



INDONESIA'S TECHNICAL EDUCATION AID TO KENYA: A SOUTH-SOUTH COOPERATION PERSPECTIVE

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Abstract

South-South Cooperation (SSC) has become a structurally different form of development that is a challenge to the conditionality-based structures of North-South aid. This paper discusses the technical education assistance given by Indonesia to Kenya as a development diplomacy tool in the SSC context, filling a literature gap on how Southern donors use education assistance as a soft power and public diplomacy instrument. Based on qualitative documentary analysis of policy reports, institutional documentation, and peer-reviewed literature, 2009-2025, the study explores three dimensions of analysis: the institutional architecture of SSC in education in Indonesia, how technical education partnerships are aligned with the industrialization agenda of Kenya Vision 2030 and the soft power politics inherent in Indonesian involvement as an emerging Southern donor. The results show that the Indonesian technical education aid, in the form of scholarships, TVET capacity-building, and bilateral memoranda of understanding is a demand responsive, sovereignty-respecting model that fulfills Kenya-reported skills shortage and serves Indonesia development diplomacy goals. This work advances both constructivist explanations of SSC and the literature on public diplomacy by developing technical education as an analytically meaningful yet under-researched tool of Southern Unity.

Keywords: development diplomacy; industrialization; South-South Cooperation; technical education aid

Introduction

Since the turn of the twenty-first century, the world architecture of development assistance has been significantly transformed in its structure. Conventional North-South aid flows, which have long been criticized on the grounds of their entrenching conditionality on the part of donors, and their promotion of the geopolitical interests of industrialized states, have been complemented by South-South Cooperation (SSC), a form of development modality based on solidarity, horizontal interaction, and non-interference among developing countries (Gray & Gills, 2016). This change has brought in a group of new development actors whose donor behavior cannot be reduced to either pure altruism or simple self-interest, and whose institutional practices defy the prevailing theoretical paradigms by which foreign aid has historically been seen.

According to classical realist scholarship, it was already a fact that foreign aid was a tool of statecraft. Morgenthau (1962) showed that aid in its various forms such as economic, military, technical, and humanitarian aid, is a platform where the donor states exercise influence, consolidate strategic alignments, and advancement of the national interests in the international system. Milner & Tingley (2010) also supported this argument by showing that the distribution of aid is more dependent on domestic political calculations and international geopolitical ambitions than on developmental needs.

Classical realist literature defined foreign aid as a tool of statecraft by its essence. Although this framework still has explanatory value in the process of traditional donor behavior, it falls short of explaining the motivations and practices of the emerging Southern donors whose identities and interests are formed by different historical paths and normative commitments based on shared post-colonial experience.

South-South Cooperation is a qualitatively different development paradigm. Based on the principles of sovereign equality, non-conditionality, and demand-responsiveness, SSC acts in horizontal partnership, as opposed to vertical dependency (Gray & Gills, 2016). This difference has acquired a new analytical urgency in the era of classic USAID defunding, the United States has already cut its USAID programs by about 80%, and major European economies have already made successive budget cuts to their official development aid (Dreher et al., 2024). This structural vacuum has resulted in opportunity and normative pressure on the middle-income emerging economies to re-adjust their positions in the international development system.

Indonesia holds a unique role in this changing situation. Being both a recipient and provider of development cooperation, Indonesia has increasingly institutionalised its SSC involvement over the decades. This tendency has a long historical background dating back to the convening of the 1955 Bandung Asia-Africa Conference, which established the ideological foundations of South-South solidarity, organized by Indonesia, which were further solidified by the 1992 Non-Aligned Movement summit in Jakarta, which gave rise to the NAM Center for South-South Technical Cooperation (NAM CSSTC) in 1995 (National Coordination Team of SSTC, 2015). This commitment has been institutionalized through 2010 in the National Coordination Team of South-South and Triangular Cooperation (NCT-SSTC) and 2019 in the Indonesian Agency of International Development (Indonesian AID) (OECD, 2025). Hutabarat (2022) describes Indonesia as orienting its engagement in SSC as a form of development diplomacy that both supports the Sustainable Development Goals and strengthens its position as an international actor as a responsible South partner, making Indonesia analytically interesting to the study of how emerging donors use aid as a public diplomacy tool.

