasing nearly five times

Fig. 1 Total ODA disbursements allocated to “Conflict, Peace, & Security,” 2004–2008



from 0.35% to 1.72% (OECD 2010). In terms of both total volume of aid dedicated to security and the overall share of that aid as percentage of all aid, we see sharp increases in the 2004–2008 period, reflecting the institutionalization of the aid model across the donor community. These aid flow figures do not reflect the nature of this institutionalization, but do provide a sense of the scope of the shift in donor priority. Although not all donors have integrated and implemented SSR or whole-of-government approaches as a mainstay of their development assistance programming, different donor countries have adopted some emphasis on security and conflict in their development assistance, with many donor agencies at minimum adopting an agency policy on security/conflict and development. It is this adoption, institutionalization, and refinement of the security and development model by donors that this article explains. How has world society influence on donors functioned to encourage the spread of the security and development model commonly seen? What social processes work to mediate the spread of this model among donors? The next section will turn to these questions following a brief examination of how donors have specifically institutionalized this model.

Donor Approaches to Security in Development Assistance

Bilateral donor agencies have integrated the SSR model into their aid programming in a number of ways. Three representative characteristics of this model that emerge in donor implementation include: (1) the adoption of an agency-level or corporate policy on security/conflict and development; (2) the creation of a targeted aid mechanism or unit within the donor agency addressing security and development; and (3) either programming in the SSR area, mainstreaming of conflict in development assistance programming, or adoption of whole-of-government approaches to SSR in post-conflict societies. All of these components are reflective of the security and development model outlined above, and are present in the DAC's 2005 guidelines on *Security Sector Reform and Governance* (OECD 2005). I use these characteristics as the framework for evaluating the institutionalization of the security and development model in my case study donor agencies. Next, following a brief description of the selection criteria for my case study countries, I assess the three characteristics of the SSR model in each country before exploring the interview data from each case to examine the social processes at work in the diffusion and implementation of the model.²

Case Study Selection

I selected my three case study countries of Canada, Sweden, and the United States because they present a diversity of donor and domestic political characteristics. In the first instance, they are three donors reflecting a diversity of perceived aid motivations, ranging from more self-interested (United States) to more humanitarian (Sweden). Canada's aid tends to be perceived as underpinned by a blend of these motives. This variation of motivation reflects the different characterization of each state's presence on the global stage. The US is often cited as a global neo-liberal hegemon both economically and politically. Sweden, on the other hand, is an advanced economy with less global influence and a highly developed welfare state based on long-standing social-democratic principles. As with motives, Canada could be argued to be a blend of these same domestic economic and political features. As such, all three countries represent a diversity of domestic approaches to the welfare state

² The summaries that follow highlight the situation as of early 2008 for each donor.

and commitment to international engagement and solidarity, something also reflected in their levels of aid generosity. I include the largest donor by volume but one of the least generous by proportion of national income (United States) and one of the perennially largest donors by percentage of national income (Sweden). Arguably these varying levels of generosity reflect different domestic state structures and levels of public support for around how aid is allocated. Sustained public support for foreign aid is highest in Sweden, reflecting again the strong welfarist social-democratic traditions there (Eurobarometer 2005). In contrast, though the greatest donor by volume as a result of the sheer size of the American economy, public support for aid is the lowest in the US of any of the three case study countries (Otter 2003). Placing the United States and Sweden on opposite ends of either spectrum of motivation and generosity leaves Canada to occupy a middle ground on each characteristic, and provides what I believe is a set of countries with a great degree of domestic diversity that can still be easily compared as donors. Beyond these domestic political and socio-economic differences, I will also highlight the diversity of my case study countries in terms of the structure of their bilateral donor agencies. The next section introducing the three donor agencies highlights these differences in organizational form.

The Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA)

CIDA is a standalone agency of the Canadian government, with only limited reporting ties to Canada's Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade (DFAIT). CIDA has its own minister and has latitude to set aid policy for Canada in most instances. The bulk of CIDA officials and their corresponding decision-making on policy and programming are located at its headquarters in the Canadian National Capital Region. In this respect, CIDA can be viewed as a centralized donor with relative autonomy from the rest of the Canadian government.

CIDA demonstrates two of the features of the SSR model outlined above. First, it has an apparatus for working on security and development initiatives. Second, CIDA has conducted programming in the SSR area and has taken part in whole-of-government approaches to security and development. CIDA does not show full adoption of the model in that it lacks a corporate level policy on security and development issues and it lacks a dedicated agency-level unit to address these issues at the corporate level.

Despite having conducted development assistance programming in war-torn and post-conflict countries throughout much of its existence, CIDA did not have a specific policy position or apparatus to address conflict and development until 1996, when the Government of Canada's Peacebuilding Initiative was created. Subsequently, CIDA formed its Peacebuilding Fund and corresponding Peacebuilding Unit in 1997 (Thibault 2003). This fund allocated approximately \$10 million CAD annually to fund programs related to post-conflict peacebuilding, encompassing development programming that was focused on redeveloping areas of conflict and future conflict prevention. In 2006, the Peacebuilding Fund was dissolved and the former Peacebuilding Unit adopted a narrower perspective on peace and security issues that focuses mainly on issues of human rights in conflict situations.

