

THE BENEFITS AND THREATS OF THE BELT AND ROAD INITIATIVE PROJECTS TO AFRICA: AN EXPERIENCE FROM BAGAMOYO PORT INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT IN TANZANIA

PHILEMON SENGATI LUGUMILIZA

philemonsengati@gmail.com
Department of Political Science and Public Administration,
College of Humanities and Social Science,
Dodoma University, P.O. Box 259, Dodoma, Tanzania.

Abstract

The study adopted a desk-based approach to empirically examine the benefits and threats of the Belt and Road Initiatives (BRI) projects to Africa, with a particular focus on Bagamoyo Port Infrastructure Development in the United Republic of Tanzania. The data were collected by reviewing relevant and credible documents and analyzing them qualitatively using a thematic analysis. The study findings reveal that BRI plays a significant role in improving Tanzania's economy, particularly by providing financing and material support for mega infrastructure projects (e.g., roads, railroads, ports, energy pipelines, power grids), as well as connectivity and internet access. However, it is associated with Tanzania's growing external debt burden, as the project's contract terms do not guarantee mutual benefits for Tanzania and China. The study recommends revisiting the project's terms to ensure mutual benefits for Tanzania and other African countries, which is essential for the sustainability of their socio-economic development and the smooth implementation of projects.

Keywords: Port Connectivity, Infrastructure Development, Bagamoyo Project, Belt and Road Initiative, Tanzania.

1. Introduction

The Bilateral relations between China and the United Republic of Tanzania officially began in April 1964. Founding leaders of both countries, including Julius Kambarage Nyerere of Tanzania and Mao Zedong of China, fostered the relationship. During the Cold War era, China became Tanzania's primary trusted partner, providing moral and material support through various development programs. Bilateral cooperation is evident in various aspects of socio-economic development, political and democratic stability, health, infrastructure, technological advancement, and military relations (Cabestan & Chaponniere, 2016). The current Tanzania's Second Five-Year Development Plan (2020/21-2025/26) broadly aligns with the concept, content, and focus of the Chinese Belt and Road Initiative (BRI).

The Chinese government designed two major policy initiatives. The initial Maritime Silk Road Initiative (MSRI) connected East and South Asia, Africa, and Europe. The Silk Road Economic Belt (SREB) is the next, and it builds a land infrastructure connecting Europe and Central Asia. These policy initiatives collectively comprise the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), launched by Chinese President Xi Jinping in 2013. The ultimate aim is to boost trade, development, and economic prosperity between China and the three continents of Africa, Asia, and Europe. The BRI's broad acceptance is evidenced by 105 countries and associations in East and South Asia, Africa, and Europe that have signed various agreements supporting the initiative. The East African countries, Kenya and Tanzania, in particular, are strategically important to the Maritime Silk Route, as they border the Indian Ocean. Upon

implementing the BRI, this will facilitate access to the maritime routes in the middle and southern African regions. The BRI focuses on infrastructure development, linking land, sea, and air routes, railway lines, coastal ports, and telecommunications across Africa (Edinger & Labuschagne, 2018).

The Belt and Road Initiative intends to strengthen relations between Tanzania and China. The BRI adheres to the principle of the five connectedness: policy connectedness, infrastructure connectedness, trade connectedness, funding connectedness and public opinion connectedness (Djankov and Miner, 2016). The BRI also emphasizes three commonalities: shared interests, shared destiny, and shared responsibility. The MSRI aims to strategically promote trade and commercial zones along maritime coastal routes connecting the Indian Ocean, which stretches to East African countries, and the South China Sea. The BRI reflects China's desire to leverage its resources to support global infrastructure development, ultimately enhancing trade and people's well-being worldwide (Belt and Road News, 2020). The MSRI seeks strategic connectivity with Tanzania, Kenya, and Somalia because they offer entry and exit points to the Indian Ocean. Other countries that have drawn the MSRI's focus are Djibouti and Egypt, which have direct access to the Mediterranean Sea, a body of water that connects the three continents of Asia, Africa, and Europe.

Tanzania's location favours MSRI's focus, as it borders the Indian Ocean and offers a direct gateway to South Africa, which is rich in minerals. This makes Tanzania a strategically important

country for the success of the BRI, and its inclusion in infrastructure development projects is inevitable for realising the BRI's far-reaching goals. Several Chinese companies are constructing various infrastructure projects in Tanzania. Alden and Alves (2008). For example, China Petroleum Technology and Development Corporation, with funds from China Exim Bank, has built a 535km gas pipeline from the Southern Mtwara region to Dar es Salaam city. Since the gas pipeline's inauguration in 2015, it has enabled the Tanzanian government to realize its dream of generating electricity from its natural resources to power its ambitious industrialization policy. In the same vein, China and Tanzania signed another infrastructure agreement worth \$ 6.8 billion to build a 2,561 km standard-gauge railway linking the Dar es Salaam port with neighboring landlocked East African countries, including Rwanda, Burundi, and the Democratic Republic of the Congo (Kim & Tukić, 2018).

Following the Chinese foreign minister Mr. Wangyi's visit to Tanzania in January 2021, another critical infrastructure agreement worth US \$ 1.32 billion, which is part of the long 2,561 km railway, was signed by contracting China Railway Construction and China Civil Engineering Construction firms to construct a standard gauge railway, 341 km long from Isaka to Mwanza commercial city. Likewise, the two countries are doing well in ensuring people-to-people connectivity. Over the past five years (2015-2020), a 25% increase in Chinese tourists to Tanzania has been recorded. In 2019 alone, 40,272 tourists from China visited Tanzania (The Citizen, 2020). The

China Railway Jiangchang (T) Ltd and China Major Bridge Engineering Company constructed the Kigamboni Nyerere Bridge crossing the Indian Ocean. The project was completed in 2016 and became the first cable-stayed bridge in East Africa. The Ubungo flyover is the first multi-layer, multi-track flyover in Tanzania, whose construction began in 2017 and was completed in 2020 by the China Civil Engineering Construction Corporation (CCECC) (CGTN, 2021).

The launch of the BRI in 2013 coincided with the country's readiness to improve its infrastructure. Tanzania began upgrading the main Dar es Salaam port in 2017 by constructing two new berths and modernizing seven existing berths. This work was again contracted to China Harbour Engineering Construction Company (CHEC). The recent successful upgrading project of the Dar es Salaam port increased its efficiency in allowing large vessels to load cargo in the area. According to Tanzania Ports Authority (TPA) (2024), the completion of this project increased the efficiency of the Dar es Salaam port, bearing its strategic location on the shore of the Indian Ocean serving as the favourite importation and exportation site of goods and services for the neighbouring landlocked Central and East African countries (Zambia, Malawi, Burundi, Uganda, Rwanda, and the Democratic Republic of Congo).

