



TAIWAN'S INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION DEVELOPMENT IN THE POST-COVID ERA: PERCEPTION AND CHALLENGES IN THE GLOBAL ARENA

Sadia Rahman*

Department of International and Strategic Studies, Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences,
Universiti Malaya, 50603 Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia
E-mail: sadia.rahman@um.edu.my

Published online: 29 August 2025

To cite this article: Rahman, S. 2025. Taiwan's international cooperation development in the post-COVID era: Perception and challenges in the global arena. *International Journal of Asia Pacific Studies* 21 (2): 297–315. <https://doi.org/10.21315/ijaps2025.21.2.15>

To link to this article: <https://doi.org/10.21315/ijaps2025.21.2.15>

ABSTRACT

This article critically examines Taiwan's international development cooperation strategy in the post-COVID-19 era, focusing on the role of the International Cooperation and Development Fund (ICDF) as both a foreign aid mechanism and a political communication tool. Situated within the broader geopolitical tension with China and Taiwan's diplomatic isolation, the article employs a qualitative methodology, including document analysis, to trace the historical evolution of Taiwan's development aid strategy. It explores how Taiwan's transition from aid recipient to emerging donor has shaped its foreign policy goals, particularly through soft power and liberal institutionalist frameworks. The analysis highlights Taiwan's efforts during the pandemic, including health diplomacy, capacity-building projects, and multilateral collaborations, as strategic tools to gain international goodwill and political legitimacy. However, these initiatives face significant challenges due to China's coercive diplomacy, economic incentives to Taiwan's allies, and the persistent application of the One China Policy in multilateral institutions like the World Health Organization (WHO). Despite its robust humanitarian contributions, Taiwan's aid often yields limited diplomatic returns, as evidenced by the loss of key allies such as Nauru and Honduras. The article argues for recalibrating global governance norms to recognise non-sovereign entities' developmental contributions and proposes practical reforms to enable Taiwan's observer status in international organisations. By contrasting Taiwan's transparent and capacity-driven aid model with China's debt-heavy infrastructure diplomacy, the article underscores the ethical and strategic value of Taiwan's international cooperation. The article concludes by recommending institutional innovations to enhance Taiwan's participation in global development and public health systems.

Keywords: Taiwan, foreign aid, ICDF, post-COVID, global governance norms

INTRODUCTION

The economic fallout of the pandemic has been severe, disrupting global supply chains and destabilising markets. Smaller economies, which are heavily reliant on sectors like tourism and exports, have faced significant setbacks. Moreover, the pandemic exacerbated pre-existing social inequalities, pushing millions into poverty and exacerbating food insecurity (Ferreira 2021). It also highlighted and exposed vulnerabilities and weaknesses in governance structures, particularly in smaller countries with limited administrative capacity. As countries emerge from the immediate crisis, there is a critical need to focus on sustainable development in the

post-COVID era to build the economic resilience capacities of smaller countries against future shocks [United Nations (UN) 2020]. Foreign aid or development cooperation plays a pivotal role in this regard, supporting initiatives that promote sustainable economic growth, environmental conservation, and social development. Relatedly, these forms of assistance have been vital in stabilising these economies through direct financial support, debt relief, and investments in critical sectors. Multilateral organisations, such as the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank, provide crucial assistance, helping countries maintain fiscal stability and invest in recovery efforts.

As the 14th richest country in the world,¹ Taiwan has also demonstrated its commitment to assisting smaller developing countries by providing financial assistance [Overseas Community Affairs Council (OCAC) 2023]. According to the latest statistics, Taiwan spent approximately USD432 million as development aid cooperation with partner countries in Africa, Asia, and Latin America [Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA) 2023a]. During the COVID-19 pandemic, under the leadership of President Tsai Ing-wen, Taiwan's successful fight against the COVID-19 pandemic can be attributed to internal factors ranging from political decision-making, contribution from civil-society and leverage of technology. Taiwan's government promptly established the Taiwan Central Epidemic Command. The Taiwanese government leveraged digital technology in various forms, including contact tracing, digital fencing, and linking government databases, for effective public health interventions. For instance, Taiwan's National Health Insurance provided affordable and easy access to high quality healthcare which was evidenced during the COVID-19 pandemic with automated payments, integrated chip National Health Insurance Cards and contracting 93% Command Centre, which was made possible by the linking of different databases (National Health Insurance Administration 2023).

Additionally, Taiwan's concerted efforts attracted global attention to its COVID-19 combat model and its significance to the international community. This included donating masks under the slogan "Taiwan Can Help" (Grano 2022) of the campaign, participating in multilateral dialogue forums like the APEC Health Working Group Meeting, holding global health forums, and establishing R&D cooperation with like-minded countries [Ministry of Health and Welfare (MOHW) 2020]. Taiwan's effective handling of the COVID-19 pandemic and its contributions to disease prevention earned it praise from international media and support from major and middle powers like the United States (US), Canada, and Australia (Chang 2020). However, the Taiwanese government believes that its contributions to COVID-19 prevention have been constrained by its lack of membership in multilateral bodies such as the UN and the World Health Organization (WHO) (MOHW 2020).

Due to its successful containment of COVID-19 and the associated health crisis, the administration of former President Tsai Ing-wen initiated a renewed campaign to garner support for Taiwan's entry into the WHO. The international community, including various governments and media outlets, acknowledged the efficacy of the Taiwan model and advocated for its meaningful participation in the World Health Assembly (WHA) sessions. Despite these efforts, Taiwan's attempt to secure entry into the WHO and WHA was thwarted by Beijing's influence within the organisation (Chen and Cohen 2020). Nevertheless, Taiwan successfully amplified its case on the global stage through sustained media attention. Taiwan's then 14 diplomatic allies endorsed Taiwan's meaningful participation in the WHA based on the principle of inclusiveness (MOFA 2023b). However, despite growing international support, Taiwan did not receive an invitation from the WHO to attend the 73rd WHA in 2023. In this context, it became imperative for Taiwan to engage with the global community in all possible ways to contribute to post-pandemic

economic recovery and build further goodwill. Consequently, Taiwan has sought to leverage its foreign aid through the International Cooperation and Development Fund (ICDF) to garner broader support from the international community for its participation in the WHO and other relevant organisations.

Before the COVID-19 pandemic, Taiwan had been utilising its development cooperation aid as a political communication strategy (Alexander 2015), with a focus on strengthening bilateral ties with its allies. During the pandemic, Taiwan's international engagement intensified through its "Taiwan Can Help" campaign, which provided medical aid, vaccines, and technical expertise to various countries despite its exclusion from the WHO. The pandemic period reinforced Taiwan's position as a responsible global actor, elevating its international visibility. Building on the scholarship of Taiwan, which leverages its development cooperation aid as a political communication strategy, the article attempts to determine whether post-COVID-19 Taipei has successfully garnered political support from its diplomatic allies. This is particularly through the implementation of ICDF projects in host countries. As a result, a correlation will be explored between the level and form of development cooperation and the resulting political dynamics between Taiwan and aid recipient countries in the post-COVID period. Considering Taiwan's primary foreign policy objective of seeking international recognition as a sovereign entity, the article also examines whether aid recipient countries succumb to China's pressure or continue to support Taiwan.