This initiative was part of a broader Canadian government approach to peacebuilding; however, it never translated into a corporate level policy at CIDA. Indeed, aside from the Peacebuilding Fund and Unit, the treatment of conflict, security and development at CIDA has been quite informal. There is no specific unit for peace and security in the agency's policy group. Although discussion with CIDA officials suggests that one could be under consideration, there is no over-arching policy outlining CIDA's approach to security and

development,. The lack of an overall corporate policy regarding these issues leads CIDA to address the conflict and security issues primarily in response to recipient country situations which require it. This treatment of issues on a case-by-case basis dependent on the country's context has seen recent initiatives in Iraq, Afghanistan, Sudan, and Haiti as prominent examples of CIDA's work in conflict zones.

In many of these cases, CIDA's contribution is simply a smaller piece of a whole-of-government approach to failed and fragile states. CIDA's contribution to PRTs in Afghanistan is a primary example of this, where coordination with both DFAIT and the Department of National Defence underlie CIDA's participation. In 2005, a new initiative with across-government involvement, located at and managed by DFAIT replaced the Canadian government's earlier peacebuilding initiative. Presently, The Stabilization and Reconstruction Task Force (START) and its corresponding Global Peace and Security Fund (GPSF) provide Canada's chief interface with the security and development agenda. The GPSF funded initiatives which directly support the SSR agenda, and extend even to fund initiatives involving military procurement in some cases (DFAIT 2007). In this sense, DFAIT is addressing the "hard" security topics as well as other issues of SSR, while CIDA has been focused on SSR through longer-term developmental and institution-building initiatives addressing the "soft" side of security on a country-by-country basis.

The Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida)

Within the Swedish government system, Sida is considered a service delivery agency and is deemed a sub-unit of the Swedish Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA). The MFA sets major policy directions for Swedish aid, and Sida has been described as a "policy-taking" agency as far as policy directions and priorities are concerned. Country-level programming decisions are taken in the field under the direction of Sida officials in recipient country offices. In contrast to Canada's CIDA, Sida is thus a decentralized donor with limited autonomy from the Swedish MFA.

Sida's adoption of a security and development approach demonstrates most of the characteristics of the model discussed above: a corporate policy, a security and development unit, and mainstreaming of conflict analysis in development assistance. The extent of the implementation of the mainstreaming initiatives is still undetermined, but Sida programming in conflict countries like Afghanistan and Iraq understandably addresses these issues as a primary concern. All of these features of Sida's approach to security suggest the implementation of a recognisable world society model for security/conflict and development within the organization.

Sida began examining the nexus of security, conflict, and development in the late 1990s. The first policy to address this area arrived in 1999 as a result of growing awareness of Sida having to increasingly do two things: (1) deliver aid in areas embroiled in conflict or recovering from conflict; and (2) ensure that Swedish aid did not further contribute to conflict in these areas.

This first strategy discussed the importance to Sida of the "do no harm" perspective on aid which had emerged following the Rwandan genocide in the early 1990s. This approach focuses on fungibility issues and tracking the use of aid funds, but also requires the analysis of conflict in an area to ensure that donor activities do not aggravate tensions or unintentionally align the donor with one party or another in an ongoing conflict. This 1999 effort to integrate a conflict perspective on Swedish aid was neither enthusiastically received nor implemented widely within the agency.

In the context of renewed international interest in security and development post-2001, Security emerged as a central theme of promoting development in the 2003 Policy for Global Development (Government of Sweden 2003). As a result of this greater awareness and engagement with the interaction of conflict and development, Sida formed a separate unit to address the issue in 2005. Instead of the earlier strategy where one officer authored a low-priority policy on conflict, the new Division for Peace and Security in Development Cooperation had five officers and a director working on the topic, and issued a more comprehensive policy on security and development in late 2005. In this policy Sida examines security and development as an issue to be considered in all programming because of the linkages between poverty and insecurity (Sida 2005). The policy identifies three approaches to development cooperation: (1) risk awareness; (2) conflict sensitivity; and (3) promotion of peace and security. By adopting these three approaches, Sida intends to mainstream conflict analysis in all of its development programming, reflecting the international discourse on the subject crafted by the UN, DAC, and other international actors.

The United States Agency for International Development (USAID)

Like Sida, USAID is a mostly decentralized donor with limited autonomy from the US State Department. Much country-level decision making takes place in USAID offices overseas, but the broad policy directions for American aid stem from foreign policy set by the State Department. USAID's annual aid spending allocations are also subject to annual congressional approval, meaning its autonomy in contrast to CIDA or even Sida is further limited by the direct budgetary oversight of the full body of elected representatives in a way not seen in Canada or Sweden.

USAID demonstrates all three features of the SSR model outlined above: corporate policy on security/conflict and development; a unit within the agency addressing security and development; and both programming in the SSR area and adoption of whole-of-government approaches to SSR in conflict and post-conflict situations.

USAID has addressed conflict and development issues since the early 1990s. In a significant policy statement from 2002, *Foreign Aid in the National Interest: Promoting Freedom, Security, and Opportunity*, conflict featured prominently as a main pillar of American development Assistance (USAID 2002). At present they address security and development issues through several approaches. The primary channel is through their organizational unit and a corporate-level policy on Conflict Management and Mitigation (CMM) which is mainstreamed as a cross-cutting program in the agency. The main focus of the CMM unit and policy is addressing issues of conflict prevention through assisting relevant country program field offices to mainstream conflict issues into their programming (USAID 2005). The CMM group is also responsible for managing USAID's relationship with the DAC CPDC Network, and plays a sometimes prominent role in the Network's activities. The CMM policy also broadens USAID's approach to conflict beyond conflict prevention to include post-conflict reconstruction and SSR. The CMM unit and policy are thus very clear representations of the features of the prototypical model for donor approaches to conflict and insecurity in development assistance.