The launch of the BRI in 2013 was positively welcomed by East African and Horn of Africa countries, which desired to benefit from Chinese resources to improve critical infrastructure projects in the region. The Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) operate in the East African region in several

projects and programmes. Kenya has about 11 extensive projects, Uganda and Ethiopia each have nine projects, and Tanzania has eight (Edinger & Labuschagne, 2018).

The Tanzanian government, which came to power in 2015, devised strict measures to reduce the shortfall in the country's expanding budget. This included the downsizing of ambitious capital schemes and cutting state expenditure. As a result, one of the significant BRI projects (the Bagamoyo Port Project) was suspended (worth US\$10 billion) and contributed to a significant decrease in the value of ongoing Belt and Road Initiative projects in Tanzania and the East African region (Kim & Tukić, 2018).

President Jakaya Mrisho Kikwete's regime (2005-2015) supported the Chinese Belt and Road Initiative in 2013, when the Chinese President visited Tanzania, and an agreement was reached to build the Bagamoyo port project. Likewise, the Tanzanian Prime Minister, Mr. Kassim Majaliwa, reiterated this position during the Beijing Summit of the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation (FOCAC) in 2018 (Hui, 2018).

1.1 Concepts: The Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) and Soft Power

This study is anchored in two key concepts that illuminate the study context: the BRI and soft power. The two concepts provide a conceptual foundation for understanding actors, institutions, interests, and power dynamics in the BRI context.

In this context, the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) is conceptualized as a strategy initiated by the People's Republic of China that seeks to connect

Asia with Africa and Europe via land and maritime networks to improve regional integration, increase trade, and stimulate economic growth (Lingliang, 2016)

The name was coined in 2013 by China's President Xi Jinping, who drew inspiration from the concept of the Silk Road established during the Han Dynasty 2,000 years ago – an ancient network of trade routes that connected China to the Mediterranean via Eurasia for centuries. The BRI has also been denoted earlier as 'One Belt One Road'¹.

The BRI composed of a Silk Road Economic Belt – a trans-continental passage that connects China with South Asia, Central Asia, Russia, South East Asia, and Europe by land – and a 21st century Maritime Silk Road, a sea route linking China's coastal regions with South East and South Asia, the Middle East, the South Pacific, and Eastern Africa, all the way to Europe.

The initiative outlines five major priorities: infrastructure connectivity; policy coordination; financial integration; unimpeded trade, and connecting people. The BRI is connected with a mega-investment in infrastructure development for roads, ports, airports, power plants, railways, and telecommunications networks. As of March 2020, 138 countries have associated themselves with the Belt and Road Initiative by signing a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with China is 138².

The BRI is related to traditional concepts of regional economic integration, partnership

arrangement and community of common destiny, the past of which is as new as the Belt and Road. It is a new method of global governance that combines elements of regional economic integration to some extent, a partnership arrangement between States. However, the implications of the Belt and Road go beyond regional integration and partnership. It takes both as its basis and priorities with a broad vision of building a community at the regional of common destiny. This regional community aims at building a "community of shared interests", "a community of shared destiny", and "a community of shared responsibility". In essence, it is a part of the community of common destiny of the whole of humankind (Lingliang, 2016)

The concept of soft power involves projecting a country's values and culture to other countries in an attempt to achieve the outcomes it wants in world politics, because other countries that admire its values, emulate its example, and aspire to its level of prosperity and openness want to follow. Developed by Joseph Nye, the core of the soft power concept lies in its power to co-opt, unlike hard power, which is based on inducement and the use of force. According to Nye, a country's soft power relies on three resources: its culture (in places where it is attractive to others), its political values (when it lives up to them at home and abroad), and its foreign policies (when they are seen as legitimate and having moral authority) (Nye, 1990, cited in Shangwe, 2017). Nye's conceptualization of soft power has been criticized for missing substantial descriptions of the

¹ <https://www.ebrd.com/what-we-do/belt-and-road/overview.html>

² *ibid*

association between soft and hard power. Indeed, far from what Nye's central thesis posits, hard power can be used to attain soft power, too (Shangwe, 2017)

Nye's conceptualization of soft power involves an overarching analysis of Chinese visions and practices of soft power, as articulated by Maria Repnikova, highlighting the key channels or mechanisms of China's soft power, including Confucius Institutes, international communication, education and training exchanges, and public diplomacy spectacles. Equally, in his oft-quoted book *Charm Offensive: How China's Soft Power Is Transforming the World*, Joshua Kurlantzick conceives soft power more broadly. John Wong witnessed that China is making its economic soft power. This includes skillful economic diplomacy and is represented by key regional trade agreements or by extended official development assistance (ODA) to foster cooperation.

China's soft power ambitions through the BRI manifest in various forms, including infrastructure diplomacy, which positions China as a development partner. Ethnic exchanges and Confucius Institutes. Media outreach and state-sponsored narratives. Development narratives: Framing itself as a "South-South" development partner distinct from Western aid. One of the most illustrative examples of these dynamics in Africa is the Bagamoyo Port project in Tanzania, which symbolically and practically demonstrates how infrastructure investment intersects with soft power projection both positively and negatively.

2. Literature Review

Some literature on the development of the new Bagamoyo port infrastructure argues that, once construction is completed, the small fishing village of Bagamoyo will be turned into a new Chinese Shenzhen model. Creating a special economic zone with an industrialized satellite city will boost foreign direct investment, open Tanzania's gateway to world trade, and promote economic advancement in Tanzania and the entire East African region (Mbashiru, 2017).

Other scholars supporting the development of the mega Bagamoyo port infrastructure put aside the negative political and economic considerations associated with the investment in the Bagamoyo port. Scholars' main argument is that the new Bagamoyo port infrastructure will create socio-economic forces that will easily turn Dar es Salaam into a new Dubai development model (Citizen, 2013; Cross, 2015; Daily News, 2017). On the other hand, Wippel et al. (2016) oppose this idea, arguing that the Dubai model of developmental experience was shaped by special circumstances unlikely to prevail in Dar es Salaam City, Tanzania.

The construction of the Bagamoyo port, funded by approximately US \$10 billion from China, on the Indian Ocean coast, was a strategic implementation of the Chinese Maritime Silk Road Initiative. This initiative targeted Tanzania to ensure infrastructure connectivity, easing the importation and exportation of goods and services throughout the entire East African region. The three actors who signed the memorandum of understanding for the Bagamoyo port project included the Tanzanian government, China Merchants Holdings

International (CMHI), and the Oman State General Reserve Fund (SGRF) (Hönke, 2018). The rationale behind the Bagamoyo port project, among other factors, include the alleged poor performance of the country's main Dar es Salaam port, the need to connect Tanzania with the emerging global markets in East Africa, the Middle East, India and China, and finally, to make Bagamoyo favourable special economic zone in the region and beyond (Blair and Ng'wanakilala, 2014).