Kenya is a strategically interesting case of studying Indonesian SSC within the technical education sphere. The multiple educational reforms in the country, starting with the 7-4-2-3 model and then the 8-4-4 model and recently the 2-6-3-3 Competency-Based Curriculum (CBC), can be seen as an ongoing attempt to align the human capital formation with the requirements of the Vision 2030, the map that Kenya has to trace to become an industrialized country with middle-income levels (Mathenge et al., 2024). However, a World Bank Group (2024) evaluation confirms underlying structural inefficiencies, low uptake of TVET, large skills mismatch in the formal labor market and lack of institutional capacity to teach competency-based learning. The institutionalization of bilateral relations, the opening of an embassy in Jakarta in March 2022, which follows the presence of the Indonesian embassy in Nairobi since 1982 and the ensuing signing of memoranda of understanding in the areas of education, ICT, agriculture, and industrialization, give the formal context within which this research is framed.

Although SSC is increasingly becoming a subject of scholarly interest as a development modality, the literature has focused mainly on infrastructure funding, trade relations, and the general frameworks of diplomacy (Gray & Gills, 2016; Heryadi et al., 2024). Technical education assistance as a tool of soft power and public diplomacy in

bilateral SSC relations, and its empirical input to national industrialization policies, has had relatively little analytical coverage. This is especially evident in works on Indonesian-African relations, where the impetus to analysis has been skewed toward political economy and diplomatic history rather than the education-development nexus. Moreover, constructivist explanations of SSC have failed to sufficiently explain how education cooperation serves as an identity-making and normative-alignment mechanism among Southern states.

The paper fills that gap by exploring the way the Indonesian technical education assistance to Kenya functions as a development diplomacy tool under the SSC model. Precisely, it explores the institutional processes by which Indonesian education aid is provided, how such processes can be adjusted to the Kenya agenda of Vision 2030, and how soft power influences the nature of Indonesia as an aspiring donor in the South. The study adds to the SSC and development diplomacy literatures by showing that technical education aid, when demand-responsive, institutionally entrenched, and respectful of sovereignty, is a unique and analytically important tool of Southern solidarity.

Methodology

Literature Review

Constructivist theory describes the social construction of state interests and identities within the international system. Wendt (1999) states that the conduct of states is influenced not just by material power, but also by collective ideas, norms and identities, which are created through social interactions. In this frame, the policy of South-South cooperation can be reflected in the way Indonesia is being framed as an ally of developing nations that aim at mutual collaboration.

The foreign policy in this context is seen as an international order in which the key analysis in global political life is the state, the key structures of state systems are thought to be inter-subjective rather than material, and it is thought that interest and identities of the state are significant constituent of the created these social structure rather than a particular foreign construct to the systems created by domestic politics or human nature. The SSC implementation in Indonesia could be interpreted as an identity that constructs itself as a partner in solidarity with the government in other developing countries. Besides, the plan offers developing countries the opportunity to exchange experiences and what

Indonesia offers to its collaborative work with other low-income countries. Hutabarat (2022) also observe that the measures outlined by Indonesia assist in enhancing the already positive image of Indonesia to facilitate international development and more specifically, the development in accordance with the Sustainable Development Goals 2030. In this respect, South-South cooperation of Indonesia can also represent more general national interests and economic diplomacy policies.

The vision 2030 of Kenya will be realized by ensuring that there is the right manpower with the right skills that can be able to meet the market demand. Thus, Kenya has been able to strategically ally with Indonesia to make sure that it meets its objective of Industrialization and development through the availability of strong human resources. As such, this increasing population of right skills guarantees that the developing nations are being realigned so as to provide support to one another due to the historic and current common problems hence the model applied is more realistic than the global north model. It has also been argued among scholars that global international relations is increasingly becoming a pluralistic world in which regional actors and developing states assume a more active role in the formation of international norms and cooperation structures (Acharya, 2014). This view underscores the increasing role of new economies like Indonesia in redefining development partnerships in terms of South-South cooperation initiatives.