To systematically and effectively capture the transition over time, a qualitative research methodology is used, incorporating document analysis and qualitative insights. The qualitative component complements the comprehensive exploration of the ICDF's efforts, drawing on contextual insights, perceptions, and impacts of Taiwan's aid initiatives. Aligned with the main argument, the document analysis systematically examines a wide array of official documents, including policy papers, agreements, public statements, and ICDF project reports, to uncover the strategic objectives and formal narratives shaping Taiwan's aid programmes. However, the above contextualisation would not be complete without discussing the pre-COVID-19 phase. To completely understand the evolution of Taiwan's international aid strategy in the post-COVID-19 landscape, the article first examines how its role as an emerging donor has historically developed, particularly how it transitioned from recipient to donor under changing geopolitical conditions. Thus, the first section of the article focuses on Taiwan's foreign aid engagement prior to COVID-19. This historical trajectory of economic development and institutionalised aid capacity laid the groundwork for Taiwan's robust international cooperation strategy during and after the COVID-19 pandemic. The pandemic created an urgent need for humanitarian support, global solidarity, and public health infrastructure needs that Taiwan was uniquely positioned to address, despite its exclusion from major intergovernmental organisations (IGOs). The pre-existing framework of the ICDF, rooted in decades of development cooperation experience, enabled Taiwan to mobilise resources swiftly, deliver targeted aid, and reinforce its soft power narrative through transparency, responsiveness, and technical expertise. Thus, Taiwan's post-COVID foreign aid activities are not ad hoc responses but rather a natural extension of its long-standing trajectory from recipient to donor, strategically aligned with liberal institutionalist principles and shaped by its diplomatic marginalisation. The pandemic merely accelerated the visibility of Taiwan's development diplomacy, highlighting how its economic maturity and normative commitment to international cooperation converge in times of global crisis.

The transition is further explored in the second section, which underscores the evolution of Taiwan's aid cooperation ecosystem, with a particular focus on the role of ICDF before, during, and after the pandemic. It is a crucial section as it analyses the formalisation of ICDF and its objectives. Subsequently, the third section addresses the impact of the Chinese government's

intimidation tactics on Taiwanese allies and development partners, which limits ICDF advocacy. This is noticeable in the post-pandemic geopolitical landscape, emphasising how these dynamics influence the relationships between Taiwan and its allies through development cooperation. Relatedly, the findings depict Taiwan's difficulties in the international community, particularly due to its unique political status and limited recognition as a sovereign state. This includes the challenges of securing diplomatic recognition, navigating international relations, and maintaining alliances through development aid. The article concludes by providing potential recommendations to include Taiwan in the WHO and other international organisations that foster inclusivity.

TAIWAN'S POSITION AS AN EMERGING DONOR: ECONOMIC MATURATION

To understand Taiwan's evolving role in global development, it is essential to engage with theoretical frameworks that capture both its aspirations for soft power and the structural limitations it faces. In particular, liberal institutionalism offers a valuable lens for analysing Taiwan's norm-driven aid strategies in the absence of formal diplomatic recognition. Theoretically, Taiwan's political communication strategy aligns with the principles of liberal institutionalism. It is a widely recognised approach in international relations that emphasises the role of institutions in fostering cooperation between countries. Developed by experts such as Robert Keohane and Joseph Nye, liberal institutionalism posits that countries are not merely driven by self-interest but can achieve mutual benefits through international institutions, norms, and cooperative frameworks (Keohane 1984; Keohane and Martin 1995). This theory highlights how institutionalised interactions shape state behaviour, promoting collective problem-solving mechanisms and diminishing security dilemmas typically associated with power politics. From a political communication perspective, liberal institutionalism suggests that states engage in structured and strategic messaging through international organisations, development assistance programmes, and diplomatic engagements to project legitimacy, foster cooperation, and advance foreign policy objectives. Political communication within this framework is not merely about rhetorical persuasion but involves institutionally embedded actions that establish credibility, shape perceptions, and create interdependent relationships among states. Taiwan, as a diplomatically constrained actor, effectively utilises international development assistance as a form of political communication to reinforce its commitment to global governance, position itself as a reliable development partner, and counteract diplomatic isolation imposed by China's geopolitical influence.

Liberal institutionalism suggests that actors engage in institutionalised frameworks not only for material benefits but also for political legitimacy and recognition (Abbott and Snidal 1998). Taiwan's participation in international development through the ICDF reflects a strategic use of institutional mechanisms to communicate its global relevance and commitment to international cooperation. Since Taiwan is excluded from many major IGOs such as the UN and the WHO due to diplomatic pressures, its alternative strategy involves embedding itself in global governance through development aid mechanisms. By structuring its engagement within internationally recognised aid frameworks, Taiwan reinforces the principles of reciprocity, transparency, and norm-driven cooperation, fundamental to liberal institutionalist thought. Furthermore, the ICDF serves as a tool for signalling Taiwan's adherence to international norms, demonstrating that its foreign policy aligns with the principles of multilateralism, capacity-building, and the provision of global public goods—elements strongly emphasised in the liberal institutionalist literature (Ikenberry 2001). By offering economic and humanitarian assistance, Taiwan reconfigures traditional state-centric diplomatic relations, utilising economic interdependence and

institutional trust-building to compensate for its lack of formal diplomatic recognition. It also fosters soft power diplomacy by constructing positive narratives about Taiwan's contributions to global development.

Correspondingly, Taiwan's long-standing transformation from an aid recipient to a donor nation provides a pre-COVID foundation for understanding its post-pandemic aid approach. Before COVID-19, Taiwan had institutionalised its development cooperation framework and its economic development, rooted in import substitution, export-led industrialisation, and strong trade ties with the US, which played a crucial role in enabling this shift. Following World War II and the Chinese Civil War, Taiwan faced significant economic challenges and received substantial foreign aid, predominantly from the US. The Taiwan Foreign Aid Policy White Paper 2009 acknowledges the critical role that US economic aid played in Taiwan's initial reconstruction and economic stabilisation (MOFA 2009). Scholarly estimates suggest that between 1950 and 1965, Taiwan received a total of USD1.4 billion from the US, averaging approximately USD100 million annually (Hugar 2022). During this period, US financial aid constituted 6.4% of Taiwan's gross national product (GNP), 34% of its gross investment, and 91% of its net import surplus of goods and services (Jacoby 1966).

Despite ideological differences with the Chinese Nationalist Republic of China (ROC) government, the US administration continued to provide economic and military assistance to Taiwan from 1950 to 1965, primarily as part of its containment strategy against the backdrop of Cold War geopolitics (as shown in Table 1). While the primary objective of US aid was to curb the spread of communism in Asia, supporting Taiwan economically was integral to ensuring that Taiwan remained a robust, non-communist ally in the region (Lee and Chang 2014). Thus, the US aid facilitated Taiwan's transformation from an aid recipient to an aid donor through several mechanisms. First, it provided the financial resources necessary for Taiwan to rebuild its economy after the devastation of World War II and the Chinese Civil War. This aid was essential for infrastructure projects, agricultural development, and industrialisation. Beyond financial support, the US also furnished technical assistance and expertise, enabling Taiwan to adopt modern agricultural techniques, improve public health, and develop its industries. Second, the US opened its markets to Taiwanese goods, thereby, laying the foundations for trade relations and promoting Taiwan's export-driven economic model. This trade relationship was crucial for Taiwan's economic growth.

Table 1: Sector-wise US economic aid to Taiwan (1951–1965)

Sector	Amount (USD million)	%
Infrastructure	235.9	44.3
Agriculture	56.1	10.5
Human resources	140.7	26.4
Industry	100.1	18.8
Total	532.8	100.0

Source: Chang (2011: 8).