The large-scale construction of the Bagamoyo port infrastructure was expected to begin in 2014 and be completed in 2022, making it the largest port infrastructure on the African continent. However, the project has not started by 2024 (Kang'ereha, 2018). The port was to be built at Bagamoyo, a small town bordering the Indian Ocean shore, just 75km from Dar es Salaam. The Bagamoyo port was to be linked to the highway, with land connectivity to the Uhuru Highway connecting Tanzania and Zambia. The port would have been a unique export zone facility with an industrial city, connected by upgraded roads and railways, linking the port to Dar es Salaam's commercial city. The Bagamoyo port was expected to connect East and Central African countries and provide maritime access to Mozambique, the Comoros, Madagascar, and the Seychelles (Ng'wanakilala, 2013).

The Bagamoyo port would also connect the central corridor of the Tanzania-Zambia Railway (TAZARA), stretching from Dar es Salaam port to the Zambian rich copper belt. TAZARA is one of the earliest projects to be financed with a free Chinese interest loan of US\$ 500 million and constructed by the Chinese Railway Engineering

Corporation (CREC) from 1970 to 1976 during the Cold War era between the capitalist and socialist blocs (Jansson et al., 2009).

The Tanzania standard gauge railway (SGR) from Dar es Salaam to Mwanza is another target for easing the connection of the Bagamoyo port to other leading countries' road and railway infrastructure. China offered 146.47 billion yuan to support feasibility studies for the ongoing standard-gauge railway project (Xinhua, 2018). However, it did not win the construction tender from Dar es Salaam to Isaka, which the government of Tanzania awarded to the Turkish company (Yapi Merkez). The Chinese Foreign Minister visited Tanzania on January 8, 2021, and witnessed the signing of an agreement for two Chinese companies to continue supporting the construction of the SGR from Isaka to Mwanza for US\$1.33 billion (African News, 2024).

Related to the Bagamoyo port project in 2014, China Merchant Group signed an agreement with the Tanzanian government worth \$1.7 to develop the Bagamoyo satellite city, including a \$460 million seaport. Although the agreement was reached in 2013, the project began to take shape in 2014, when the Tanzanian government, under President Jakaya Kikwete, signed a memorandum of understanding with China Merchant Holding International (CMHI) and Oman's State General Reserve Fund (SGRF) (All Africa, 2017).

President Jakaya Mrisho Kikwete's administration believed that by investing in the Bagamoyo port infrastructure, the efficiency of the old Dar es Salaam Port would be boosted, ultimately turning Dar es Salaam City into a new Dubai. This stance also suggests that it is easier to build a modern port

facility in Bagamoyo, as required by global economic logistics standards, than to modernize the old infrastructure of the Dar es Salaam port (Larkin, 2013). Some scholars criticize this position, arguing that the Jakaya Mrisho Kikwete administration's decision to construct a new Bagamoyo port was a political elite strategy to overlook the old challenge of the poor performance of the old Dar es Salaam port (World Bank, 2016; Hönke & Cuesta-Fernandez, 2018).

The plan was disrupted by the ascent to power of President John Pombe Magufuli in 2015, whose administration espoused an efficiency narrative that the old ports of Dar es Salaam and Mtwara were underutilized and that, once improved, they could serve their purpose (Hönke & Cuesta-Fernandez, 2018). The new government focused more on improving the port infrastructures of Dar es Salaam and Mtwara. The rejection of the Bagamoyo port infrastructure implementation was carried out, despite former President Jakaya Mrisho Kikwete laying the foundation stone in 2015, which enabled investors to begin work on the 800-hectare port and the 1700-hectare Export Processing Zone in his hometown of Bagamoyo (Kang'ereha, 2018).

President John Pombe Magufuli's administration reviewed the terms and conditions for constructing the Bagamoyo port and realized that the project did not benefit the country. The government devised five new terms and conditions in 2019, which the Chinese company (China Merchants Holdings International) based in Hong Kong should have accepted before the project started. These conditions include the following: one, China Merchants Holding International be given a land lease right of 33 years and not 99 years as

previously agreed; two, investors will not be given special status in terms of accessing various services such as water and electricity so that they will pay according to the current market rates; three, investors will have no tax exemption once the operation begins; fourth, investors will not be allowed to start any other new business in the facility without the approval of the Tanzania government; and five, the government of Tanzania will have the right to develop other ports in the country as it deems necessary to compete with the Bagamoyo port (The Citizen, 2020).

It seemed that the conditions were very tough for investors in Chinese companies to continue the project, which contributed to the delayed start in 2013. Following the sudden death of President John Pombe Magufuli in 2021, whose government stopped the construction of the Bagamoyo port infrastructure in 2015. The successor regime of President Samia Suluhu Hassan expressed interest in reviving discussions among stakeholders to implement the Bagamoyo port infrastructure project. Policy analysts argue that this was a strong signal for BRI stakeholders to work closely with the Tanzanian political leadership to realize the Bagamoyo port infrastructure development (Burimaso, 2018). The Samia Suluhu Hassan administration also supports the efficiency camp, as it finalized an investment agreement in 2023 with DP World investors from Dubai to modernize the port's infrastructure (Reuters, 2023).

3. Materials and Methods

This desk-based Study extensively reviewed secondary sources containing information closely related to the BRI and the Bagamoyo infrastructure

port development only. The review approach draws on rapid evidence reviews, systematic reviews, and theory-based reviews (Shadish & Myers 2004; Hammerstrøm et al. 2010; Higgins & Green 2011; Snilstveit et al. 2012; EPPI 2019). The former are mainly useful for mapping fundamental connections and factors that impact the outcomes. The rigor of systematic review was adopted throughout the search, screening, and data-extraction stages, with a more flexible approach in the synthesis stage, which allowed for the presentation of formative evidence in accessible, practical ways to the end user. The results summarize the current literature on the topic, as well as the discussions, associations, and insights within it.