Research Method

Design

The research design adopted in this study is a qualitative research design based on documentary analysis as theorized by Bowen (2009) who makes document analysis a scientific process of reviewing and assessing written texts to evoke meaning, build up on understanding and come up with empirical knowledge. The methodology is epistemologically suitable to this question since the main evidentiary foundation, which is the institutional policy reports, governmental cooperation reports, multilateral agency reports, and peer-reviewed scholarship is the material in which the SSC framework of Indonesia and its technical education interaction with Kenya can be rigorously charted and understood. The interpretive orientation is based on Creswell & Poth (2017) who

support qualitative inquiry as a research method that relies more on contextual insight and analytic depth than statistical generalization.

Unit of Analysis and Data Collection

The choice of the source was controlled by purposive sampling and clear inclusion and exclusion criteria. The main criterion was that the documents had to address at least one of the following criteria: they directly addressed the policy of South-South cooperation and institutional architecture in Indonesia; they discussed technical education assistance within the SSC frameworks; they presented empirical or institutional data on educational reform agenda and Kenya education reform trajectory; or they reported on Indonesian-Kenyan bilateral cooperation mechanisms. Documents were filtered out that mainly concern the North-South ODA relationship without a comparative relevance to the SSC, or that were published prior to the formalization of the Indonesian formal SSC architecture in 2010. There is a resultant corpus of peer-reviewed journal articles, official government and multilateral organization reports (and OECD, World Bank, and NCT-SSTC publications), bilateral cooperation records, and conference proceedings, 2009-2025.

Data Analysis

The data analysis was carried out in three cycles according to the Bowen (2009) document analysis protocol. The first step involved a preliminary review of documents to determine relevance, scope and usefulness in analysis. Systematic open coding was used in the second stage to discover common patterns within the corpus of documents, which included three dimensions of analysis: the institutional development of the SSC system in Indonesia; the process of providing technical education support to Kenya; and the soft power and public diplomacy aspects within the cooperation. At the third step, preliminary codes were grouped together using thematic classification into three main analytic themes which frame the Results and Discussion sections.

Trustworthiness

Trustworthiness was conceptualized as consisting of four criteria based on the framework of Lincoln et al. (1985). Triangulation of different types of documents and institutional

sources was used to build credibility. Systematic documentation of analytical decisions at every phase of the coding process was used to ensure dependability. The transferability was also performed by explicit theorization of results applicable to similar SSCs associations outside of the Indonesia-Kenya dyad. Confirmability was operationalized by basing all interpretive assertions on documentary evidence, and findings were based on data as opposed to the researcher's inclination.

Result and Discussion

A Global Change in Aid Architecture: The Emergence of South-South Cooperation

The modern global development landscape has been restructuring in the sense that the SSC has become a plausible alternative to the North-South aid model (Heryadi et al., 2024). The conventional model of development assistance, where Development Assistance Committee (DAC) donors have played a dominant role in acting as providers of development assistance through conditionality-based models, has been increasingly criticized due to its limited structural impact and the fact that it tends to cement dependency relationships within recipient states (Gray & Gills, 2016). It is against this backdrop that institutional traction of the SSC model has been a framework based on experience in joint development, horizontal knowledge sharing and responsive program design.

This transformation is expressed through the education policy reforms that the emerging economies in the Global South have undertaken. The case of Indonesia is exemplary: systematic changes in the Ministry of Education and Culture, such as new rules on curriculum development, institutional accreditation and quality assurance have been associated with the *Merdeka Belajar* (Freedom to Learn) model, promoting the reorganization of higher education to improve competence and internationalization (Heryadi et al., 2024). Although *Merdeka Belajar* was not created with the main aim of using it as an SSC tool, its focus on institutional change has shaped how Indonesia has approached knowledge transfer partnerships with Southern states to generate an internally consistent development model that serves as transferable technical cooperation content.