During the 1950s and early 1960s, Taiwan implemented import substitution industrialisation policies aimed at reducing its reliance on imports by fostering the development of local industries. This approach laid a foundation for subsequent industrial growth. By the late 1960s, Taiwan transitioned to an export-oriented industrialisation strategy (Irwin 2021). The

government established export processing zones and provided various incentives to promote export industries. This strategic shift attracted foreign investment and technology, significantly enhancing industrial production and exports. The combination of effective government policies, a skilled workforce, and robust international trade relations facilitated rapid economic growth. The United States Agency for International Development (USAID) discussion paper titled *An Evaluation of US Economic Aid to Free China (1951–1965)* highlights a critical observation: “Even if Free China had been able to survive the initial years without US aid, which is by no means certain, aid probably doubled the annual growth rate of GNP and cut thirty years from the time needed to attain 1964 standards of living” (Jacoby 1966: 46–47). Taiwan successfully diversified its economy from agriculture to manufacturing and high-tech industries, establishing itself as a significant player in global markets (Bednarski 2023). Notably, despite receiving economic aid from the US, Taiwan had already begun its development cooperation as an aid donor nation, exemplified by the visit of Taiwanese agricultural specialists to Vietnam in 1959 (Lin 2020).

Initially, Taiwan’s development cooperation efforts were primarily confined to the agricultural sector and focused on smaller countries in Africa, until it developed significant capacities in areas such as industrialisation and public infrastructure (as shown in Table 2). Despite its limited capacities, Taiwan has managed to provide development assistance by dispatching over 2,000 technical experts to more than 50 countries worldwide, particularly to its diplomatic allies in Africa and Latin America. By the 1990s, Taiwan had achieved a high level of economic maturity, joining the ranks of the “four Asian tigers” alongside Hong Kong, Singapore, and South Korea (Gulati 1992). This economic success facilitated Taiwan’s transition from an aid recipient to a donor. Consequently, Taiwan began providing development assistance and technical aid to other developing countries, especially in Asia, Africa, and Latin America (Lee 1993). Subsequently, the establishment of the ICDF in 1996 formalised Taiwan’s foreign aid initiatives, emphasising humanitarian aid, technical cooperation, and capacity building. While domestic economic development was crucial for Taiwan’s emergence as an aid donor, the unfavourable political environment also motivated Taiwan to actively engage in development cooperation with its allies and friendly countries. However, despite a substantial increase in foreign trade volume from USD3.9 billion in 1971 to USD39.5 billion in 1988, Taiwan faced the severing of diplomatic ties with 50 countries. It saw its official membership in international organisations decline to a mere eight bodies during the same period (Lee 1993).

Table 2: Evolution of Taiwan’s development aid cooperation ecosystem

Year	Project
1959	Agricultural technical mission in Saigoan, Vietnam
1961	Operation Vanguard: technical missions to improve agriculture in African countries
1962	Sino-Africa Technical Cooperation Committee (SATCC) (a permanent agency for expanding agricultural cooperation with Africa countries)
1972	Merger of SATCC into Committee of International Technical Cooperation (CITC)
1989	International Economic Development Cooperation Fund (IEDCF) to provide economic assistance to developing partners
1996	ICDF followed by merging CITC next year

Sources: Taiwan ICDF (2023a) and MOFA (2009).

Furthermore, the expansion of foreign trade did not yield significant diplomatic benefits, as only 5% of Taiwan’s trade was with countries that officially recognised it as an independent sovereign entity. Thus, in the ensuing decade of the 1990s, Taiwan’s leadership recognised the importance

of foreign aid and the political communication it entailed for gaining diplomatic favours from partner countries. This understanding is reflected in the substantial increase in Taiwan's budgetary allocation for international development cooperation, which rose from USD120 million in 1992 (Lee 1993) to USD432 million in 2022 (MOFA 2023b).

ICDF'S OBJECTIVES AND OPERATIONALITY

Taiwan's development assistance through the ICDF acquired heightened strategic relevance in the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic. The global health crisis amplified the demand for credible, transparent, and norm-driven development actors qualities that Taiwan, constrained by its exclusion from multilateral institutions, effectively projected through ICDF-led initiatives. As the pandemic disrupted traditional channels of diplomacy, Taiwan leveraged the ICDF's operational infrastructure to extend technical expertise, medical aid, and pandemic relief to partner countries. This not only addressed urgent humanitarian needs but also reaffirmed Taiwan's commitment to global solidarity and sustainable development. In doing so, the ICDF became a key vector for Taiwan's post-COVID soft power strategy, allowing Taipei to transform developmental aid into a form of political communication that counters China's exclusionary tactics and underscores Taiwan's legitimacy as a responsible stakeholder in global governance. Thus, the ICDF's institutional objectives rooted in long-term socio-economic cooperation became seamlessly aligned with Taiwan's post-pandemic diplomatic recalibration.

The strategic use of ICDF is not an isolated phenomenon but rather a continuation of its enduring engagement with institutional frameworks that promote global governance and multilateralism. The evolution of aid strategy, particularly through the ICDF, must be understood within the broader historical trajectory of its economic transformation. Before the COVID-19 pandemic, Taiwan's development aid strategy focused on strengthening bilateral relations through infrastructure development, technical cooperation, and humanitarian assistance. Channelling through ICDF, prioritised aid sectors were agriculture, public health, and education to bolster its soft power and diplomatic recognition. Since its establishment in 1996, the ICDF has catalysed the enhancement of Taiwan's global foreign relations. The ICDF's cooperation framework encompasses assisting friendly and developing countries in their socio-economic development and strengthening human resource capabilities. To achieve these goals, the ICDF has utilised its expertise in technical standards, international education and training, and industrial development, along with providing necessary investments to implement cooperation projects with beneficiary countries. The operational responsibilities of the ICDF for partner countries cover seven key categories:

1. socio-economic development;
2. promotion of bilateral economic ties;
3. cooperation with IGOS and domestic government;
4. humanitarian assistance to international refugees;
5. technical and human resource support for industrial capacity building;
6. operating overseas missions; and
7. bolstering international cooperation and developing good relations with partner countries (Taiwan ICDF).

Although the ICDF has emphasised non-political operations to foster development cooperation with targeted beneficiaries, these efforts also contribute to building a positive image and public opinion, which can translate into support for Taiwan from partner countries.

While nation-states often present their development financing or foreign aid models as part of a humanitarian effort or adherence to international norms, it is generally understood that strategic objectives and geopolitical considerations frequently underpin philanthropic endeavours. These strategic and geopolitical factors primarily influence the selection of donors and recipients within the international community. When powerful nation-states design their foreign aid strategies, their generosity often aligns with national interests related to the global balance of power dynamics. In such zero-sum contexts, foreign aid becomes a tool for exerting influence or power over the intended beneficiary state. As noted by Williams (2022: 1), “Donors do not exist in a vacuum. Rather, the objective they seek to realise through their aid allocation in developing countries generates externalities for other donors that either supplement or cancel out efforts of other donors to realise their objectives”. This suggests that development aid, for both donors and recipients, is contingent upon the prevailing balance of power dynamics at any given time. While this logic is universally applicable to major powers competing for influence, development financing is not confined to them alone; even smaller countries contribute and raise their stakes within the political economy of aid. Given Taiwan’s small size and vulnerable geopolitical position, however, Williams’ argument may not fully be applicable when deciphering the objectives of the ICDF. Taiwan’s foreign aid initiatives, through the ICDF, are shaped by a unique set of circumstances that distinguish its strategy from those of major powers.