The stages involved to ensure a comprehensive, replicable, and valid review that avoids bias are described below. The review provides a comprehensive search, collation, organization, and synthesis of the available evidence, documented in peer-reviewed academic journal papers, book chapters, organizational and grey literature, in response to this question

3.1. Literature search strategy

The pool of potentially relevant journal articles, periodicals, magazines, proceedings, newsletters, websites, working papers, newspapers, election Acts, books, theses, and reports was found by searching:

- Academic databases, specifically: Web of Science; Econ Lit; SCOPUS; and, Science Direct,

- Specific journals, namely the Journal of Development Studies and Water Alternatives.
- Google Scholar and Google are used to search for grey literature and unpublished material, with the first 50 hits examined further if they are highly relevant.
- Websites of relevant organizations, networks, and initiatives on BRI

3.2. Inclusion and exclusion criteria

The identified titles and abstracts were used for review and assessed for significance and inclusion using the following two-stage processes: At the first stage, by reviewing the title and abstract, and, for those selected, through full-text screening. Multiple reviewers worked on this process (and following coding), and to support a reliable approach, training, coaching, and internal checks were offered to ensure adherence to the inclusion or exclusion criteria. Main reviewers assessed randomly selected sub-sample of titles and abstracts, then shifted their focus to reviewing full texts to ensure consistency. Where inconsistencies were found, they were checked to support an explicit interpretation and use of the criteria.

3.3. Criteria for choosing literature sources

3.3.1. Relevance and scope

This criterion was applied to search for relevant literature that falls within the scope of the study, i.e., China–Africa, China-Tanzania connectivity, infrastructure, BRI in Africa and Tanzania, particularly focusing on Bagamoyo port. The scope also includes literature from 2013, when the BRI was launched, covering topics such as African

countries within the BRI framework, transportation, logistics, governance, debt, investments, and environmental impacts.

3.3.2. Credibility, authority and quality

These criteria focused on the author's credentials, publication outlets, methodological rigour, citation influence, and history. The emphasis was on ensuring that authors' institutional affiliations are credible – whether a research organization, university, think tank, or government - and that publication outlets are credible and high-impact. Equally, the methodological rigour and citation history of the sources allowed for an objective selection.

3.3.3. Currency and timeliness

To ensure that the study benefits from current literature, this criterion allowed selecting sources from the last 5 to 15 years. However, older, foundational, or conceptual literature sources remained relevant for ensuring rigorous theoretical framing and historical context. In the BRI context, since the initiative was launched in 2013, literature from that year onwards has been crucially most relevant.

3.3.4. Balance, diversity and bias

To ensure triangulation of the literature and avoid bias, multiple perspectives from different sources were included, including pro-BRI, critical, neutral, empirical, and conceptual and theoretical stances. This helped avoid potential bias arising from political, ideological, and donor positions in the literature.

3.3.5. Analytical utility: depth, breadth and gaps

This criterion helped identify the major themes, sectors, and geographic cases relevant to the topic, as well as the depth of the key studies analyzed in detail, including their methods, findings, and limitations. It was also possible to identify gaps in what has not (yet) been researched or in methodological weaknesses.

3.4. Data coding, extraction, and analysis

For each comprised study on BRI, important characteristics were coded to aid mapping and review. Standardized coding was supported by EPPI Reviewer software, and the data was extracted to an Excel spreadsheet for review. The EPPI Reviewer software is a web-based software program for organizing and analyzing data in literature reviews. It has been developed for all types of systematic reviews (meta-analysis, framework synthesis, thematic synthesis, etc.), but also features that would be useful in any literature review.

The following information in relation to each reviewed material was coded.

- Full bibliographical reference/citation
- Year of publication
- URL link
- Type of publication (peer review journal articles, conference/working papers/book chapters/organizational reports, or evaluation)
- BRI focus (roads, railroads, ports, energy pipelines, power grids, connectivity, internet access, industrial parks, financial schemes)

- Methodology (qualitative/quantitative)
- Geography – (country of study)

The Study employed the qualitative analysis technique because it helped provide an in-depth understanding of the phenomenon. Data was analyzed through content analysis because, despite its associated drawbacks, such as being limited to the review of recorded communications and the possibility of the problem of validity and reliability the advantages of it, which outweigh its demerits, emphasize its use in this Study.

4. Findings and Discussion

Although construction was initially scheduled to start in January 2018 (according to some reports, it was supposed to begin in 2014), the mega-project has not progressed. Moreover, Tanzania is reportedly renegotiating the terms of the port development. The lack of progress is puzzling, as the project and the MSRI, which are part of it, align with Tanzania's development strategy, which emphasizes infrastructure, industrialization, and trade expansion (Blanchard, 2020, p. 167).

Two major explanations contributed to the Tanzanian government's decision that led to the project's deadlock. First, on political grounds, the Tanzanian government believes that implementing this project under the previous terms and conditions would affect the country's sovereignty, and that the signed agreement favoured the investors (Harsh, 2019). Therefore, the government wanted to secure a significant share of the project because the land in Tanzania belongs to the government. Taking an example of the conditions which limited Tanzania

from developing or building other ports throughout the Indian Ocean shore stretching from Tanga to Mtwara, while the country has a very extensive Indian Ocean coastline is an attempt to infringe the country's sovereignty right in deciding what to do in her own defined territorial sovereignty, and this amounts to losing an essential attribute of a state (South China Morning Post, 2018).

Second, economic reasons forced the Tanzanian government to delay construction of the Bagamoyo port and to focus on upgrading the country's main port in Dar es Salaam. This decision was more reasonable than pursuing Chinese foreign aid financing to construct the new Bagamoyo port infrastructure at the expense of underutilized port infrastructure in Dar es Salaam, Tanga, Mtwara, and Zanzibar (CGTN Africa, 2018). This decision was taken to resist further borrowing, despite success stories in Ethiopia, where China's BRI has invested heavily in dozens of projects that have been constructed for billions of dollars, and these projects have come to fruition without significant delays or disruptions, unlike the Bagamoyo port project (Financial Tribune, 2018). Tanzania is not the first African country to suspend or revoke Chinese projects under the BRI due to concerns about political implications and economic considerations for implementing the project. This differs from Ethiopia's and Tanzania's response to the MSRI initiative (Blanchard, 2020).

Sierra Leone was the first African country to cancel the Chinese Belt and Road Initiative project in 2018. The country abandoned the construction of the latest Mamamah airport, which was to be funded by China for approximately \$318 million

near its capital, Freetown. The country's leadership recognized that it was uneconomical to build new airport infrastructure at the expense of the existing, underutilized airport. Sierra Leone's government, led by President Julius Maada, deemed it more beneficial for the country to upgrade the airport to ensure efficient operation (Mishra, 2019).

Another backlash against the BRI project in Africa occurred when the Kenyan National Environment Tribunal refused to allow the construction of the proposed \$2 billion Lamu coal-fired plant. This project was to be constructed by Chinese companies in collaboration with a Kenyan firm. The major allegation was the failure to conduct an environmental impact assessment on Lamu, a critical UNESCO World Heritage site in East Africa (Lin, 2022).

Similarly, BRI faced strong opposition from Gambian citizens who blamed their government for having exploitative relations with China. This ill-conceived principal relationship is influenced by China's role as the principal financier of the Gambian government since 2017, when the government moved from dictatorship to democracy. The Gambia government agreed to receive \$33 billion to build infrastructure and invest in fisheries and agriculture. This matter risks the country's food security and leaves Gambia deeply indebted to a Chinese aid-trap diplomacy (Conteh, 2020).

