

DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION REVIEW

Editorial

Special Articles

Mexican South-South Cooperation after BAPA+40: A Quality and Effectiveness Affair

Carlos Cortés Zea

India-Argentina Science and Technology Cooperation: A Case of Utilisation of Biomass as a Source of Energy

Maria Jose Haro Sly

Approaches to Development Cooperation and Traditional Norms and Culture: An African Dilemma

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Development Cooperation Review

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Editorial

South-South Cooperation (SSC) is an embodiment towards fulfilling the aspirations of Agenda 2030 and the commitment to leave no one behind. Herein lies the need to explore the synergies between the Sustainable Development Goals, interlinked with the efforts initiated by developing countries towards inclusive development. *Development Cooperation Review (DCR)* brings its second volume forward to capture holistic narratives around development cooperation to overcome knowledge gaps and strengthen Southern cooperation.

The edition presents a set of articles deliberating upon pressing issues that have been in discussion since the initiation of the Delhi Process Conferences and acknowledged in the Outcome Document of the Second High-level United Nations Conference on South-South Cooperation (BAPA+40).

The BAPA+40 Outcome Document underscored the need to enhance the effectiveness of SSC to ensure mutual accountability and transparency of SSC. The focus on effectiveness leads to a risk of conflating the Northern-led contractual process of development with the solidarity based efforts of the South. Addressing this risk, Carlos Cortés Zea in his paper titled 'Mexican South-South Cooperation after BAPA+40: A Quality and Effectiveness Affair' attempts to understand the priorities that guide Mexico's development cooperation and evolving conceptual and institutional perspective.

Beyond the effectiveness debate lies the pressing operational challenges and efforts that are being undertaken to strengthen cooperation in a diverse set of sectors and calling for a multi-stakeholder approach. Cooperation in Science and Technology can play the role of a game-changer, as it has the potential to contribute to a multi-sector environment. Maria Jose Haro Sly in the paper, 'India-Argentina Science and Technology Cooperation: A Case of Utilisation of Biomass as a Source of Energy' addresses the issue of 'technology gap' that undermines developing countries to effectively tap into their favourable capacities. The paper engages on the need for technological transfer and presents a best practice between India and Argentina in the biomass sector. Following this, the paper by Olawale R. Olaopa titled, 'Beyond International Finance Upgrade: SDGs, Development Cooperation & the

Dilemma of Africa's Prevailing Traditional Norms and Culture' explores the various commitments and framework of African countries to operationalise the SDGs and the challenges faced in respect to public financing and capacity building. The paper questions whether existing efforts and the framework are sufficient to develop a global partnership for development.

In the section on perspectives, Milindo Chakrabarti examines development cooperation presenting the Lexicon and Syntax of Development Cooperation 'In Support of an Equity Criterion for Development Assessment'. The article looks at inter-country and intra-country inequalities that have steadily risen over the years. Chakrabarti proposes the need for a metric to be developed that would capture the net gain or loss in 'access' to resources while evaluating the effectiveness of a process of designed development and thereby emphasises the case for including "equity" as an important indicator while assessing a development process.

SSC in Statistics throws light on the trade and growth rate of the Southern African Development Community (SADC). Sushil Kumar notes that the total trade in the grouping increased more than six fold between 1992 and 2018. Moreover, the section highlights that SADC ranks first among African RTAs in terms of value of exports and Intra-SADC trade has increased making it the largest amongst trading blocs across Africa.

DCR invites policymakers, officials, researchers, academics and development practitioners to contribute to the forthcoming issues to share their ideas, experiences and concerns vis-à-vis development cooperation.

Mexican South-South Cooperation after BAPA+40: A Quality and Effectiveness Affair



*Carlos Cortés Zea**

“The idea behind Mexico’s lobby before the government of the United States, is to convince them to invest resources in the plan and move past from a security-driven to a development-driven approach to tackle regional challenges...”

Introduction

Aspirating to overcome the paradigmatic Buenos Aires Action Plan prepared in 1978, the Second High-level United Nations Conference on South-South Cooperation (BAPA+40), held in March 2019 again in Buenos Aires, set the stage to finally address the elephant in the room: how to improve quality and effectiveness of South-South Cooperation and Triangular Cooperation; Quality, as a means, to identify distinctive attributes possessed by these modalities of international development cooperation; and Effectiveness, as its capacity to achieve its own goals. In other words, the idea was to clear the way to foster South-South Cooperation (SSC) with a more results-oriented approach.