To seek a rational explanation for why smaller nations, such as Taiwan, are motivated to enhance their contributions to global socio-economic development through foreign aid strategies, the concept of political communication strategies is relevant. It is a strategy, per se, that smaller countries employ to reach the international community. Colin Alexander has suggested that substantial evidence indicates the ICDF functions as a communications vanguard for the domestic and international priorities of the Taiwan government (Alexander 2015). For smaller countries, development assistance serves as a form of political communication and a mechanism for creating mutual benefits, leading to interdependence. Moreover, foreign aid and development assistance provided by donor countries are influenced not only by material benefits but also by concerns about identity and status. Development assistance often helps donor countries enhance their identity and moral standing on the international stage, even when material benefits are minimal (Finnemore and Sikkink 1998). As Joseph Nye’s (2017) concept of soft power suggests, attraction and persuasion are key methods to achieve goals by influencing others. Development assistance is a crucial element of soft power, helping to establish and maintain a positive image among recipients and create favourable perceptions (Wilson 2008).

Similarly, Taiwan, through its ICDF, leverages its expertise in various fields, including agriculture and healthcare, to cooperate with other countries and foster socio-economic partnerships. It also strategically aligns its aid initiatives with soft power diplomacy. It is significant to note that development assistance programmes have varied goals for different countries, depending on their political status in the international system (as shown in Table 3). However, it functions within a global environment where development aid is intertwined with geopolitical considerations and diplomatic objectives. In the context of tensions with China, international development cooperation enables Taiwan to enhance its global image and maintain diplomatic allies or friendly nations. However, this task has become increasingly challenging as China leverages its financial power to attract these countries.

Table 3: ICDF projects in different sectors

Category	Country/region	Project
Climate	Central America	The regional project for prevention and control of <i>Fusarium oxysporum</i> f.sp. <i>cubense</i> tropical race 4 of banana
	Saint Vincent and the Grenadines	Disaster management and medical emergency burden reduction development programme preliminary study
	Belize	Urban resilience and disaster prevention project
	Paraguay	Surubi fingerling breeding and cultivation project
	Fiji and Palau	Aquaculture projects
	Saint Kitts and Nevis	The Climate and Ocean Risk Vulnerability Index (CORVI)
Food	Haiti, Indonesia, and Papua New Guinea	The rice production enhancement project, quality rice seed production
	Somaliland	Project for improving production and quality of vegetables and fruits
	Nauru and Tuvalu	Dietary diversity extension project
	Ukraine	Grain company financing project
Inflation	Paraguay	Small, and medium-sized enterprise (SME) mentoring and capacity building
	Saint Lucia	Project for enhancing the efficiency of production-distribution supply chain in the fruit and vegetable sector
	Eswatini	Technical and vocational skills certification enhancement project
		Capacity building project for microfinance ecosystem focusing on grassroots women
	Guatemala	Financial technician dispatch mission
Health	Latin America and the Caribbean	Vocational training project for the youth—online training course for IT certification
	Eswatini	Cash assistance project to complement the maternal and infant health care improvement project
	Saint Kitts and Nevis	Capacity building project for the prevention and control of chronic metabolic disease
	Guatemala	Project for promotion of medical technology for improvement of maternal-neonatal health
	India	Digital health innovation for COVID-19 response
	Haiti	Earthquake “Water, Sanitation and Hygiene” (WASH) assistance to affected communities and households project

Source: Taiwan ICDF (2022a).

Furthermore, China has systematically obstructed Taiwan's meaningful participation in international organisations such as the UN and the WHO, citing sovereignty concerns and influencing international bodies not to recognise Taiwan as a sovereign political entity. To counter China's strategy of isolating Taiwan, the ICDF's role as a medium of political communication is of utmost fundamental importance for Taipei. Correspondingly, acknowledging the severe constraints imposed by the Chinese government, ICDF's former Secretary General, Timothy Hsiang, asserts that Taiwan's position in the international community is challenging, necessitating reliance on allies and friendly countries to advocate for Taiwan as a political entity. He further notes, “With the promotion of Taiwan's ICDF projects, our allied and friendly countries are increasingly aware of Taiwan's kindness and contribution to the international community, and as such, they are willing to support and speak up for us in international events” (FRS Taiwan Program on Security and Diplomacy 2022: 3). Thus, Taiwan's aid programmes are

integral to its diplomatic strategy for maintaining and strengthening international relationships, especially given its unique political status and the limited number of countries that officially recognise it. Through aid and development cooperation, Taiwan seeks to build partnerships and garner support from the international community (as shown in Tables 4 to 6).

Additionally, ICDF facilitates Taiwan's meaningful contributions to global development initiatives by offering technical assistance, financial aid, and support for sustainable development projects in developing countries. This approach aligns with global efforts to alleviate poverty and promote sustainable development. By sharing its own developmental experiences, technological advancements, and economic strategies through the ICDF, Taiwan not only aids recipient countries but also effectively demonstrates its capabilities and achievements, thereby, bolstering its international image and reputation.

Table 4: ICDF projects with diplomatic allies

No.	Country	Project	Political dynamics
1.	Belize	6	Reaffirm strong support to Taiwan during President Tsai's visit in 2024
2.	Guatemala	5	
3.	Haiti	7	China's attempt at offering interest-free loan to lure Haiti, China's Commercial Development Office in Haiti resumes operations
4.	Paraguay	10	Vaccine deal in quid pro quo for One China
5.	Saint Kitts and Nevis	8	Supports Taiwan's UN bid
6.	Saint Lucia	6	Supports Taiwan but history of switching ties
7.	Saint Vincent and the Grenadines	6	Supports Taiwan
8.	Holy See		Pope advocating relations with China
9.	Eswatini	10	Advocated UN seat for Taiwan
10.	Marshall Islands	3	China is employing both economic coercion and lucrative deals to switch their allegiance from Taiwan to China
11.	Palau	6	
12.	Tuvalu	1	

Source: Taiwan ICDF (2023c).

Table 5: ICDF projects with non-diplomatic allies

No.	Country	Project	Political dynamics
1.	Thailand	2	Supports China's one country two systems principle
2.	Indonesia	2	Support One China Policy
3.	Philippines	1	Adherence to One China Policy
4.	Papua New Guinea	1	Closed trade office in Taipei, support One China Policy
5.	Nauru	2	Terminated ties with Taipei in 2024 and supported the One China Policy
6.	Fiji	2	Support One China Policy, Taiwan's trade office in Fiji removed 'ROC' from title
7.	India	1	No reaffirmation of One China Policy after 2020 Ladakh Crisis
8.	Türkiye	3	Commitment to One China Policy
9.	Jordan	1	Supports One China Policy

(continued on next page)

Table 5: (continued)