The Sri Lankan government canceled construction of the vast Hambantota port in 2008 near the small town of Hambantota, citing allegations that it could not operate the facility. However, the Chinese government later provided additional funds to the Sri Lankan government. Eventually, it took 70% of

the joint venture's share, leaving only 30% for the Sri Lankan government (Yamada & Palma, 2028). This is another predatory bilateral relationship, as under this agreement the Chinese government has exclusive rights to access over 15,000 acres near the port for the construction of an industrial zone to process seafood, agricultural products, provide shipping services, and support other manufacturing industries (Shida, 2017).

The examples highlighted above show that the BRI faces intense backlash from many countries where it is being implemented. Conversely, some countries have rejected the Belt and Road initiative to protect their national interest. India does not want to participate in the initiative, as it perceives that the BRI is an ill-conceived initiative that focuses on raising China's influence in the World without considering the interests of other countries (Grant, 2010).

The BRI's engagement in the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) and the Bangladesh-China-India-Myanmar Economic Corridor significantly impacts India's economic influence in South Asia. India and China relations remain unfriendly because China is rich in resources to invest abroad, unlike India, and is not nervous or scared of India's rise. However, India is more concerned about China's rise, as it threatens to erode India's economic leadership in South Asia. In this scenario, relations among these countries remain characterized by conflict, competition, cooperation, and containment, primarily driven by the BRI (Joshi, 2018).

It has only been nine years since the BRI was launched in 2013 by the Chinese President, but the

initiative has faced numerous backlashes from partnering countries in Asia and Africa. This indicates China's self-serving interest in exploiting poor countries to exert control over global governance and international influence by providing substantial Chinese loans to countries that cannot escape the debt diplomacy trap. Critics argue that the BRI is characterized by massive loan provisions to recipient countries where projects are constructed, which those countries cannot afford to repay. As a result, they become trapped in compromising their sovereignty rights.

The Belt and Road initiative has received much criticism from Western, Asian, and African countries. The BRI is a Chinese strategy aimed at making China a more influential global leader. Further critique perceives the initiative's focus on the Maritime Silk Road to open and construct commercial projects along the shores of the Indian Ocean, such as the Bagamoyo Port in Tanzania, as strategic considerations that infringe on participating countries' sovereignty (Jacob, 2017).

Scholars focusing on economic advantage view the BRI initiative positively as it will bring economic development to participating countries (Jha, 2016; Kulkarni, 2017). They argue that participating countries like Tanzania, rather than opposing the Bagamoyo port project, should view the initiative as an economic opportunity to leverage Chinese overcapacity to advance their internal connectivity plans, eventually positioning the country to assume a leadership role in infrastructure connectivity in East Africa. The Bagamoyo port location in East Africa, beside the Indian Ocean, is not only for Tanzania's and China's benefit but also for the

entire African continent, as it offers maritime access connecting the entire African continent, Asia, and Europe (Das, 2017; Stobdan, 2016).

This perspective suggests resuming negotiations between China Merchants Holdings International (CMIH) and the Tanzania government to review the terms of reference for the agreement, ensuring that both parties achieve mutual benefit in the construction of the Bagamoyo port project. However, the Bagamoyo project is a three-way project involving China Merchants Holdings International, the Tanzanian government, and the State General Reserve Fund (SGRF) of Oman—the controversy centres on the relationship between the Tanzanian government and the Chinese company.

To resume negotiations on the Bagamoyo port project, the Tanzanian government provided five new terms and conditions to China Merchants Holdings International (CMIH) at the end of 2019 to initiate implementation, but no progress has been made. The anticipated benefits Tanzania will gain when this project is completed under equitable terms of reference include making the country an export development zone and an economic hub in the region. Hursh (2019, p. 23), commenting on this issue, argues that;

".... China's Maritime Silk Road suffered a setback after Tanzanian officials refused to budge over stalled negotiations to build the largest deep-water port in Africa. Agreed in 2013, the terms of the agreement remain controversial between the Tanzanian government and China Merchants International Holdings, the firm slated to construct the port and the adjoining

infrastructure. Tanzania suspended the project in June, showing no signs of backing off in follow-up negotiations held in October. Instead, Tanzanian officials offered the Chinese firm a blunt ultimatum: accept our conditions or leave..."

On the other hand, some scholars argue that BRI partner countries, including Tanzania, should not resume negotiations but cancel the BRI projects. Many scholars and analysts suggest that the increasing discontent about BRI projects in participating countries, stemming from the creation of an unpayable heavy debt burden and the backlash the initiative faces (Chellaney, 2016; The Economic Times, 2017, 2018), is a contributing factor. A few examples of project failures, such as Hambortanta Port and airport in Sri Lanka, the fish meal factory in Gambia, the coal-fired plant in Kenya and Bagamoyo Port in Tanzania, suggest that the BRI has complicated implementation procedures, which require more consideration of the terms of reference between China and recipient countries (Marais & Labuschagne, 2021).

This has raised criticism of the Chinese BRI following the challenges surrounding the initiative; even though China has supported significant infrastructure development in the African continent to make the continent somehow connected, its system of issuing financial assistance with a non-interference clause (Noah, 2021) to poor African countries has created a huge debt burden to recipient countries such as Ethiopia \$13.5 billion, Zambia \$7.4 billion, Angola \$25 billion, Sudan \$6.4 billion and Republic of Congo \$7.3 billion (Broadman, 2021) and thus making the initiative to

cause more challenges than benefits. This makes Tanzania hesitant to implement the mega Bagamoyo port infrastructure due to fear of the debt diplomacy trap. If the recipient country fails to pay, the financier owns the investment (Omoruyi, 2019; Hurley et al, 2018; IMF, 2018).

However, this position is more advocated by scholars with a Western orientation, who view China's growing influence in Africa as a threat to Western countries seeking considerable influence in the region. As the counter-balance strategy to limit the advancement of the Chinese BRI infrastructure construction on the African continent, the G7 Launched in 2022 the Build Back Better World (B3W) initiative, which aims to mobilize funds to support global infrastructure development programs in less developed countries, including Africa, Latin America, the Caribbean, and Indo-Pacific regions (Makengo et al,2022).

This recent development reflects the intense competition between China and Western countries, led by the USA, whose economic influence in Africa is diminishing compared to China's rising influence. (2022) critically analyzed the two competing initiatives (BRI and B3W) using membership criteria, resources, scope, and preparedness. This assessment credits the Chinese BRI as a more reliable and practical strategy for infrastructure development in Africa than the B3W Western initiative, which is too new to yield the desired results (Sacks, 2021; Nedopil, 2021). Likewise, China has outsmarted the Western countries in many aspects of economic engagements with Africa, and thus created a massive influence for African countries to rely on

China rather than on Western counterparts, which seeks to perpetuate structural dependence between the African peripheral countries and their former colonial masters, whose development was a result of the intentional underdevelopment of Africa.