Internationalization of higher education in the Global South has also changed its orientation significantly. According to Zhang (张靖佶) & Wu (吴寒天) (2025), the new

standards and practices in intra-Southern higher education partnerships, which are more focused on sustainability and regional knowledge networks than the replication of Northern academic paradigms, appear. Wu & Zha (2018) differentiate outward-based internationalization strategies, which are employed by emerging economies that aim at increasing their international presence, and inward-based approaches chosen by less-developed Southern states that aim to build domestic capacities by engaging in external alliances. This typology can be applied analytically to situate the education diplomacy of Indonesia: since Indonesia is an emerging economy and a middle-income country, it is in the outward-oriented category, using education partnerships to produce soft power and provide partner states with substantive capacity-building advantages.

Indonesia's Institutional Architecture for SSC in Technical Education

The involvement of Indonesia in South-South Cooperation is not accidental, but it is an inbuilt part of the foreign policy identity. The SSC framework was officially institutionalized as part of Indonesian foreign policy in the Medium-Term Development Plan (RPJMN) 2010-2014 as shown by Hutabarat (2022). In 2010, the creation of the NCT-SSTC, which included the coordination of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the National Development Planning Agency (Bappenas), the Ministry of State Secretariat, and the Ministry of Finance, offered the administrative framework of ongoing bilateral interaction (National Coordination Team of SSTC, 2015). The further institutionalization of the Indonesian institutional capacity as a development cooperation provider was further consolidated by the subsequent establishment of the International Development Cooperation Fund (LDKPI) operationalized by the Indonesian Aid in 2019.

The SSC portfolio of Indonesia is geographically diverse covering African partners such as Sudan, Algeria, Namibia, Tanzania, and Democratic Republic of Congo, and Asian states such as Cambodia, Laos and Nepal, and Central Asian Republics under agriculture cooperation programs co-financed with the Islamic Development Bank (National Coordination Team of SSTC, 2015). Djarwono et al. (2025) describe this breadth as a strategic use of SSC by Indonesia as a foreign policy tool to meet the Sustainable Development Goals that integrates development efficacy and international engagements to create international legitimacy and bilateral influence.

Table 1. Key Institutional Milestones and Educational Programs in Indonesia's SSC Framework

Initiative/ Milestone	Year	Scope/Focus Area
Bandung Asia-Africa Conference	1955	Ideological foundations of South-South solidarity among developing nations
NAM CSSTC established	1995	Agriculture, health, SME development, ICT, environment — thematic SSC cooperation
NCT-SSTC established	2010	Inter-ministerial SSC coordination; formal integration into RPJMN development plan
Indonesian AID/ LDKPI established	2019	International development financing agency; consolidates Indonesia's role as aid provider
Indonesia-Kenya bilateral MOUs	2022–present	Education and human resources, TVET, ICT, agriculture, industrialization, affordable healthcare
Indonesian Scholarship Programs	Ongoing	Higher education and TVET scholarships for Kenyan and other Southern partner students

Source: Compiled from National Coordination Team of SSTC (2015); OECD (2025); Hutabarat (2022); Heryadi et al. (2024)

Kenya's Presence in Indonesian Education Aid: Mechanisms and Vision 2030 Alignment

The World Bank Group (2024) report on the education system in Kenya confirms the structural problem that has sparked the involvement of Indonesia, although enrolment in primary schools is at record highs, learning outcomes, especially in numeracy, technical literacy and vocational skills, are low in relation to the labour market needs. The number of graduates of secondary schools with the competencies needed to enroll productively in TVET is about 10% (Mathenge et al., 2024). Unemployment among young people and chronic skills mismatch are important issues of governance that have direct implications on the industrialization targets of Vision 2030 (Government of Kenya, 2007). These reported shortages characterize the demand-responsive gap in which the technical education aid in Indonesia functions.

The opening of the Kenya embassy in Jakarta in March 2022 has more than a diplomatic formality and analytical significance. The 4-decade history of the relationship has been characterized by the Indonesian maintenance of an embassy in Nairobi, which has been an asymmetry in the relationship, limiting the institutional mutuality that

successful SSC structures demand to deliver programs over time. The move by Kenya to reciprocate is a structural enhancement of the bilateral relationship and this is an indication of political commitment to the relationship in the upper hierarchy of foreign policy. This institutional symmetry is especially important to education cooperation: it makes it easy to Kenya-side own program design, monitoring and evaluation, the thin institutional basis that Heryadi et al. (2024) identify as a precondition to reduce educational exchange into the long-term developmental implications. The framework of multi-sectoral MOU that followed including education, TVET, ICT, agriculture, industrialization and health care is also reminiscent of the logic of integrated human capital development underlying Vision 2030, where industrialization is not the sole economic object but the outcome of the joint investment in education, technology and institutional capacity.