No.	Country	Project	Political dynamics
10.	Saudi Arabia	3	Supports One China Policy
11.	Bahrain	2	Supports China's peaceful reunification with Taiwan
12.	Lebanon	1	Abiding One China Principle
13.	Uganda	1	Attempt to boycott sports events in Taiwan in 2017 and supports One China Policy
14.	Kenya	1	Adherence to One China Policy
15.	Somaliland	5	Improvement in ties after 2020
16.	Honduras	7	Terminated ties with Taiwan
17.	Turkmenistan	5	Reaffirmation of One China Policy
18.	Moldova	3	Supports One China principle
19.	Romania	3	Adherence to One China Policy but growing ties with Taiwan
20.	Bosnia and Herzegovina	2	Firmly supports One China Policy
21.	Serbia	1	Supports One China Policy
22.	Ukraine	2	Continues One China Policy but proximity with Taiwan on card

Table 6: ICDF cooperation projects with international organisations

Organisation	Project
Afro-Asian Rural Development Organisation	International Human Resources Workshop Development Program
European Bank for Reconstruction and Development	Financial Intermediary and Private Enterprises Investment Special Fund (FIPEISF) – Small Business Account – Phase III
	FIPEISF – Sustainable Agribusiness Value Chain Account
	Special Fund for the High Impact Partnership on Climate Action
Central American Bank for Economic Integration	Regional Lending Program for Coffee Rust in Central America
	Emergency Support and Preparedness Program for COVID-19 and Economic Reactivation – Credit to finance public sector operations
	Emergency Support and Preparedness Program for COVID-19 and Economic Reactivation – Financial sector support facility for micro, small, and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs)
	Assisting the Economic Empowerment of Women in Latin America and the Caribbean in the post-pandemic of COVID-19 – Women's Economic Empowerment Guarantee Project
Inter-American Development Bank	Specialised Financial Intermediary Development Fund
Pan American Development Foundation	International Human Resources Development Workshop Program
United States Agency for International Development	Cooperation projects

Source: Taiwan ICDF (2023c).

POST-COVID-19: TAIWAN'S RECALIBRATED AID POLICY AND ITS LIMITATIONS

Taiwan's soft power efforts during the pandemic cannot be fully assessed without situating them within the broader regional competition, particularly China's assertive vaccine diplomacy and its implications for Taiwan's diplomatic space. During the pandemic, Taiwan's approach evolved to address emerging global challenges by emphasising health diplomacy and pandemic response measures. Taiwan, despite its limitations, has attempted to strengthen its diplomatic outreach through emergency assistance, public health cooperation, and vaccine diplomacy, thereby, reinforcing its global visibility and goodwill. In the post-COVID period, Taiwan recalibrated its policies, shifting towards long-term resilience-building, economic recovery support, and digital and green technology initiatives. Recognising the geopolitical implications of the pandemic, Taiwan has focused on enhancing strategic partnerships beyond its formal allies, expanding its outreach to non-traditional partners through capacity-building programmes, digital infrastructure investments, and climate adaptation projects. Relatedly, Taiwan's development cooperation objectives reflect not only an attention to the developmental needs of the Global South but also a commitment to contributing to global technology research and development efforts. For instance, Taiwan's foreign minister, Joseph Wu, outlined four primary objectives for the ICDF:

1. **Expanding International Cooperative Partnerships:** This initiative aims to promote equality, inclusiveness, and economic recovery, particularly in light of the global economic slowdown resulting from the pandemic and ongoing geopolitical conflicts, such as the Russia-Ukraine war and Israel-Hamas tensions. The Taiwan government seeks to contribute to and lead the establishment of international cooperation networks to address these challenges. The ICDF has collaborated with multilateral and bilateral institutions to provide technical assistance, training, and mentorship to local populations in Latin American countries, thereby enhancing the resilience of micro, small, and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs), particularly those owned and operated by women.
2. **Addressing Regional Development Needs:** Taiwan aims to collaborate with like-minded institutions both domestically and internationally to address regional development challenges. Notably, Taiwan, in partnership with the US, extends cooperation to its diplomatic allies facing climate change issues. The signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the ICDF and USAID to invest in the Pacific American Fund has led to the joint implementation of the Coastal Fisheries Management Project in Palau, ensuring sustainable fishery practices.
3. **Leveraging Private Sector Resources:** The ICDF aims to inject vitality and innovation into Taiwan's foreign aid model by emphasising public-private partnerships. This new funding framework has significantly enhanced Taiwan's foreign aid capabilities.
4. **Enhancing Diplomatic Benefits:** Considering Taiwan's domestic and external challenges, the ICDF's contributions extend beyond its role as a foreign aid agency by fostering partnerships and promoting international cooperation. The Taiwanese government strategically associates development aid cooperation with the potential diplomatic benefits accruable from partner countries (Wu 2024).

Thus, ICDF prioritised grassroots initiatives, digital tools and sustainable development, guided by local needs rather than top-down policy prescriptions. As the central agency responsible for implementing development aid and cooperation projects, the ICDF is mandated by the Taiwanese government to initiate, execute, and manage overseas cooperation initiatives. Article 141 of the Constitution of the Republic of China (Taiwan) emphasises the importance

of fostering good relations with neighbouring nations, promoting international cooperation, advancing global justice, and ensuring world peace (Taiwan ICDF 2023b). Initially established to support poverty alleviation efforts among its diplomatic allies and friendly countries, Taiwan, as discussed, evolved the ICDF into a comprehensive foreign aid agency that encompasses sectors such as smart agriculture, education, public health and medicine, environmental protection, and information technology. Over the years, the ICDF has evolved into a robust body that tailors its projects to the specific needs of partner countries, operationalising them through technical cooperation, investment and lending, international education and training, and humanitarian assistance (Taiwan ICDF n.d.). To enhance the efficiency of its development projects, the ICDF's 2030 strategic plan identifies six priority areas: (1) food security and rural development; (2) health; (3) learning and capacity building; (4) governance; (5) climate change and ocean sustainability; and (6) economic growth and global partnerships (Taiwan ICDF 2022b). According to the 2022 annual report, the ICDF projects are currently being implemented in more than thirty countries worldwide. These partner countries, which belong to diverse landscapes, political systems, economic models, sizes, and populations, have been a significant focus of the ICDF for extending development aid in the post-COVID era (as shown in Tables 3–5).

Although Taiwan is persistently improving the quantity and quality of aid offered to its partner countries, the intended support accrued from such foreign assistance is still awaiting fulfilment. Instead, Taipei has witnessed severing of ties with existing diplomatic partners deserting her, either due to lucrative offers or economic coercion by China. It can be observed that ICDF projects are concentrated significantly among diplomatic allies in a tacit quid pro quo for maintaining support for Taiwan's recognition as a sovereign political entity. In recent years, especially since the COVID-19 pandemic, most of its allies have been facing foreign policy dilemmas in deciding between supporting Taiwan and China. As a result, Taiwan has already lost two of its diplomatic allies, Nauru and Honduras (Yang 2023), in the last two years, as domestic governments succumbed to pressure from the Chinese government. This also suggests that China has particularly paid utmost attention to Taiwan's diplomatic allies in the Pacific region, especially island nations. With Nauru cutting ties with Taiwan and announcing full-fledged support for the One China Policy, Taipei has now lost half of its diplomatic allies from the Pacific Island nations in the last five years (Srinivasan 2024).