The tension between China and USA to have exclusive influence on the Bagamoyo port construction was also depicted following Tanzanian President Samia Suluhu Hassan's diplomatic visit to USA in 2021, on arrival the President was reported saying, "I would like to share with you the good news that we have started negotiations on reviving the Bagamoyo port project" (The Citizen, 2021). The USA has expressed interest in providing technical advice on the construction of the Bagamoyo port project if Tanzania needs it. The government of Tanzania announced its intention to revive negotiations for the project. However, it is not clear whether the resumed negotiations are with China and the USA, or whether the country has chosen one investor whose terms of reference will suit the Tanzanian government.

On the other hand, the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace (2021) argues that the existence of two competing, antagonistic initiatives (BRI vs B3W) aiming to invest in infrastructure projects is advantageous for African countries, particularly Tanzania. The two initiatives can work simultaneously to provide double support for African countries' infrastructure development and to offer alternatives, helping African countries choose development partners whose terms of reference offer mutual benefits to recipient countries wishing to build mega infrastructure

projects. Carnegie Endowment for International Peace (2021, p. 13) categorically argues that,

".....a close reading of the two initiatives revealed certain strategic ambivalences in terms of objectives, membership, costs, values, and even sectors. However, in any case, it is not difficult to smell the attractive perfume of this strategic opposition to realize that the stability and prosperity of developing countries, particularly Africa, would be better served if the B3W and BRI initiatives operated in tandem..."

Conceivably, the rivalry between the USA and China for global economic supremacy and impliedly the ulterior interest expressed by the US government for Bagamoyo Port to provide "technical support" could be an opportunity for Tanzania to have verification on critics of the projects and possibly revisit plans and solicit a genuine partner in the project for national, regional, and international prosperity.

Tanzania's interest in the BRI is to attract investment, open the country to international trade, and increase its exports. Additionally, Tanzania aims to expand employment opportunities for Tanzanians, thereby enhancing their living standards and promoting economic growth. Moreover, the proposed infrastructure will attract trade between Tanzania and neighboring countries. This puts Tanzania in a position to gain a competitive advantage over neighboring countries. Tanzania's move to renegotiate the terms of the BRI is essential to ensure that it can benefit from such projects, that the interests of groups in the country

are represented and taken into consideration, and that the agreement does not put the state's sovereignty in jeopardy. It is argued that the BRI is a good move to boost Tanzania's economy, provided that the terms of the respective agreements benefit different groups of Tanzanians.

5. Conclusion and Recommendations

The study indicates that the BRI initiative is a critical strategy and driver for African sustainable development, as it focuses on developing infrastructure to enhance regional connectivity. Africa has been left behind for many years because it lacks infrastructure; its transport system is largely uncommercial, as it is mainly connected by air and cannot facilitate massive trade by air. Therefore, BRI is an opportunity, and China-Africa relations offer significant economic potential to benefit African countries, including Tanzania. 23% of China's landmass lies in Africa; in terms of railway connectivity, it accounts for 7% of the global total. In terms of roads, $\frac{1}{4}$ are high-speed roads, $\frac{1}{10}$ are access roads, 50% have access to power, and 40% have access to water. Africa and Tanzania need strategic investments to advance economically and technologically, and the BRI provides a strong economic base to make significant strides.

As noted earlier, the Bagamoyo Port project is a multi-billion-dollar investment. It was initially estimated at US\$10 billion (TZS 23 trillion) for the combined port and related Special Economic Zone (SEZ) development. The 2024 Tanzania parliamentary data show that the Tanzania Ports Authority (TPA) had budgeted US\$ 9.5 million (TZS 22 billion) toward the Bagamoyo project in the financial year 2024/2025, reflecting a very

small portion of the total envisaged investment. Notably, the investment scale is large relative to Tanzania's GDP and infrastructure base. The US\$10 billion figure places it among the big infrastructure proposals in Africa. However, looking at the government budget for the 2024/2025 FY, very little appears to have been committed or disbursed.

The Bagamoyo port agreement was signed in March 2013 between Tanzania and China during President Kikwete's tenure in office. The project involved China Merchant Holdings International (CMHI) and Oman's sovereign wealth fund. The late President of Tanzania, John Pombe Magufuli, made remarks on the Bagamoyo port contract terms, calling them 'dubious, unpatriotic, crazy, and stating that only a crazy person can accept the contract terms. The contested contract terms include:

- A proposed 99-year lease of the port area by the Chinese investor.
- A proposed operator guarantee/concession period of 33 years (or similar) before extension. For example, a 33-year operator guarantee plus a 99-year land lease.
- Exclusive operational rights that allow the investor to restrict the development of Tanga and Mtwara ports, thereby securing the port's dominance.
- Tax holiday/special status demands: The investor reportedly requested exemptions from various taxes (VAT, customs duty, land tax, skills levy) and internal auditing controls.
- Control over linked infrastructure, such as logistics and rail links (e.g., the Standard

Gauge Railway spur to Ruvu), was part of the demands.

President Magufuli finally suspended the agreement in 2019, citing terms "exploitative and awkward." In the renegotiation process, Tanzania offered revised contractual terms, e.g., a lease reduced from 99 to 33 years; no tax holiday; the investor must pay market rates for utilities; and the government retains approval rights over various businesses in the zone. The contract terms pose a significant financial risk to Tanzania, including long concession periods, generous privileges for the investor, and a potential loss of regulatory/control rights. The government's strong pushback indicates awareness of the implications for sovereignty, revenue, and development.

The very long concession and land lease terms, tax exemptions, and control over rail/logistics would reduce Tanzania's ability to capture benefits, including by subjecting its sovereignty and revenues to risk. Equally, the project required clearing large areas (887 ha in the initial area) and relocating residents, thereby increasing environmental risks in the coastal ecosystem near Bagamoyo. In addition, because the agreement was suspended and renegotiated, the anticipated benefits have been delayed, leading to opportunity costs (e.g., foregone industrial growth, locked-in land). Finally, the port's success depends on inland connectivity; if port readiness outruns rail/road links, Bagamoyo risks becoming a "sea-ready, land-weak" node.