Aside from the CMM group, USAID also has an SSR advisor to assist USAID field offices and country programs in developing specific SSR activities, as well as liaising with other government departments in the United States that have an interest and involvement in the SSR agenda. In this respect, USAID's work on conflict and insecurity is actually very closely tied to the broader agenda of the US government. For instance, security features

prominently within the Strategic Plan for the US State Department and USAID 2007–2012 (USAID and State Department 2007). In addition, USAID's role in supporting American foreign policy on security also appears in the 2006 US *National Security Strategy*, suggesting it will become more closely linked to the State Department to achieve these aims (United States Government 2006). USAID's work on conflict is linked very closely to a whole-of-government approach to security and development. This approach was formalized further in 2009 with the issuing of a joint set of SSR guidelines by USAID and the Departments of State and Defense (USAID 2009).

Policy Isomorphism in Security and Development

The outlines of CIDA, Sida, and USAID above show a diversity of domestic contexts and donor organizational forms, but also demonstrate striking similarities of security/conflict and development approaches among donors: each has had a specific unit responsible for addressing security and conflict issues; each has made some effort to do SSR programming; and each has either mainstreamed conflict or participated in whole-of-government approaches to security in recipient societies. Yet, as much as donors acknowledge the importance of the security and conflict issue in development assistance, the extent to which they implement policy and programming on the issue varies. Both Sida and USAID have dedicated policy units tasked with leading the organization on these issues, as well as corporate level policies that accord a priority to security. This prioritization of security stands in stark contrast to CIDA and its lack of policy guidance or unit-based leadership on security. The manner in which CIDA actually addresses the security and conflict issue in its programming is shaped by the absence of an agency-wide policy strategy on the issue. Instead, the implementation of a security and conflict approach at CIDA is dominated by ad hoc application in countries where it is required, but there is little focus on these issues in other cases. Both Sida and USAID have this same context-based implementation—with a greater effort to address these issues in specific post-conflict societies—but also have a corporate approach to the issue which makes it applicable potentially in all cases, mainstreaming conflict through the agencies' efforts. CIDA lacks this mainstreaming approach on conflict. I argue that this divergence in the extent to which a common approach to security issues is implemented is reflective of different social processes at work in each country's domestic context.

Part of this difference can be accorded to the close link of the security and conflict issues to national interests in the foreign policy arena. Bilateral aid officials have seen as taboo all things military or defence related, but no longer. In the post-Cold War international security agenda and the recent focus on combating terror, development has been accorded the ability to help stem some aspects of insecurity (Ball and Hendrickson 2005; Brzoska 2003; Jean 2005). At the same time, insecurity is seen as a major barrier to development. Failing or fragile states are therefore seen as a development assistance concern not only for the reasons of promoting human development, but also for stemming insecurity that has the potential to affect not only developing societies, but donor societies also. This notion of enlightened self-interest or collective security cannot be discounted as a key component of the renewed focus on security in the development assistance field. These motives bear consideration as I turn in the next section to the examination of data collected on this issue from interviews with development agency officials and civil society representatives in each of the three countries that compose my case study.

Processes of Influence on Donors

My semi-structured interviews with development officials and civil society representatives working on the security and conflict issues within the development assistance sector in each of my three case-study countries yielded comparable results regarding the factors which influence donors to adopt a conflict and security approach in development assistance. Adopting a snowball sample approach in each country I identified gatekeeper respondents who assisted in the identification of other relevant aid officials and civil society representatives to take part in the study. Interviewing a total of 41 respondents across the three countries over the period of a year from early 2006 to early 2007, I recorded, transcribed, and then coded each interview for common themes and emerging similarities across the cases using ATLAS.ti qualitative data analysis software. I paid particular attention to themes that were apparent in all three country cases and mentioned by multiple respondents in each country. I examined these common themes and similarities among respondents for the presence of any underlying social mechanisms and processes which could explain donor adoption of the global model of security and development. These processes and mechanisms, in keeping with the work of McAdam et al. (2001), are those events that work in divergent contexts to change the relations between social actors in similar fashions. In this respect, the processes I identify are those which appear in each case to mediate the interface of donors and world society to affect the adoption of a security and development policy approach.

Based on this interview data, I identified two primary social processes at work in shaping the interface of donor agencies with world society and the resulting adoption, institutionalization, and refinement of a security and development model in their policy and programming. First, I show how the similar experience of catalytic policy processes help to shape a global agenda shared by donors and leading to adoption of common models of security and development. Second, I demonstrate the important effect that the process of donor agencies asserting autonomy from foreign ministries and the rest of government has in mediating the extent of implementation of a common world society approach related to security and development. Both of these processes account for the similarities and differences found between CIDA, Sida, and USAID in the security and development case and I argue that these processes are critical factors in shaping the diffusion and institutionalization of other world society institutional models globally.