The remaining three allies, namely Palau, Tuvalu, and the Marshall Islands, are also under duress due to Chinese intimidation. The Republic of Tuvalu was offered a lucrative economic deal to construct an artificial island, which would help mitigate the state's effects of climate change; in contrast, Palau was threatened with economic consequences, including limiting Chinese tourists to the country. Both economic coercion and lucrative offers from China were intended to compel these island nations to sever their ties with Taiwan. Similarly, the allies from Central and Latin America were also intimidated by the Chinese side, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic. For instance, when Paraguay was reeling under pressure due to a shortage of COVID-19 vaccines, the Chinese government proposed a vaccine supply deal through the Paraguay-China Chamber of Industry, which heightened anxieties in Taipei (Aspinwall 2021). Latin American countries that recognised China over Taiwan were able to receive vaccines from Sinovac and Sinopharm.

In contrast, Paraguay, Honduras, and Guatemala struggled to cope with the pandemic's exigencies (Harrison 2021). The Chinese government used these conditions to attract Honduras with an offer for a vaccine deal in exchange for cutting ties with Taiwan. In Haiti, China has made offers of interest-free loans and recently reopened its commercial development office with the assistance of Haitian authorities (*Xinhua* 2024; Huang 2019). It is pertinent to see how

long Taiwan's existing diplomatic partners would resist coercion and ignore offers to remain with Taipei. Regarding non-diplomatic partner countries, Taiwan's development aid cooperation remains limited, primarily focusing on sectors such as agriculture, sustainable development, and education. The number of projects is insufficient to alter existing political dynamics with partners, as all of them, except India, have consistently reaffirmed their adherence to the One China Policy. Moreover, Taiwan's participation in international organisations, such as the UN and WHO, has been constrained due to Beijing (Glaser et al. 2020).

Thus, despite Taiwan's ongoing efforts to enhance the quantity and quality of its aid to partner countries, the anticipated support of foreign aid remains primarily limited and unfulfilled. Instead, Taiwan has experienced severing of ties with existing diplomatic partners, switching sides either due to lucrative offers or economic coercion from China (Shattuck 2020). This has not worked in favour of ICDF's concerted efforts to implement projects predominantly with Taiwan's diplomatic allies, a tacit *quid pro quo* to maintain support for Taiwan's recognition. Consequently, it remains to be seen, given China's mobilisation of its resources and the strategy of coercion, how long Taiwan's existing partners will resist the pressure. Additionally, notwithstanding immense constraints, Taiwan has been providing development cooperation assistance in crucial areas and even partnering with international organisations (as shown in Table 6). Still, it is insufficient in altering the political dynamics. All partners, except India, have consistently reaffirmed their adherence to the One China Policy.

Due to the entrenched influence of China over the decision-making bodies of the UN and its member countries, Beijing has been able to leverage the interpretation of Resolution 2758 to thwart Taipei's membership bid (Drun and Glaser 2022). Under the People's Republic of China's One China Policy, any form of international engagement by Taiwan is viewed by China as a challenge to its sovereignty. Consequently, few countries, apart from the US, currently advocate for Taiwan's increased participation in international organisations or support Taiwan's UN campaign. Given Taiwan's expertise and contributions to the global community, there is a compelling case for greater support and recognition. Taiwan's robust healthcare system and effective handling of the COVID-19 pandemic, including its provision of medical assistance to Asia, Africa, and South America, demonstrate its value as a contributor to global health. This underscores the need for Taiwan to be granted entry and observer status in the WHO, aiding in the combat of global health issues and the achievement of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) (MOFA 2023b). And despite its demonstrated capability, interest, and capacity, Taiwan's exclusion from these international organisations highlights the extent to which geopolitical issues can influence global governance.

Consequently, the global political landscape is favouring China due to its rising economic and military power. Countries are aligning with China to benefit from the ambitious Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), which promises significant infrastructure development and economic opportunities. On the other hand, this exclusion not only undermines Taiwan's contributions but also reflects the broader challenges faced by international bodies in maintaining objectivity amidst geopolitical tensions. This displays that China's incentives often include investments, loans, and trade agreements that Taiwan cannot match. Furthermore, the geopolitical and economic implications of supporting Taiwan's political freedom outweigh the potential benefits, as aligning with Taiwan could result in economic retaliation from China. The shift in allegiance from Taiwan to China is part of broader strategic realignments, as China offers more substantial benefits in terms of trade, investment, and political support on the global stage.

Thus, Taiwan's strategic move can be extending development cooperation to countries affected by China's unsustainable economic cooperation, which presents a compelling alternative. Chinese-funded infrastructure projects are frequently criticised for their lack of transparency and the creation of unsustainable, complex financial obligations, often laden with hidden costs and conditions that lead to significant financial strain on recipient countries. While these projects may provide immediate benefits, they usually lack a focus on long-term development and capacity building, leaving recipient countries dependent on Chinese expertise and services. Furthermore, such initiatives involve significant political and strategic considerations, as recipient countries may feel pressured to align with China's political and economic policies, compromising their independence. The limited local input in these projects can also lead to issues of relevance and acceptance among local communities.

In contrast, ICDF offers several advantages to smaller countries compared to China's financing strategy for infrastructure development. Unlike the opaque nature of Chinese government lending practices and the associated risks of losing sovereign rights over assets, the ICDF emphasises transparency and sustainable financial practices (Deng 2018). Their loans and grants come with detailed terms and conditions, ensuring that recipient countries understand their financial obligations and can plan accordingly. The ICDF prioritises capacity building, technical assistance, and sustainable development, often incorporating training and education components to help recipient countries build their expertise and capabilities. The ICDF's current projects are operationalised through technical assistance and humanitarian aid in most partner countries, with lending and investment activities more common in Türkiye, Central Asia, and Eastern Europe. Another comparative advantage of the ICDF is its engagement with local communities and stakeholders in the planning and implementation of projects, ensuring that initiatives meet local needs and priorities and operate with fewer political strings attached. Taiwan's assistance is often driven by diplomatic goodwill and development goals rather than strategic geopolitical interests. Accordingly, Taiwan's foreign aid can be leveraged by financially burdened countries to avoid creating further dependency on external financing by promoting self-sufficiency and sustainable development practices. ICDF projects are designed to be economically viable and sustainable in the long term, providing a robust alternative to the investment-driven approach often associated with Chinese investment.

CONCLUSION

Taken together, these empirical patterns and theoretical insights point to a critical juncture in Taiwan's international development strategy that demands both pragmatic policy recalibration and more inclusive global institutional reforms. In recent years, particularly since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, Taiwan has significantly enhanced its development cooperation with countries in Africa, Asia, and Latin America. This strategic move aims to gather international support and goodwill for Taiwan's contributions to global development. However, despite Taiwan's growing reputation as a responsible humanitarian actor, its development aid has yet to translate into sustained diplomatic support. The lack of formal recognition remains a structural constraint that even impactful and normatively aligned aid cannot easily overcome. This highlights the persistent asymmetry between Taiwan's significant developmental contributions and its marginalisation within global governance structures. At its core, Taiwan also seeks to catalyse extensive debate on Taiwan's meaningful participation in international organisations. The international community must urgently reconsider rigid norms of statehood that exclude capable, cooperative entities like Taiwan, denying from the world's valuable expertise and resources.