Chairing a crowded room, framed by a shining stage, the UN Secretary-General, Antonio Guterres declared, “I see five issues that will be central to implementing the Paris Agreement on climate change and achieving the 2030 Agenda”. These are the rising inequality between individuals and nations; climate change; infrastructure and energy needs; gender equality; and a multilateral development system better positioned to support SSC (United Nations, 2019). If some prominent colleagues consider that “40 years is nothing” (Ayllon & Surasky, 2018), the long and winding road pursued by this international development cooperation (IDC) modality, make some of us think that it is about time to move forward.

Meanwhile, allocated resources to SSC are on the rise since 2010. Interestingly, the most methodologically accurate attempt to quantify gross disbursements of these flows come from the Organisation for Economic

* Coordinator of the AMEXCID-UNDP Cooperation Programme, UNDP Mexico. Views expressed are personal.

Cooperation and Development (OECD), included in its statistical exercise for countries beyond the Development Assistance Committee (DAC) (Luijkx & Benn, 2017). In sum, SSC went from US\$ 11.4 billion in 2010 to US\$ 23.5 billion in 2013, rising to US\$ 32 billion in 2014. According to the same OECD working paper, this means that SSC almost tripled between 2010 and 2014, thus, their share within total IDC flows passed from 7.4 per cent to 17.5 per cent during the same period (Luijkx & Benn, 2017).

Still, the crucial debate goes beyond the competition to know who gives more (whether it's traditional donors or Southern Providers), and it is not limited to the search for opposing narratives (Bracho, 2015). To address the elephant in the room, we ought to talk about what makes SSC different on the ground, and what makes it more successful to achieve its goals. In that context, there is a soft consensus surrounding the positive contribution of SSC to international development, even though countries struggle to provide sound evidence to prove it (or to refuse the hypothesis).

Emerging countries like Mexico – in a favourable position within the new global configuration – could unlock the path unfolding after BAPA+40. The key might be, to avoid the worst practices and schemes in which traditional aid agencies have been engaging over the last decades. More than ten years ago, these worst practices were formulated as opacity, fragmentation, selectivity, ineffective aid costs, and overhead costs overruns (Easterly & Pfutze, 2008). The latter constitutes, precisely, the subject of further research.

As far as we are concerned, this paper contributes to the discussions proposed by the BAPA+40 conference, hoping to make them match with the reform that has been taking place within the Mexican International Development Cooperation (IDC) System. Established eight years ago, its functioning is currently being questioned by the government that took office in December 2018. This entails a redesign of its structural engineering, policy orientation, thematic and regional priorities. Mexico's quest to improve its role as a Southern Provider reminds us that SSC has several options to move forward, towards what it could be differentiated from traditional cooperation and more capable of achieving its goals, in line with the principles that aspired to shape it, and based on successful experiences in the region and other parts of the world. Definitely, an affair closely linked to quality and effectiveness.

For this purpose, the paper is divided into three parts. First, it will introduce the factors that explain the advent of the new configuration of international development cooperation post-2015. The second part describes the characteristics of Mexican SSC. Finally, the third part explores the reforms that aims to consolidate Mexico's IDC System.

The New Configuration of International Development Cooperation post-2015

In 2015, the Third International Conference on Financing for Development in Addis Ababa, the United Nations Sustainable Development Summit in New York, and the United Nations Climate Change Conference in Paris, laid the foundations of a new era. Their respective outcomes

upgraded a range of current norms, defining the priorities that will guide the new configuration of international development cooperation post-2015.

On the one hand, they formulated different work-streams and opened negotiations between traditional and non-traditional development cooperation stakeholders. On the other hand, the political affirmation of Southern Providers consolidated a new balance of power with traditional donors. In March 2019, the Second High-Level United Nations Conference on South-South Cooperation tried to shuffle the cards.

South-South Cooperation: a Soft Consensus

The new configuration¹ of international development cooperation post-2015 is comprehended in this paper as resulting from five factors. They are: the erosion of classic aid architecture, the rise of the Global South, the proliferation of emerging development cooperation agencies, a soft consensus on SSC, and the adoption of the outcome documents of the three international conferences mentioned above (Cortés Zea, 2016).