Catalytic Policy Processes

The first process identified by respondents was something I label the Catalytic Policy Process. This process entails an outside discussion or working group activity which drives the internal development of policy within a donor organization to meet a specific deadline or goal. In some respects, this resembles the influence of “epistemic communities” or “expert isomorphism” discussed elsewhere in the literature on global diffusion of institutional models (Babb 2001; Haas 1992; Kogut and Macpherson 2008). For instance, work towards arriving at consensus on a set of guidelines, directives, or statement on a specific policy issue at an international conference or meeting. This process is considered catalytic when it is the primary mover of internal policy discussion or change. In the absence of such an outside process, the donor organization is unlikely to have a position or policy on a given issue. Because of the expectations that the country/organization will come to the international table with a defined position, the outside policy discussions catalyze internal policy development. This may lead to the organization undertaking work in new,

previously untouched areas of policy priority. In such instances, the question of how dedicated or devoted an organization is to initially work in a particular policy area may be called into question, as the main motivation for beginning work on an issue may indeed be simply to have a place at the table amongst its peers, or to not be left behind in an emerging area of concern. This is not to say that afterwards, the result of an outside catalytic policy process cannot be a strongly supported policy that becomes institutionalized within an organization. Indeed, an argument can be made that many new ideas may follow this trajectory within an organization if the driving forces behind them are mostly external to the organization.

In the development assistance sector catalytic policy processes have a number of international venues in which to originate. Chief among these is the DAC, followed by both the UN and the World Bank as alternate points of catalysis. One Canadian respondent highlights the DAC's role in initiating policy discussion:

The process itself is a great *accoucheur* [midwife]. It really helps the countries to actually make a position. Because the first positive impact is that as you reach a process, you suddenly realize that this is an issue which needs to be dealt with. So it forces you to think about your issue. (October 18, 2006)

Describing the DAC process as a midwife when it comes to policy development suggests that preparing for and taking part in DAC discussions, meetings, and preparation of policy guidelines and directives can in essence deliver a new policy position to an agency where it did not exist previously. In this respect, the DAC deliberations and preparation of standards for donors is viewed as catalytic in generating policy development and positions among donors.

Commenting on the influence of the DAC High Level Meeting declaration on Security Sector Reform from 2004, another Canadian respondent stated:

I would say it has [influenced CIDA's policy], but I'm not sure it is so much the declaration itself as it is the process of preparing for the declaration...I think we still would have been doing some things, but there wouldn't have been a driver. There wasn't a lever to say that you have to have this done by this time. And without those sorts of external levers, it continues festering along for a while and there's no real demand internally to resolve it. (April 11, 2006)

The description of the DAC process as a lever on Canadian policy suggests the external influence of the process of contributing to the DAC declaration on security and development had on CIDA. Describing CIDA's participation in the DAC process as a "driver", which pushed the agency beyond its lack of internal demand to resolve the issues, illustrates this respondent's view of the DAC's catalytic role in the security sector question. Without the DAC recommendations in this area, the respondent perceived no "movement" on the issue within CIDA.

When questioned about the DAC's role in shaping the Canadian approach to security and development, another respondent (January 30, 2007) suggested that despite Canada's past work on peacebuilding from a human security perspective, the DAC could be seen to help push CIDA's focus on security and development from its past focus on peacebuilding to a perspective more akin to the DAC position on SSR. This assertion that the DAC process was involved in shaping CIDA policy on the security and development issue lends support to my argument that donor participation in the DAC process of arriving at consensus on the security and development issue actually pushed donors to adopt positions simply so they would have something to bring to the table. Establishing a position on these

issues allowed CIDA to demonstrate that their new models for addressing security and development were in line with agreed upon international standards defined by the DAC.

One American respondent echoes this view of the DAC's catalytic role and reports that there was not an approach to security sector reform in USAID prior to the DAC declaration on the topic in 2004. Instead, the respondent suggests that the DAC guidance on security sector reform allowed for a number of diverse security initiatives throughout the agency to coalesce into a "more comprehensive program" (March 27, 2007). In the view of this respondent, not only did the DAC declaration of April 2004 lead to this coalescing of a SSR program at USAID, but it also was a direct contribution to the creation of a SSR advisor position within the agency in August of that year. This direct connection between DAC influence and agency reaction through implementing policy and assigning human resources to the issue demonstrates this catalytic role of the international declaration and the process involved in arriving at a consensus position among donors.

The implication here is that the DAC and its guidelines can act as a catalytic external influence because donors know that they will be held to account for their activities in newly emerging priority areas such as Security-Sector Reform. This expectation of being policed on adherence to new DAC standards may explain the reason that donors activate policy development in areas that the DAC deems relevant priorities. One Swedish respondent who had formerly worked at the DAC on secondment from Sida discussed the DAC's role in this regard by highlighting the tenuous connection between DAC policy guidelines and the eventual scrutiny being examined by other DAC members in the peer review process:

Now the link between the policy development and the follow-up, that is peer reviews basically, is not clear. It might look so from the outside, but it's not a clear structure on how you're going to monitor the guidelines and the peer reviews. But you will find, say, in the last eight reviews, that...the [DAC] secretariat has tried to cover peace and security issues in a...systematic way. (September 13, 2006)

Despite the absence of a "clear" link, this respondent highlights a definite relationship between the DAC's priority setting and the policing of these priorities among donors. For instance, the peace and security issue emerged in a "systematic" fashion in the DAC peer reviews during the respondent's time at the DAC. The catalytic process of DAC participation for donors thus appears to be inspired by a notional expectation that donors will be scrutinized for their follow-up on specific issues of importance to the DAC.

