1. Introduction
At a glance, China and Zambia – just like China and Africa – are strikingly different in many ways. They followed markedly different paths to development. They achieved significantly divergent trade and development results. However, they also have many striking commonalities, including a shared long history of developmental cooperation and relations. But, what are the lessons of China-Zambia relations for Zambia’s developmental goals and aspirations, including those in the Vision 2030?

This study sought to undertake a critical comparative assessment of the trade (and other underpinning socio-economic) developments in China, Africa and Zambia, with a view to understanding their impetus as well as their consequences, both positive and negative, for China-Africa and China-Zambia ties. It offers unique perspectives and understanding about China-Africa and China-Zambia relations. It takes a look at the history and present-day China-Africa and China-Zambia relations, considering the social and cultural ties that have defined cooperation as well as the political and diplomatic relations that have been forged over time. It unravels the trade and development implications of these relations for Zambia, Africa and China.

2. Main Observations at a Glance
Box 1: Populations and Land Areas
- China and Africa have similar population sizes; Zambia’s population (with 17 million people) is relatively smaller than that of an average African country (22.5 million):
  - 1.362 China
  - 1.215 Zambia
  - 17 Africa

- Africa – at 30.2 million km² – is 3 times larger than China, 40 times larger than Zambia and 54 times larger than the average African country:
  - 9,596,661 China
  - 30,221,532 Zambia
  - 752,618 Africa

Box 2: Economy Size and Welfare
- China’s GDP was US$11 trillion in 2015; Africa’s was US$2.3 trillion, and Zambia’s was US$21.9 billion:
  - 11,156 China
  - 21.9 Zambia
  - 2,323 Africa

Box 3: Pollution; FOCAC Commitments
- China’s economic growth has the side-effect of heavy pollution (e.g., CO2 emissions (‘000 tonnes per year));
- Africa/Zambia: among the “greenest” places on earth.

- New Chinese developmental cooperation FOCAC started in 1999 at US$5 billion and grew to US$60 billion by 2015:
  - 20 2006
  - 5 2009
  - 35 2015
  - 9 Commercial (non-concessional) Financing
  - 10 Grants & zero-interest loans
  - 20 Concessional loans (and buyer’s credit)
By 2014, China was the largest exporter in the world; China’s export specialization was in sophisticated goods:

Zambia and Africa have remained in the peripheries of global trade volumes and export trade sophistication, with primary and resource-based exports dominating:

Box 4: Demographic Transitions and Responses
- Zambia (like the rest of Africa) is young and getting younger, with an increasing productive age group:

Box 5: Primary Goods Trade Persist in Zambia & Africa
- China is aging and has thus focused on education, particularly science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) since 2006:

Box 6: China’s Increasing Export Trade Dominance & Sophistication
- Zambia and Africa have remained in the peripheries of global trade volumes and export trade sophistication, with primary and resource-based exports dominating:

3. Policy Suggestions
Against the foregoing observations, the study offers a number of policy suggestions for Zambia, Africa and China, including the following:

- African countries including Zambia should plan for deep-rooted reforms in education, skills development and talent discovery, with the first step towards this being the undertaking of comprehensive, systematic and time-bound reviews of their education, skills development and talent development sub-sectors and systems, benchmarked against leading world economies (like China).
- In order to cope with and mitigate the effects population growth and urbanization pressures, particularly the pressures on environmental sustainability in China and Africa, the blocs should formulate a common, standardized monitoring and evaluation system for measuring the “greenness” (“labour intensity”) of FDI funded activities and various China- and Africa-sponsored developmental projects.
- The current approach of FOCAC exchange initiative, which focused Africa-to-China learning should be reviewed as it will do little to help Chinese people to get familiar and comfortable to operate in African social, economic, political and legal spaces and systems. Given the near parity of the total populations in China and Africa, the exchanges could be set at a 1:1 ratio. China-to-Africa learning will also help to resolve some of the challenges emanating from the cultural differences between China and Africa.
- In order to address language and communication barriers between China and Africa, Chinese and African social and linguistic research centres as well as information and communication technology (ICT) centres should be identified as part of a specific FOCAC programme, and commissioned to conduct public sector R&D.

“You do not discuss with a tiger concerning the stripes of its skin when you want a tiger-skin coat”
Chinese proverb (by unknown)