The support provided by Indonesia helps Kenya to overcome the reported skills shortage in several channels that are mutually reinforcing. The Kenyan students and TVET instructors are given access to Indonesian institutions of higher education and vocational training under scholarship programs, which develop personal competency and transferable institutional knowledge. According to Heryadi et al. (2024), the success of SSC education interventions is highly reliant on the level of demand-oriented and institutionally-grounded initiatives rooted in local systems. The Kenya-Indonesia cooperation framework exhibits both features: its alignment with the 2-6-3-3 Competency-Based Curriculum reform and Vision 2030 human capital development pillar shows that Indonesian aid is addressing structurally determined needs, and not to the supply-side institutional preferences of Indonesia. The framework also includes the credential recognition and domestic skills market alignment mechanisms that transform the educational exchange into the economically deployable human capital and the translation gap which has historically limited the effect of North-South scholarship programs.

The elevated education and technical training in South-South Cooperation have become a prominent aspect of Indonesian foreign policy precisely because it is at the crossroads of two analytically different logics: development diplomacy and projection of soft power. Wu & Zha (2018) note that internationalization of higher education in emerging economies plays both inward and outward roles, which are domestic

institutional capacity building and international projection of influence. The relationship between Indonesia and Kenya puts this twofold logic into tangible institutional practice, and the soft power theory and constructivism offer the most fruitful approaches according to which its importance can be discussed.

The theoretical framework to explain the involvement of Indonesia is the concept of soft power introduced by Nye, Jr. (2008) and it suggests the ability to shape the behavior and preferences of other people by means of attraction and co-optation, not coercion and material enticement. Technical education aid in Kenya by Indonesia creates soft power in three interdependent mechanisms. First, it establishes Indonesia as a valid and plausible development model in the minds of Kenyan policymakers, scholars, and students, a country that is a Southern state and has already undergone the middle-income transition and has knowledge that is institutionally transferable. Second, it creates positive attitudes towards Indonesia in the next generation of technocratic and professional elites in Kenya, the generation most apt to influence long-term bilateral relations. Third, it institutionalizes the continuity of cooperation relationships that generate structural interdependence, entrenching the bilateral partnership in the enduring structures of institutional frameworks, but not the cycle of transactional programs.

The education cooperation of Indonesia has aspects of the analysis as a field of its public diplomacy. Nye, Jr. (2008) differentiates between government-to-government diplomatic communication, strategic communication and the development of lasting relationships through civil society, cultural and educational interactions, the latter of which, he argues, is the most enduring and fruitful source of soft power, precisely because it is conducted underneath the framework of official political relations. The Indonesian scholarship schemes and TVET collaboration with Kenya create a particular type of soft power resource: a professional and technocratic community of Kenyan graduates with first-hand experience of Indonesian development practices, institutional culture, and problem-solving strategies. This network forms the exchange aspect of public diplomacy, an investment in long-term reciprocal understanding whose payoffs are not seen in annual program cycles but decades. With Kenyan scholarship graduates in government ministries, TVET institutions and the business world, they bring with them not just technical skills but also dispositions towards the Indonesian as a plausible developmental partner, creating the types of long-term reputational capital that no amount of official

communications can replace. This people-to-people aspect is the constitutive element of what Hutabarat (2022) refers to as the Indonesian deliberate policy of promoting the image of Indonesia on the international level via SSC the effect of which is gauged not by diplomatic messages but by the aggregate perceptions of thousands of people whose professional identity was formed by Indonesian institutions.