The same Swedish respondent hinted at how some of this catalytic process of participation within the DAC might work, specifically by describing the role of individual experts participating on the behalf of donors in DAC working groups like the Conflict, Peace, and Development Cooperation network:

[S]ome people get engaged in this [and] it becomes their own sort of *raison d'être*, and a group can have a life of its own almost, and there is no clear end date ...in a way, you can view the process itself as having the interactions among the donors as really that's where you pursue the agenda. (September 13, 2006)

This quote highlights the entrepreneurialism of individual participants in the DAC working groups and how they have the independence and latitude to pursue issues on their own accord. It is this respondent's view that the interactions between donors within the DAC venue is the chief means by which "you pursue the agenda" or set priorities for the donor community.

This process of networking on the stage within international organizations is a key component of the catalytic policy process. This gathering of donor experts coalescing

around security and conflict issues under DAC auspices closely resembles the consensus-building role played by epistemic communities identified in earlier literature on transnational policy formation (Haas 1992; Kogut and Macpherson 2008). Indeed, such networks of experts and their joint work towards consensus positions is indicative of the role of what Babb (2001) calls “expert-isomorphism” within the catalytic policy process. Donor representatives coming together within the DAC context—being forced to formulate legitimate and acceptable positions to share with their expert peers—encourages those experts to reshape their specific agency’s policy on conflict and security to resemble the agreed upon principles developed within the transnational epistemic community of donor experts. Another Swedish respondent highlighted the importance of Sida participation in DAC networks and working groups, suggesting they have a noticeable influence on Sida policy in areas like poverty reduction and security:

Yeah, it has been very influential. Like one example I can give is on the poverty. We used to be very active in the poverty network that presented guidelines on poverty reduction. These were very influential when Sida prepared its own strategy or what you call it, prospectus on poverty. That is just one example... For example, we had a new policy on Conflict, Peace and Development. I think that is also very influenced by the DAC working group. And many others [issues] as well. (September 11, 2006)

The influence of international organizations on nation-state actors within world society have been highlighted repeatedly in the literature (Boli and Thomas 1999; Meyer et al. 1997). The evidence offered by the interview respondents in my three case countries helps to illuminate more deeply how this influence may function. The role of catalytic policy processes initiated within the DAC venue appears to be a powerful driver of policy development and adoption within the three donors I have studied here. Various mechanisms operate within this catalytic process including bureaucratic entrepreneurialism, networking, and both standards setting and policing. All of these mechanisms concatenate into a process which “kick-starts” donors to initiate new or revise existing policy positions on the security and development issue to fall in line with international standards regardless of existing domestic wherewithal or priority attached to the issue. This process is a participatory one, in which donors actively shape the international agenda at the same time as they develop domestic responses and implementation plans to meet it. As noted earlier, the initiatives of the United Kingdom’s Department for International Development to place the security sector reform issue on the DAC agenda began overall donor engagement with this issue (Ball and Hendrickson 2005; Brzoska 2003). The DAC, therefore, is not simply an external force, a *deus ex machina* acting on donors, but instead is an interactive venue where donors indeed establish the external influences which then come to shape their own policy positions on the security and development issue.

Decoupling and Autonomy from Rest of Government

When discussing the security and development approach of donor agencies with interview respondents, the second process that emerged in the data was the nature of the agency’s relationship to the rest of the government, especially the ministry of foreign affairs. Respondents identified the relative level of autonomy a donor agency has from the rest of government as a key characteristic of this relationship. The level of autonomy from the rest of government refers to the nature of the relationship between the bilateral donor arm of a state and the government apparatus. Part of this is due to donor agency structure: Is the donor a sub-unit of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) or is it an arms-length agency

reporting to its own minister or agency head? Degrees of structural autonomy fill the continuum between these two extremes. I will argue that if a donor agency is less autonomous, its policy objectives and aid priorities are more likely to be motivated by national interests of the donor rather than broader humanitarian concerns of development. Conversely, the more autonomous the donor agency, the more likely its motivations and priorities are to be motivated by more altruistic humanitarian interests. The opposition of these two motivations was present in discussing the security issue with many of my respondents and reflects the decades-old debate in the literature pitting self-interest against humanitarianism as the competing motivations of aid. It stands to reason, therefore, that autonomy from the rest of government can fluctuate depending on the policy issue: the more altruistic the issue, the greater the autonomy of the aid agency; the more politically sensitive or pertinent to national interests an issue, the less the autonomy of the donor agency. The degree of autonomy is constantly under negotiation and in flux depending on the topic at hand, and underlines the frequently referred to conflict that tends to exist between aid agencies and MFAs or other government departments reported in many countries. In the event that a world cultural model aligns more closely with national interest of the state/society rather than global humanitarian aims, the degree of autonomy from the rest of government will influence the tightness of coupling of implementation of the model to the model specifications. I will argue that this process of donors exercising varying levels of autonomy can explain the more tightly coupled implementation seen in the Sida and USAID cases, as well as account for the apparent decoupling evident in the case of CIDA.