Taiwan's persistent efforts to secure UN membership and participation in the policy, it continues to face exclusion due to the political dynamics with China. Marginalised communities and non-sovereign entities that remain outside global health dialogues weaken the universality of health responses. Relatedly, to strengthen Taiwan's integration into global health governance the article proposes potential actionable recommendations. While Taiwan's exclusion from the WHO remains a symptom of broader geopolitical tensions, reforming global health governance mechanisms is essential to foster inclusivity and resilience in the face of global (future) pandemics. To delimit global health engagement one of the pressing needs that must be addressed is to secure observer status at the WHA. While WHO operates under the One China Policy UN Resolution 2758, there is scope to propose reforms in the procedural mechanisms. A possible reform could involve institutionalising an Observer Plus category, a functional model through which non-member political entities or territories with advanced health infrastructure could contribute to technical and humanitarian discussions without being construed as sovereign entities. A precedent exists in Taiwan's observer role at the WHA between 2009 and 2016,² which can be institutionalised through the creation of a health-specific multilateral engagement framework such as a Global Health Observer Mechanism under WHO's constitution that permits technical collaboration and data sharing without requiring full sovereign recognition.³

Additionally, the WHO (and other international organisations) could adopt differentiated participation models, allowing non-member entities with significant public health capacity to contribute to technical working groups, joint research, and global health surveillance efforts. This would align with the principles of functional cooperation and public health diplomacy, ensuring that political constraints do not compromise global pandemic preparedness and response systems. Other than that, WHO can initiate an inclusion index that can help measure the participation of non-member stakeholders in its programmes, bringing transparency to the conversation and pressuring member states toward more inclusive practices. Correspondingly, Taiwan could also be integrated into WHO activities through regional and thematic collaboration frameworks. For instance, WHO's regional offices in the Western Pacific and Southeast Asia could establish specialised technical working groups where Taiwan can participate as a contributing partner. These groups could focus on non-controversial areas, such as communicable disease surveillance, digitalisation of healthcare, or maternal and child health. Encouraging informal participation through regional forums would circumvent direct political hurdles while enabling Taiwan to make meaningful contributions. This also gives scope to leverage Track II diplomacy engaging with multilateral frameworks like the Global Health Security Agenda or forming health alliances with other like-minded democracies. This unfolds the pressing needs of depoliticisation anchoring when (global) public good is involved.⁴

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The author would like to express gratitude to the Taipei Economic and Cultural Office in Malaysia for generously supporting the organisation of the Taiwan Studies conference, which subsequently led to the publication of this article.

DISCLOSURE STATEMENT

No conflict of interest was reported by the author.

NOTES

- * Sadia Rahman is a lecturer at the Department of International and Strategic Studies, Universiti Malaya. Her academic achievements include receiving prestigious scholarships such as the MOFA Taiwan fellowship and Ministry of Education doctoral scholarship from the ROC government. In 2021, Rahman was awarded the Outstanding Student Award by the ROC government. Her research interests are primarily focusing on international relations, China studies, cross-strait, international order and global governance.
- ¹ Fourteenth richest country gross domestic product (GDP) per capita (Forbes Ranking 2024). The magazine's list of the richest countries in the world is compiled/based on GDP per capita data, as estimated by the IMF (OCAC 2024).
- ² Press statement released by American Institute in Taiwan (2024).
- ³ See, the global health observatory: <https://www.who.int/data/gho>
- ⁴ See, global health security agenda: <https://globalhealthsecurityagenda.org/>

REFERENCES

- Abbot, W.K. and Snidal, D. 1998. Why states act through formal international organizations. *The Journal of Conflict Resolution* 42 (1): 3–32. <https://doi.org/10.1177/002200279804200100>
- Alexander, C. 2015. Development assistance and communication: The case of the Taiwan International Cooperation and Development Fund. *Global Governance: A Review of Multilateralism and International Organizations* 21 (1): 119–139. <https://doi.org/10.1163/19426720-02101009>
- American Institute in Taiwan. 2024. Press statement: Taiwan as an observer at the 77th World Health Assembly, 1 May 2024. <https://www.ait.org.tw/taiwan-as-an-observer-at-the-77th-world-health-assembly> (accessed 18 July 2025).
- Aspinwall, N. 2021. Paraguay says Chinese brokers offered vaccines for diplomatic recognition. *The Diplomat*, 27 March 2021. <https://thediplomat.com/2021/03/paraguay-says-chinese-brokers-offered-vaccines-for-diplomatic-recognition> (accessed 18 July 2025).
- Bednarski, L. 2023. Made in Taiwan: How developing countries can leverage high tech. *Engelsberg Ideas*, 27 April 2023. <https://engelsbergideas.com/essays/made-in-taiwan-how-developing-countries-can-leverage-high-tech> (accessed 18 July 2025).
- Chang, I.-W. J. 2020. Taiwan's COVID-19 experience earns international praise. *Global Taiwan Institute*, 25 March 2020. <https://globaltaiwan.org/2020/03/taiwans-covid-19-experience-earns-international-praise> (accessed 18 July 2025).
- Chang, T. T. 2011. Re-examination on the role of the state in the development of Taiwan's small and medium-sized enterprises, 1950–2000: The state, market and social institutions. PhD diss., London School of Economics, United Kingdom.
- Chen, Y.-J. and Cohen, J. A. 2020. Why does the WHO exclude Taiwan? *Council on Foreign Relations*, 9 April 2020. <https://www.cfr.org/in-brief/why-does-who-exclude-taiwan> (accessed 18 July 2025).
- Deng, Y. 2018. How China's Belt and Road is reordering Asia. *Harvard International Review* 39 (4): 30–35.
- Drun, J. and Glaser, B. S. 2022. The distortion of UN Resolution 2758 and limits on Taiwan's access to the United Nations. *German Marshall Fund*, 24 March 2022. <https://www.gmfus.org/news/distortion-un-resolution-2758-and-limits-taiwans-access-united-nations> (accessed 20 October 2024).
- Ferreira, F. H. G. 2021. Inequality in the time of COVID-19: All metrics are not equal when it comes to assessing the pandemic's unequal effect. <https://www.imf.org/external/pubs/ft/fandd/2021/06/pdf/inequality-and-covid-19-ferreira.pdf> (accessed 20 October 2024).
- Finnemore, M. and Sikkink, K. 1998. International norm dynamics and political change. *International Organisation* 52 (4): 887–917. <https://doi.org/10.1162/002081898550789>
- FRS Taiwan Program on Security and Diplomacy. 2022. By sharing Taiwan's experience in foreign aid, we hope to let the world know that Taiwan is willing to participate in international affairs actively. <https://www.frstrategie.org/sites/default/files/documents/programmes/Programme-Taiwan/2022/04-2022.pdf> (accessed 20 October 2024).