To enhance the analytical uniqueness of the SSC education model in Indonesia, it is illuminating to place it in a comparative context with the Chinese and Indian educational cooperation models of the South. Although on a large scale, China has been criticized on its activities in African education in the context of a larger Belt and Road Initiative logic, in which scholarship programs and institutional collaborations are connected to the financing of infrastructures, technology transfer deals, and business relations, a bundling that, as Cheru (2017) notes in the case of Ethiopia-China, makes it difficult to distinguish between developmental and strategic-commercial activities. The Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation (ITEC) plan of India is more comparable to the Indonesian model in its focus on transfer of technical skills and institutional capacity-building; but its simultaneous provision to over 160 partner countries spread the bilateral richness and responsiveness to local demand characteristic of Indonesia's local involvement with Kenya.

There are three features of the Indonesian model which are not replicated by the Chinese or the Indian models: institutional depth in a limited bilateral focus; explicit alignment with the national planning models of the partner state as opposed to Indonesian export interests and anchoring on a common post-colonial identity that can create a normative legitimacy in African SSC settings that cannot be replicated with the same plausibility by states that bear their own regional hegemon This comparative framing implies that the SSC education model provided in Indonesia is not a smaller version of bigger programs in the South, but a qualitatively different framework that is based on relational level rather than programmatic scale.

In the constructivist view, as developed by Wendt (1999), the SSC participation in Indonesia is also the construction of international identity. By establishing itself as a solidarity partner, and not a traditional donor-state, Indonesia is a specific international identity, based on common post-colonial experience and general developmental goals, normatively different both to Northern donor models and infrastructure-financing models

of certain other Southern actors. The operationalization of this identity construction is materialized in the non-conditional, demand-responsive structure of the bilateral cooperation format, which instantiates the principle of sovereign equality and mutual benefit of the SSCs in the institutional practice, not just proclaims them rhetorically.

The SSC engagement of Indonesia, as Hutabarat (2022) notes, is shaped to improve its global image and development outcomes, as well as aligned with the SDGs convergence of national interest and normative commitment that defines the most institutionally consistent relationships between Southern donors. The inclusion of educational cooperation in the Kenyan Vision 2030 framework represents a larger point regarding the connection between education and industrialization in the context of the SSC. In the SSC model, education is both an instrument of foreign policy and a way to develop industry as Djarwono et al. (2025) say. The Indonesia-Kenya collaboration realizes this logic by focusing on the definite gaps in human capital that planning documents in Kenya have recognized as constricting factors to the implementation of Vision 2030. This demand-based orientation will not create the structural discontinuity between the priorities of the donor and the needs of the recipients that has continued to constrain the effectiveness of the North-South technical assistance programs in development.

The SSC model in Indonesia is structurally different in four basic aspects than the traditional donor models. First, it is non-conditioned: aid is not given subject to policy changes, institutional regulation or political affiliation. Second, it is demand-driven, not supply-driven: the cooperation agenda is based on the stated development priorities of Kenya, as opposed to the strategic interests of Indonesia as an exporter. Third, it places education cooperation in a wider normative context of solidarity and shared identity that creates long-lasting bilateral relations instead of transactional aid relations. Fourth, and possibly most theoretically important, the model of education diplomacy in Indonesia is self-reflexively based on the experience of development as a state that successfully passed the middle-income threshold which Indonesia had gone through earlier in its developmental history, a source of normative credibility and experience authenticity neither Northern donors nor states at an earlier stage of development can imitate.

This experiential aspect makes up the peer-learning nature of SSC, and it is what most distinctly separates the Indonesia experience as compared to the inherent

asymmetric nature of the knowledge-transfer processes of traditional North-South technical assistance. Collectively, these four characteristics make up what can be termed educational diplomacy- a unique form of public diplomacy that is best-suited to the institutional strengths and normative promises of mid-income Southern donors. Another level of analysis is the scalability of the Indonesia-Kenya education partnership with triangular cooperation mechanisms - an aspect that makes the Indonesia SSC model stand out against bilateral engagements and enhances its developmental capabilities. Triangular cooperation is defined as a pivoted country of the South offering technical knowledge and expertise to another Southern state and co-financed and administered by a classic Northern donor or an international organization.