When respondents were asked about the relationship between the donor agency and the respective foreign ministry regarding security and development issues, respondents highlighted the delicate balance that existed in managing the relationship. When asked about USAID's relationship to the State Department on this issue, one respondent stated:

I think there are times where the development agency and the ministry of foreign affairs are closer together and farther apart and that tends to be cyclical and we are at the point in the cycle where we are much closer together and in fact, all foreign assistance now is being reorganized via our Administrator who is now dual-hatted as the Deputy Secretary of State...At the moment, there's quite a bit of collaboration. (March 27, 2007)

This closer collaboration and the dual role for the USAID administrator were all relatively recent developments. The respondent continued:

This is a tricky topic because the way the US security assistance is generally delivered in a way that creates operational partners to advance US interests. Security Sector Reform and security programming from a development perspective is interested in operational capability but really more so in developing host nation capacity to make decisions about their own security. So those two things are sometimes at odds and sometimes they are complementary. What our approach has been has been to point out that more often than not, they are complementary and that all of the operational training you can give won't be sustainable unless it's done in line with the host nation's requirement and needs. (March 27, 2007)

These competing approaches highlight the tendency of the donor to approach security sector reform from the perspective of advancing recipient country interests, while broader security interests of the US government may or may not be complementary.

These competing motivations also highlight the tensions surrounding donor autonomy from the rest of government in the security and development area. Indeed, in the US case,

the lack of donor agency autonomy from the State Department leads to implementation of a security and development approach which is at the basic level vested with US national security interests. When questioned about which of these competing interests usually dominated, the same respondent suggested:

I guess national security interests always win. I suppose that it does come down to a case by case basis, but you know, given the legislative limitations and the different mandates of the actors on the donor side, responsible for providing related programming, you can have programs going on at the same time. I mean what we're working towards in our program is taking a comprehensive approach, you know, [starting] at the assessment through program design and delivery through monitoring and evaluation, but that's a long way off. In the military parlance of crawl, walk, run...we're crawling. (March 27, 2007)

This comprehensive approach the respondent addresses is a reference to the whole-of-government type of approach that is espoused in the world society models discussed earlier in this paper. The USAID approach to security and development is therefore very heavily influenced by the State Department, the Department of Defense, and other interests in the US Government; within such influence, USAID's approach very closely reflects the world model expectations set for donors. The relative lack of autonomy of USAID from the State Department, in this case, ensures adherence to a world society model that very closely aligns with US national security interests.

The autonomy of the donor agency is also raised by a Swedish respondent, suggesting that it is the nature of the Swedish system to have the decisions made by the MFA while expecting Sida to dutifully implement them:

In a context like the Swedish where you have a Ministry of Foreign Affairs dealing with sort of policy issues and implementation should in theory be carried out by a government office such as Sida, there is also that divide. There's been a lot of cooperation in this field, but there's also been some disconnects sometimes. That can sometimes explain why it takes some time to implement policies. The logic in the Swedish system is rather complex, it goes back a couple hundred years, about the theory that the ministry should be small and focus on instructions for the implementing agencies, who should then carry out, and they should be quite independent. But in the role of Sida, it's been slightly complicated sometimes. I don't want to overemphasize this, but in an area like this [security] and human rights, it's very hard to draw the line what's clear foreign policy and its implementation. (September 13, 2006)

As the implementing agency, Sida is deemed by this respondent to be quite independent, but rather than creating its own policy and priorities, it is a policy-receiving organization much like USAID. In this respect, the MFA plays an important role in the Swedish system to help set policy for the development assistance agency. This same respondent highlighted this close relationship in discussing the first Sida policy on conflict and development:

[T]he first policy was also sort of a platform for the cooperation between Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Sida in this field. It provided input to what the Ministry then picked up as the policy area which they took forward into the DAC when [it] set up the first task force [on Conflict, Peace, and Development Cooperation]... (September 13, 2006)

In the Swedish case, therefore, the role of the MFA in setting policy had a major influence on the nature of the Sida policy on conflict. To highlight the important role of the

MFA in contributing to policy development in this area, it should be noted that, the main Swedish representative at the time on the DAC Conflict, Peace, and Development Cooperation was an officer of the MFA and not a Sida representative. This relationship still exists in the Swedish case, and Sida's Peace and Security group view their policy mandate as stemming not only from the Sida policy on those issues, but also more broadly with how the security and development issue have been framed in the 2003 Policy for Global Development.

A Canadian respondent echoed the importance of CIDA's autonomy from the Department of Foreign Affairs in shaping the response to security and development:

I think the difference was that human security came through as more of a Foreign Affairs, purely diplomatic, initiative. It wasn't viewed as responding to development issues. It was viewed as an external view—from a Foreign Affairs perspective—on what needed to be done, but it wasn't bottom up, participatory, democratic, developmentally oriented etc. For the security stuff...it wasn't so much of a unilateral push...so I think there was a lot more interest. (April 11, 2006)

According to this respondent, in the Canadian case the relative autonomy CIDA has from the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade (Pratt 1994) allowed the organization to sidestep the human security agenda to some extent because it was perceived as not having a developmental orientation. At the same time, when the move to address more conventional security issues rose to prominence on the international agenda, this evolution of security and development concerns had greater appeal to certain groups within CIDA as it was not branded as a Foreign Affairs initiative in the early stages.