For Tanzania, the BRI represents an opportunity to acquire financing and material support for infrastructure projects that have been on the

drawing board for years. Tanzania faces challenges with inadequate roads, railroads, ports, energy pipelines, power grids, and water projects. Other potential benefits include industrial parks, shipping facilities, and exhibition halls for trade fairs and tourist attractions. In general, the BRI has a great potential to offer the following benefits to Tanzania:

Looking at the size and scope of the BRI economies, one could see that they account for one-third of global GDP and trade, and for close to two-thirds of the world's population. For some BRI countries, poverty rates, which are the percentage of the population living below the poverty line (\$1.90 a day), are still high, averaging 20 to 25 percent in East African countries, including Tanzania. If BRI projects are successful, they will benefit a large number of poor people and have significant positive spillover effects on global welfare.

There is also considerable, unexploited potential in the BRI economies, which are increasingly integrated with the rest of the world and with one another. The contribution of BRI countries to global exports has nearly doubled over the last two decades. But a few BRI economies, particularly China, are accountable for the major share of the exports. The trade of various BRI economies, for instance, EAC countries, is below potential due to weak policies and inadequate infrastructure. If successful, the BRI could help fulfill these gaps, advancing international commerce, especially for countries that have been unable to join to the world economy fully.

Regarding connectivity, it currently takes approximately 30 days to transport goods from China to Central Europe, with most goods being shipped by sea. Transporting goods by train can cut transit time in half, but costs high. There is a trade-off between saving time and saving money: each day's delay in getting an item from the factory gate to the consumer is anticipated to reduce trade by 1%. Enhancing the capacity and network of railways and other transport infrastructure in EAC countries, including Tanzania, could lead to increased trade across the borders, greater investment, and improved growth in BRI economies. Regional cooperation on infrastructure developments is needed to resolve this challenge. If successful, BRI projects are poised to facilitate trade in some of the world's most crucial economic corridors.

Although the BRI offers an exceptional opportunity for African countries to improve their underdeveloped infrastructure, which has largely hindered the continent's economic progress and prosperity, this study also argues that infrastructure development is not a panacea for achieving socioeconomic development. Infrastructure development is only a catalyst to fuel such development. Other factors are at play as well: sound fiscal and monetary policy, transparent and accountable leadership that has zero-tolerance on corruption, and mismanagement of public resources, independent and vibrant media, a strong civil society that speaks truth to power, strong and uncompressed opposition political parties, rule of law, and civically competent citizenry that is fully aware of its rights and obligations.

Notwithstanding the above disposition, African countries should leverage the Chinese government's resources to improve logistics and connectivity, enabling goods and commodities to be integrated into the global market. The BRI becomes a threat when its massive foreign aid package leaves poor countries indebted to China, thereby jeopardising their sovereignty.

The Bagamoyo port project is very important to the Tanzanian economy and to East Africa as a whole. The government of Tanzania should use this opportunity wisely by entering into agreements that guarantee mutual benefits for all actors involved in the Bagamoyo port. The port's successful implementation will help Tanzania enhance trade infrastructure connectivity and logistics, create opportunities for greater investment, and improve the country's investment profile in Africa.

The Study recommends that Tanzania and other African states engage in BRI projects to achieve rapid development. BRI intends to enhance African state capacity by leveraging China's extensive, long-standing experience in international economic affairs. Infrastructure development will open up opportunities, private businesses will flourish, and jobs will be created and further developed.

Although critics of BRI attribute the project to debt-trap diplomacy, the study examines Africa's history. It concludes that the core source of African underdevelopment is the invented structural adjustment program (SAPs) imposed by Western countries through their economic agencies, the IMF and the WB, which created a massive debt trap for the African economy. The implementation of the structural adjustment policy hindered infrastructure

development across Africa, making it difficult for African countries to achieve sustainable development. The article calls for China to remain open and listen to concerns and comments for the BRI implementation adjustment initiative, including the Bagamoyo Port's construction controversy.

Acknowledgement

I wish to acknowledge the individuals whose intellectual contributions strengthened this article. In particular, I acknowledge the intellectual contributions of Mr. David Jeremia Luheja, both in conceptualization and data analysis. His contribution was indeed instrumental in shaping this paper.

Funding

The author has not received a specific grant for this research from any funding agency in the commercial, public and or from the not-for-profit sectors.

Competing interests

None declared.

Ethical Consideration: As this study did not collect data from individuals, all other ethical research principles were observed throughout the research process.

References

- Alden, C., & Alves, C. (2008). History & identity in the construction of China's Africa policy. *Review of African Political Economy*, 35(1), 43–58.
- Babbie, E. (1992). *The practices of social research* (6th ed.). Wadsworth Publishing Company.
- Belt and Road News. (2020). Significance of Belt & Road initiative to Nigeria. *Belt and Road News*.
- Blanchard, J.-M. F. (2020). Problematic prognostications about China's Maritime Silk Road Initiative (MSRI): Lessons from Africa and the Middle East. *Journal of Contemporary China*, 29(122), 159-174. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10670564.2019.1637565>
- Broadman, H. G. (2021). Africa's debt dance with China in creating the Belt Road Initiative. <https://www.theafricareport.com/81857/africas-debt-dance-with-china-in-creating-the-belt-road-initiative/>
- Burimaso, A. (2018). Strengthening security and political stability to encourage BRI investment in EAC: Learning from Tanzania. *Journal of the Institute of African Studies*, 12(1), 151–159.
- Cabestan, J.-P., & Chaponniere, J.-R. (2016). Tanzania-China all-weather friendship from socialism to globalization: A case of relative decline. A discussion paper. Centre for Chinese Studies. Stellenbosch University. <https://scholar.sun.ac.za/server/api/core/bitstreams/dddb76ef-4f6d-4252-8d8b-e06ff516c239/content>
- Carnegie Endowment for International Peace. (2021). Can the BRI and B3W coexist in Africa? <https://carnegieendowment.org/2021/07/15/canbri-and-b3w-coexist-in-africa-event-7666>
- CGTN. (2021). China and Tanzania reach important agreement on cooperation. <https://news.cgtn.com/news/2021-01-08/Wang-Yi-hails-the-four-important-consensuses-reached-with-Tanzania-WTlqxkNmhO/index.html>
- Chellaney, B. (2016, January 26). Upholding the Asian order. *New Vision*. <https://www.newvision.co.ug/news/1415635/upholding-asian>
- Conteh, F. (2020). The Gambia–China relations and its strategies to restrain the Western influences in the Gambia (Master's thesis). State Islamic University Syarif Hidayatullah UIN Jakarta.
- Cross, J. (2015). The economy of anticipation: Hope, infrastructure, and economic zones in South India. *Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa and the Middle East*, 35(3), 424–437. <https://doi.org/10.1215/1089201X-3426277>
- Das, K. (2017). The making of One Belt, One Road and dilemmas in South Asia. *China Report*, 53(2), 125–142.
- Djankov, S., & Miner, S. (Eds.). (2016). *China's Belt and Road Initiative: Motives, Scope,*