The feasibility of this model has already been proven in Indonesia through its agricultural cooperation programs that were co-financed with the Islamic Development Bank (National Coordination Team of SSTC, 2015). The Indonesia-Africa Infrastructure Dialogue (IAID) and the Indonesia-Africa Forum (IAF) offer institutional avenues under which the bilateral education collaboration with Kenya may be advanced into a triangular structure, with Northern co-financing and maintaining the ownership of the Indonesian content of technical materials and the normative SSC framing. The analytical importance of this triangular dimension is that it implies that the education diplomacy model in Indonesia does not need to be bound by the resource constraints that often limit middle-income Southern donors; instead, it can utilize the source of comparative advantage, institutional knowledge, development credibility, and normative legitimacy, in an architecture of co-financing in a multilateral form. This scalability argument counters the implicit assumption of much SSC literature that Southern donors are engaged in a zero-sum game with traditional ODA channels, and instead, conjectures about a complementary architecture where SSC supplies the developmental content and relation structure, and triangular financing mechanisms supply the resource base to scale programs.

It is worth noting, though, that the use of this model is not without conditions. Heryadi et al. (2024) note that the achievement of sustainable SSC education necessitates effective program monitoring, strong market alignment of domestic skills, and viable credential recognition systems. The present Indonesia-Kenya model, although institutionally appealing, is still in its infancy and the process of converting bilateral

MOUs into program delivery will take further institutional investment and political will of both sides. This caveat highlights the issue of differentiating between normative promises of the SSC education model and the empirical conditions upon which it can be fulfilled.

Conclusion

This article has explored the Indonesian aid of technical education to Kenya through the analytical prism of South-South Cooperation and has shown how such aid serves as a tool of development, a tool of foreign policy and a tool of soft power. There are three key findings in the analysis.

First, the institutionalized SSC architecture of Indonesia, which has historically and continues to operate through the 1955 Bandung Conference legacy and which has been operationalized via the NCT-SSTC and Indonesian AID, offers a structured and normatively legitimate, bilateral education engagement that can be qualitatively differentiated to the conditionality-based mechanisms of conventional North-South ODA. Second, Indonesian technical education support is relevantly consistent with the agenda of Kenya industrialization outlined in the Vision 2030, in dealing with the reported lack of TVET capacity, skills creation and curriculum reform that are cited in Kenya national planning frameworks as limiting constraints of development (Government of Kenya, 2007). Third, the education cooperation aspect of the Indonesia-Kenya relationship reflects the fundamental SSC principles of sovereignty-respect, non-conditionality, and demand-responsiveness, which is a paradigm of educational diplomacy that is structurally different to traditional international assistance models.

Theoretically, the research paper adds to constructivist explanations of SSC, as it shows that identity making and normative coordination, rather than solely material resource transfer, are constitutive forces that drive Indonesia to become an emerging Southern donor. It also contributes to the literature on public diplomacy by making technical education an analytically relevant yet little-studied tool of projecting soft power in South-South relations, and by creating the notion of educational diplomacy as a unique form of SSC. This comparative analysis also shows that the institutional depth, responsiveness to demand and normative anchoring in shared post-colonial experience

are what separate the Indonesian model of SSC education from similar models in Chinese and Indian models of SSC education, and also has implications on the wider literature on the nature of middle-income Southern donor construction of development identities.

Regarding policy implications, the model in Indonesia has transferable lessons to other middle-income Southern donors which would wish to apply SSC principles to the education sector. In the case of Kenya, continuous participation in the Indonesian SSC system is not only an addition to the waning traditional aid but a qualitatively new structure of partnership that can facilitate long-term industrialization based on the demand-responsive development of human capital. Future studies need to consider the quantifiable effects of the Indonesian scholarship programs and TVET partnerships on the Kenya labor market and need to expand comparative analysis to other Indonesian SSC education partnerships in Sub-Saharan Africa to understand the larger generalizability of the model. The triangular cooperation prospect of the Indonesia-Kenya framework also deserves specific empirical research in connection with the IAF and IAID as the institutional facilitator of appealing co-financing and bringing bilateral SSC education partnerships to the multilateral programmatic level.

Declaration of Interest

The author states that there is no conflict of interest.

Area for Further Research

Future research ought to investigate the quantifiable effect of Indonesian education aid on South-South cooperation paradigms in Kenya and Ethiopia, on the basis of economic performance, institutional change, and sustainability.

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