Another respondent highlighted how the divergent and competing interests of different government departments influenced Canadian participation in the international discussions at the DAC on security, development, and ODA (Official Development Assistance):

You know, you had the development view and then you had a foreign policy view—DND [Department of National Defence] weren't real players, but there were parts of Foreign Affairs who definitely wanted to see ODA opened up so that some of these peacekeeping/peacebuilding activities would be affordable. And so you have the spectrum and it took a while...It was a compromise and we were certainly in an awkward position because [Canada] was chairing and so [Canada] had to remain somewhat neutral, but then we had Canadians at the flag and we had that dynamic between CIDA and Foreign Affairs and CIDA had the lead on Foreign Affairs. So there was a bit of an internal pushing and shoving about coming up with a Canadian position. But it was a healthy debate and I think we ended up with a common position because of it. (January 30, 2007)

These divergent views and the "pushing and shoving" involved in coming up with a Canadian position, demonstrate the relative autonomy of CIDA on these issues in contrast to USAID and Sida. That CIDA is at liberty to have a different viewpoint than DFAIT and DND illustrates that its autonomy from the rest of government in this case has actually enabled it to adopt a position which, in fact, demonstrates a diminished level of implementation of the security and development model outlined earlier in this paper. Without DFAIT pushing CIDA to adopt a strong system to implement the SSR agenda and other conflict and development issues, CIDA has instead taken an approach to the issue which is only loosely coupled to the principles they agreed to in the donor statement from the 2004 DAC High Level Meeting. One respondent suggested that CIDA had not taken these issues very seriously, and attributed this partially to the absence of DFAIT or other

government department leadership on the issue, as well as the general lack of coordination between departments at the more senior level:

In sum, I don't believe that we've taken the DAC guidance in this area very seriously even though we've participated in its development and a lot of that—some of that—may be to do internally. It also has to do with the fact that other government departments really don't have a strong sense of what this DAC guidance is all about. I don't think the Department of Foreign Affairs fully, you know, [there's] a lot of rotation through there. You don't have a lot of continuity and certainly I don't believe the central agencies are fully up to speed on what the content of some of this stuff is and there's only so many hours in the day. I've tried to kind of reach out and talk to people a little bit more, but the fora for these kind of things—it happens at the very senior levels of government, at the deputy minister level, maybe even occasionally at the DG level. It doesn't actually happen and it's difficult to spontaneously get it going at the analyst level and it's because we're tasked by other people to do other things. Also, we don't really have the authority to convene anything that has any kind of weight. (February 6, 2007)

This respondent highlights the difficulties of managing the relationship with other government departments, identifying the frustrations that can face the donor agency analyst who does not feel senior management is leading on an issue.. This respondent's frustrations with the inability to achieve something that "has any kind of weight" in the security and development area at CIDA is reflective of CIDA's indifferent treatment of the issue at the corporate level and the subsequent decoupling of CIDA's implementation from the intent of the SSR model. Indeed, in Canada, DFAIT can arguably be seen to lead activity on the security and development issue—especially the SSR issue—through newly formed funds and organizational units within that Department. This reduction in role for CIDA in delivering aid in the SSR area is reflected in the decline in the percentage of Canadian security-related aid disbursed by the agency. Disbursed aid fell from a high of 85% of conflict-related aid in fiscal year 2004–2005 to only 24% of the same aid by 2008–2009 (CIDA 2009, 2010). As CIDA's share of delivery or security-related aid has declined, DFAIT's has increased substantially. In this sense, CIDA's relative autonomy from the rest of government and DFAIT has allowed its senior management to avoid implementation of a rigorous approach to security and development at the same time that DFAIT has been very active in SSR as a means of furthering Canadian interests. In light of this autonomy, it is only in the very pressing or high profile country-by-country cases where CIDA's autonomy from DFAIT is diminished and a more comprehensive approach to security and development issues is taken—something demonstrated in recent research on CIDA's experience with programming in Afghanistan (Brown 2008). Where CIDA's autonomy is reduced, the implementation of the model becomes more closely coupled to the global norms and expectations of the donor community around the SSR priority.

Another respondent suggested reluctance by CIDA to enter into the SSR programming in an integrated fashion, as there is a perception that it runs contrary to CIDA's culture of developmentalism. As such, much of the work on this in the Canadian system has fallen to DFAIT:

In terms of Canada, security system reform is very much right now on the Foreign Affairs side of things and they have responsibility for advancing that area with the creation of START and the Global Peace and Security Fund. It has not, as I said, traditionally been part of the CIDA culture and so often when they [CIDA] talk about security, they talk about justice... We've done those kinds of things, but we haven't, as I said, integrated this. (February 6, 2007)

From this perspective, CIDA has had the latitude to not integrate SSR concerns intensively into its programming and policy, and from a broader Canadian perspective this has been sufficient to meet international expectations on Canada, as DFAIT has undertaken SSR work in a more formal manner. CIDA's autonomy from DFAIT in this regard has contributed to the decoupling of Canadian positions at the DAC from the actual implementation of work in the same area.