- and Challenges. Peterson Institute for International Economics.
- Edinger, H., & Labuschagne, J.-P. (2018). If you want to prosper, consider building roads: China's role in African infrastructure and capital projects. *Deloitte Insights*. https://www2.deloitte.com/content/dam/insights/us/articles/za22330_consider-building-roads/DI-If-you-want-to-prosper-consider-building-roads.pdf
- Grant, C. (2010). India's response to China's rise (CER Policy Brief). Centre for European Reform.
- Hammerstrøm, K., Wade, A., Hanz, K., & Jørgensen, A. K. (2010). Searching for studies: Information retrieval methods group policy brief. A *Campbell Collaboration Policy Brief*. <https://citeseerx.ist.psu.edu/viewdoc/download?doi=10.1.1.366.294&rep=rep1&type=pdf>
- Higgins, J. P. T., & Green, S. (2011). *Cochrane Handbook for Systematic Reviews of Interventions* (Version 5.1.0). The Cochrane Collaboration. Available from: <http://handbook-5-1.cochrane.org>
- Hönke, J. (2018). Beyond the gatekeeper state: African infrastructure hubs as sites of experimentation. *Third World Thematics: A TWQ Journal*, 3(3), 347–363. <https://doi.org/10.1080/23802014.2018.1456954>
- Hurley, J., Morris, S., & Portelance, G. (2018). Examining the debt implications of the Belt and Road Initiative from a policy perspective.
- Hursh, J. (2019). A bump in the belt and road: Tanzania pushes back against Chinese port project. *CIMSEC*. <https://cimsec.org/a-bump-in-the-belt-and-road-tanzania-pushes-back-against-chinese-port-project/>
- IMF. (2018). *Regional Economic Outlook: Sub-Saharan Africa – Domestic Resource Mobilisation and Private Investment*. IMF, Washington.
- Jacob, J. T. (2017). China's Belt and Road Initiative: Perspectives from India. *China & World Economy*, 25(5), 78–100.
- Jansson, J., Burke, C., & Hon, T. (2009). Patterns of Chinese investment, aid and trade in Tanzania: A briefing paper. Centre for Chinese Studies, University of Stellenbosch.
- Jha, P. S. (2016). Why India must embrace China's One Belt One Road plan. *The Wire*. <https://thewire.in/diplomacy/india-must-embrace-chinas-one-belt-one-road-plan>
- Joshi, M. (2018, March 9). Fresh overtures hint at a thaw in India-China relations. *Asia Times*. <https://asiatimes.com/2018/03/fresh-overtures-hint-thaw-india-china-relations/>
- Kang'ereha, D. (2018). Construction of US\$10bn Bagamoyo port in good progress. *Construction Review Online*. <https://constructionreviewonline.com/news/tanzania/construction-us-10bn-bagamoyo-port-good-progress/>
- Kim, Y., & Tukić, N. (2018). Tanzanian infrastructure development and the role of China: The case of Bagamoyo port. Stellenbosch University. https://www0.sun.ac.za/ccs/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/CCS_PB_Tanzania_infrastructure_development_China_2018.pdf
- Kulkarni, S. (2017, May 25). BJP's Belt and Road myopia. *The Indian Express*. <https://indianexpress.com/article/opinion/columns/bjps-belt-and-road-myopia-ram-madhav-narendra-modi-government-4672396/>
- Larkin, B. (2013). The politics and poetics of infrastructure. *Annual Review of Anthropology*, 42(1), 327–343.
- Lin, J. Y. (2022). China's Belt and Road Initiative: The rationale and likely impacts of the new structural economics perspective. *Journal of International Business Policy*, 5(2), 259–265. <https://doi.org/10.1057/s42214-022-00138-9>
- Marais, H., & Labuschagne, J.-P. (2021). If you want to prosper, consider building roads: China's role in African infrastructure and capital projects. *Deloitte Insights*. <https://www2.deloitte.com/us/en/insights/industry/public-sector/china-investment-africa-infrastructure-development.html>
- Mishra, A. (2019). Tough conditions and unfavorable demands: Does China risk losing Tanzania's Bagamoyo port project? *Observer Research Foundation*.

- <https://www.orfonline.org/expert-speak/tough-conditions-and-unfavorable-demands-does-china-risk-losing-tanzanias-bagamoyo-port-project-56891>
- Mwadi Makengo, B., Mimbale Molanga, J., Kamanda Londo, P., & Mbutamuntu, J.-M. (2022). Understanding the strategic opposition between the Build Back Better World [B3W] and Belt and Road Initiative [BRI]. *Academia Letters*, 5202, 1–7. <https://doi.org/10.20935/AL5202>
- Nedopil, C. (2021). Countries of the Belt and Road Initiative. <https://greenfdc.org/countries-of-the-belt-and-road-initiative-bri>
- Ng'wanakilala, F. (2013, May 31). Tanzania signs port deal with China Merchants Holdings. *Reuters*. <https://www.reuters.com/article/tanzania-china-infrastructure-idUSL5N0EB3RU20130530/>
- Noah, W. M. (2021). Who will win the strategic long game? The G7's Build Back Better World or China's Belt and Road Initiative? *Sochin Research Institute Research N*, 1–5.
- Sacks, D. (2021). Countries in China's Belt and Road Initiative: Who's in and who's out. <https://www.cfr.org/blog/countries-chinas-belt-and-road-initiative-whos-and-whosout>
- Shida, W. (2017). Bilateral economic ties between China and Sri Lanka. In H. M. G. Palihakkara (Ed.), *The Island of the Lion and the Land of the Dragon*. Pathfinder Institute.
- Shadish, W., & Myers, D. (2004). Research design policy brief. <https://citeseerx.ist.psu.edu/viewdoc/download?doi=10.1.1.174.1744&rep=rep1&type=pdf>
- Stobdan, P. (2016). Benefitting from China's Belt and Road Initiative. *IDS Comment*. <https://bit.ly/2vWPWih>
- Wippel, S., Bromber, K., Steiner, C., & Krawietz, B. (Eds.). (2016). *Under construction: Logics of urbanism in the Gulf region*. Ashgate.
- World Bank. (2016). Dar Es Salaam Maritime Gateway Project. *Project Information Document (PID) Concept Stage*.
- Yamada, G., & Palma, S. (2018). Is China's Belt and Road working? A progress report from eight countries. *Nikkei Asia*. <https://asian.nikkei.com/spotlight/cover-story/Is-China-s-Belt-and-Road-working-A-progress-report-from-eight-countries>
- Zanzibar is endowed with potential resources that can transform the Islands into a business centre like Dubai. (2017, May 10). *Daily News*. <http://dailynews.co.tz/index.php/home-news/50484-zanzibar-economic-prospects-promising>