- Glaser, B. S., Bush, R. C. and Green, M. J. 2020. Taiwan's participation in the international community. In *Toward a stronger U.S.-Taiwan relationship*, eds. Glaser, B. S., Bush, R. C. and Green, M. J., 25–28. Washington, DC: Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS).
- Grano, S. 2022. Cat-Warriors vs. Wolf Warriors: How Taiwan promotes its brand in the face of a more assertive China. *Taiwan Insight*, 20 April 2022. <https://taiwaninsight.org/2022/04/20/cat-warriors-vs-wolf-warriors-how-taiwan-promotes-its-brand-in-the-face-of-a-more-assertive-china> (accessed 20 October 2024).
- Gulati, U. C. 1992. The foundations of rapid economic growth: The case of the four tigers. *The American Journal of Economics and Sociology* 51 (2): 161–172. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1536-7150.1992.tb03345.x>
- Harrison, C. 2021. Vaccines reignite China vs. Taiwan debate in Latin America. *AS/CAO*, 12 May 2021. <https://www.as-coa.org/articles/vaccines-reignite-china-vs-taiwan-debate-latin-america> (accessed 21 October 2024).
- Huang, K. 2019. Beijing targets Haiti as bid to isolate Taiwan from its diplomatic allies heads to the Caribbean. *South China Morning Post*, 14 September 2019. <https://www.scmp.com/news/china/diplomacy/article/3027176/beijing-targets-haiti-bid-isolate-taiwan-its-diplomatic-allies> (accessed 20 October 2024).
- Hugar, W. R. 2022. Cold War economic ideology and US aid to Taiwan, 1950–1965. PhD diss., Liberty University, Virginia, US.
- Ikenberry, G. J. 2001. *After victory: Institutions, strategic restraint, and the rebuilding of order after major wars*. New Jersey, Princeton University Press.
- Irwin, D. A. 2021. The rise and fall of import substitution. *World Development* 139: 105306. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.worlddev.2020.105306>
- Jacoby, N. H. 1966. *An evaluation of U. S. economic aid to free China, 1951–1965*. Washington, DC: Bureau for the Far East, Agency for International Development, Department of State.
- Keohane, O. R. 1984. *After hegemony: Cooperation and discord in the world political economy*. New Jersey: Princeton University Press.
- Keohane, O. R. and Martin, L. 1995. The promise of institutionalist theory. *International Security* 20 (1): 39–51. <https://doi.org/10.2307/2539214>
- Lee, W.-C. 1993. Taiwan's foreign aid policy. *Asian Affairs: An American Review* 20 (1): 43–62. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00927678.1993.10771147>
- Lee, W.-C. and Chang, I.-M. 2014. US aid and Taiwan. *Asian Review of World Histories* 2 (1): 47–80. <https://doi.org/10.12773/arwh.2014.2.1.047>
- Lin, J. 2020. Martyrs of development: Taiwanese agrarian development and the Republic of Vietnam, 1959–1975. *Cross-Currents: East Asian History and Culture Review* 9 (1): 67–106. <https://doi.org/10.1353/ach.2020.0000>
- Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA). 2023a. International cooperation and development affairs annual report. <https://ws.mofa.gov.tw/Download.ashx?u=LzAwMS9VcGxvYWQvNDZlZGZpbGUvMjM2LzQxNS8yMjQ0YjExZS1iZmYwLTQ1YmItOTlkYS04NTE4Mzc1ZTI2ZTcucGRm&n=SW50ZXJuYXJpb25hbCBDb29wZXJhdGlvbiBhbmQgRGV2ZWxvcG1lbnQgUmVwb3J0IDIwMjIucGRm> (accessed 20 October 2024).
- _____. 2023b. MOFA regrets with dissatisfaction the 76th WHA's decision to not include a proposal item to invite Taiwan as observer. https://en.mofa.gov.tw/News_Content.aspx?n=1329&s=114740 (accessed 20 October 2024).
- _____. 2009. Progressive partnerships and sustainable development: White paper on foreign aid policy. <https://ws.mofa.gov.tw/Download.ashx?u=LzAwMS9VcGxvYWQvT2xkRmlsZS9SZWxGaWxlLzExMjM2LzQxNS8yMjQ0YjExZS1iZmYwLTQ1YmItOTlkYS04NTE4Mzc1ZTI2ZTcucGRm&n=YTUwMGEyNzQtZmM1ZS00YmMzLWJiMzctNjk2YTJjMzhiMzdkLnBkZg%3D%3D> (accessed 20 October 2024).
- Ministry of Health and Welfare (MOHW). 2020. Taiwan can help, and Taiwan is helping! <https://covid19.mohw.gov.tw/en/cp-4789-53866-206.html> (accessed 21 October 2024).
- National Health Insurance Administration. 2023. Taiwan can help-National Health Insurance's contributing in combating COVID-19. <https://www.nhi.gov.tw/en/cp-436-d7330-47-2.html> (accessed 16 October 2024).
- Nye, J. 2017. Soft power: The origins and political progress of a concept. *Palgrave Commun* 3 (17008). <https://doi.org/10.1057/palcomms.2017.8>

- Overseas Community Affairs Council (OCAC). 2024. Taiwan ranked world's 14th richest country. <https://english.ocac.gov.tw/OCAC/Eng/Pages/Detail.aspx?nodeid=329&pid=69211777> (accessed 20 Oct 2024)
- _____. 2023. Taiwan the 14th richest country in the world: Global finance. <https://www.ocac.gov.tw/OCAC/Eng/Pages/Detail.aspx?nodeid=329&pid=60358145#:~:text=Taiwan%20was%20the%2014th%20richest,capita%20adjusted%20for%20purchasing%20power> (accessed 19 October 2024).
- Shattuck, T. J. 2020. The race to zero?: China's poaching of Taiwan's diplomatic allies. *Orbis* 64 (2): 334–352. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.orbis.2020.02.003>
- Srinivasan, P. 2024. Culture, democracy and clout: Why three pacific countries are sticking with Taiwan. *The Guardian*, 23 February 2024. <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2024/feb/24/culture-democracy-and-clout-why-three-pacific-countries-are-sticking-with-taiwan> (accessed 18 October 2024).
- Taiwan International Cooperation and Development Fund (ICDF). 2023a. History of Taiwan ICDF. <https://www.icdf.org.tw/wSite/ct?xItem=4582&ctNode=31513&mp=2>
- _____. 2023b. Directions in strategic planning. <https://www.icdf.org.tw/wSite/ct?xItem=8110&ctNode=31518&mp=2#aC>
- _____. 2023c. Annual report. <https://www.icdf.org.tw/wSite/DownloadFile?type=attach&file=f1721349780922.pdf>
- _____. 2022a. Annual report. <https://www.icdf.org.tw/wSite/DownloadFile?type=attach&file=f1685950564980.pdf&realname=PDF%28Single+page%29.pdf>
- _____. 2022b. Priority areas. <https://www.icdf.org.tw/wSite/ct?xItem=8112&ctNode=31520&mp=2> (accessed 20 October 2024).
- _____. n.d. Operations. <https://www.icdf.org.tw/wSite/lp?ctNode=31611&CtUnit=531&BaseDSD=7&mp=2> (accessed 11 November 2024).
- United Nations (UN). 2020. Sustainable Development Goals Report 2020. <https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/report/2020/The-Sustainable-Development-Goals-Report-2020.pdf> (accessed 17 October 2024).
- Williams, M. D. 2022. A strategic political economy of aid. Paper presented at the 14th Annual Conference on The Political Economy of International Organisation, 7–9 July 2022, Oxford, UK.
- Wilson, E. J. 2008. Hard power, soft power, smart power. *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 616 (1): 110–124. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0002716207312618>
- Wu, J. J. 2024. Defending Taiwan by defending Ukraine: The interconnected fates of the world's democracies. *Foreign Affairs*, 9 May 2024. <https://www.foreignaffairs.com/china/defending-taiwan-ukraine-jaushieh-joseph-wu> (accessed 22 October 2024).
- Xinhua*. 2024. China's commercial development office in Haiti resumes operations. 19 July 2024. <https://english.news.cn/20240719/358c67f368ba425187828fa7eb50f414/c.html> (accessed 22 October 2024).
- Yang, W. 2023. Taiwan fears loss of diplomatic allies in Latin America. *DW*, 20 March 2023. <https://www.dw.com/en/taiwan-fears-loss-of-more-diplomatic-allies-in-latin-america/a-65048747> (accessed 21 October 2024).