Autonomy from the rest of government, and in particular the respective ministries of foreign affairs, appears to have played a significant role in all three cases in determining the extent of the implementation—or degree of decoupling—of a recognizable world society security and development model in each country. The lesser autonomy of the donor agency in both Sweden and the United States appears to have yielded a more effective and tightly-coupled application of the security and development model set forth in the DAC guidelines on the subject. Conversely, CIDA's relative autonomy from DFAIT and the rest of the Canadian government has allowed CIDA to proceed with a much less intensive, less comprehensive, and decoupled treatment of the issue within its overall policy and programming frameworks. This is reflected both in the overall percentage of aid allocated to conflict, peace, and security by each donor. For instance, OECD DAC statistics for each country's aid flows shows that from 2005 to 2007, 1.8% of Sweden's aid and 3% of American aid was categorised as being related to conflict, peace and security. In contrast, in the same period, Canada only devoted 1.1% of its aid on these priorities (OECD 2010). Though this might appear to be only a slight difference in percentage between Sweden and the Canada, this amounted to more than US\$83 million in additional spending by Sweden over the three years. These figures hint at the lesser priority placed on the security objective by Canada, and indeed the lesser translation of that priority into actual aid spending. The ability to exercise greater autonomy from the rest of government on these issues appears in the Canadian case to have encouraged a decoupling of policy from practice. Canada did support and agree to the international declarations made at the DAC and contributed to the guidelines that subsequently followed, yet CIDA has not taken a strong stance on these issues internally. DFAIT has instead taken the lead on SSR issues and, despite not being a traditional aid implementing agency, is funding the majority of Canadian programming in this area (CIDA 2010).

Greater autonomy from the MFA and rest of government appears in the cases examined here to permit a donor agency to deviate from a world society model of development assistance that may be more in line with national interests rather than developmental or humanitarian concerns.³ This suggests the need to examine this process in the context of other priorities that are fundamentally more humanitarian in nature and less directly linked to national interests. If, for instance, we consider the priority of gender and development for our three country cases, this process of asserting autonomy might also be seen to function as expected. CIDA's greater autonomy allows for a more liberal application of gender and development models, whereas USAID's lesser autonomy inhibits its approaches to gender. Sida, in contrast, is encouraged to pursue the gender and development specifically because of its lesser autonomy and the key place of gender equality values in Swedish public policy. This suggests that a more thorough exploration of how these processes work is merited in future research.

³ An interesting contradiction to this finding that must be acknowledged here is that in the case of the United Kingdom's Department for International Development (DFID), its general autonomy was likely responsible for the UK taking a vanguard role in pioneering the integration of SSR into British aid programming. In this respect, relative autonomy of DFID would appear to enable innovation around engaging on an issue that, at the time, was unconventional for aid donors to address and more closely reflected national security interests.

Conclusion

This comparative case study of security and development in three countries shows that there are common social processes which account for some of the striking similarities in the application of security and development models in each donor agency. At the same time, these processes can account for the distinct differences demonstrated among the three donors. Both the catalytic policy processes inspired by international activities within the DAC and the process of asserting agency autonomy from national governments are evident in my data as shaping how specific donors have taken up the recent move towards security sector reform and mainstreaming a security and development approach in development assistance. This case study highlights two important processes which can help to explain the international influences of the world society on nation-state institutional and policy models—especially in the development assistance sector. Considering the presence of catalytic events and declarations, or the mediating process of the internal autonomy of nation-state actors from the rest of government, both become significant explanatory processes to consider when discerning the influence of world society models on independent states.

The processes I have identified are suitable additions to world society explanations of the spread and adoption of common policies and institutional frameworks among nation-states. Though not exhaustive in their explanation of the phenomenon of policy isomorphism among development assistance donors, these processes are clearly implicated in the interface of world society and the nation-state leading to greater uniformity among states. These processes arguably can be extended beyond the development assistance sector to more broadly explain homogeneity of nation-state policies and institutions in other sectors—a matter for future research into this area. Within this broader context, future researchers might address whether some countries more easily influenced via these processes than others, examining the permeability of various countries to world society influence.

My findings on autonomy processes hint at one explanation of this permeability and shed new light on the role of the nation-state in world society. World society research has tended to focus on states as nodes in a broader network of model diffusion. In this view, states simply adopt models and norms leading to global isomorphism. The process of autonomy of state-level institutions revealed here suggests that the nation-state actually plays a mediating or translating role between world society and various state-level agencies and organizations. Nation-states can “adopt” the models or norms, but the extent to which organizations within the state are autonomous from the central government mediates how tightly coupled implementation of these norms are to the model itself. Greater autonomy of organizations may in this way lead to increased decoupling from global norms or policy models. In this context, the nation-state becomes a conduit for the adoption of global norms, but it is the autonomy of lower-level agencies that actually determines how tightly coupled these norms are to their implementation.

If the state is viewed as a conduit in this way, it suggests we need to question the nature of the relationship between state and world society further. This relationship is not as clearly demarcated as past research might suggest. Delineating between world society and nation-state actors becomes increasingly difficult when one considers intergovernmental bodies and their role in the world society. The OECD DAC under consideration in this study is a prime example where disentangling what is world society and what is nation-state agency becomes difficult. Teasing out these distinctions requires further investigation. Indeed, extending research on world society in these directions would surely unearth other

social processes implicated in how world society influences the nation-state, organizations, and individuals, and perhaps provide more insight into how nation-states, organizations, and individuals iteratively influence world society.

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