First, the erosion of classic aid architecture is characterised by a loss of relevance of the OECD-DAC, in favour of other spaces for multilateral negotiation and dialogue, namely, the Development Cooperation Forum of ECOSOC, the High-Level Committee on SSC, the Global Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation, and further punctual and regional initiatives on the matter. Second, the rise of the South has been theorised from different approaches by several authors. The 2013 UNDP Human Development Report *The Rise*

of the South: Human Progress in a Diverse World mainstreamed the notion. A strong case that leaned on heterodox thesis proposed by authors like Samir Amin (2010) and Boike Rehbein (2010). Both show the upheaval of relations between “North” and “South” countries. The latter believes that this chimerical division is no longer able to explain international social phenomena occurred after the end of the cold war.

Third, the rising trend of SSC flows sustained the proliferation of emerging development cooperation agencies. In a period of only eleven years, we witnessed the establishment of the *Agencia Peruana de Cooperación Internacional* in 2002; the Thailand International Cooperation Agency in 2004; the *Agencia Uruguaya de Cooperación Internacional* of Uruguay and the Coordinating Team on South-South and Triangular Cooperation of Indonesia in 2010 and moving towards the creation of a separate agency²; the *Agencia Presidencial de Cooperación Internacional* of Colombia and *Agencia Mexicana de Cooperación Internacional para el Desarrollo* (AMEXCID) in 2011; and the India’s Development Partnership Administration in 2012. Assuming this trend, China announced the creation of its own agency in March 2018 (Zhang, 2018).

A soft consensus of SSC is identified as the fourth factor. In a context that tends to the imbrication of international governance, new consensus arises (Ceballos & Lautier, 2013). In this sense, the contribution of SSC is systematically presented as self-evident. There is an international consensus on the effectiveness of SSC. However, the popularity of SSC seems, at least, disproportionate to the lack of evidence available to defend its supposed effectiveness. Few Southern

Providers have sound and institutionalised methodologies or mechanisms to quantify their development cooperation flows, and more specifically, to assess the implemented programmes and projects (United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, 2018).

Lastly and fifth, the adoption of the Addis Ababa Action Agenda, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and the Paris Agreement on Climate Change reflect the challenges of the contemporary balance of powers in international relations; that is to say, a reformulation of the notion of international resources for development, synchronising the 'beyond aid' agenda with domestic resources mobilisation, and preconising the involvement of new stakeholders that might be able (and willing) to mobilise the billions needed to finance international development (World Bank et al., 2015). Besides, Development Diplomacy managed to agree on 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), from a universal and aspirational perspective (whereas the Millennium Development Goals' progress was meant to be meticulously measured and were designed only for developing countries). Finally, the climate change agreement redistributed the responsibilities regarding the state of the environment between developing and post-industrialised countries.

The BAPA+40 Conference, a Tipping Point?

There will certainly not be another meeting as the Second High-Level UN Conference on South-South Cooperation (BAPA+40) before several years. The rendezvous that took place in March 2019, gathered official delegations from around the globe

to discuss South-South Cooperation and Triangular Cooperation biggest issues for the first time since 2009 in Nairobi. Development Diplomacy at its best, organised around the commemoration of the Buenos Aires Action Plan from 1978 and trying to build a momentum of its own; another milestone that will help us trace in the future, the long and slow history of cooperation between developing countries.

Even so, the BAPA+40 Conference felt more like a place to reinvigorate old debates, rather than to settle them. For instance, the impossibility to agree on an operational concept to define SSC has systematically disabled the attempts to establish accurate methodologies to assess SSC flows, and therefore increase their quality. Instead, countries and international organisations engage in outreach strategies to promote their tailored-designed and competing instruments. Deciding the debate surrounding the convenience of having a narrow definition (exclusively including technical cooperation, technology transfer, knowledge exchange and capacity development), against the need for a broader one (that would also include economic cooperation and private finance) (Besharati & MacFeely, 2019), can be considered as the most relevant pending issue. This is related with the difficulties to design a concept capable of synthesising across a plurality of SSC identities, considering that in Latin America cooperation is mostly technical and scientific, while economic and financial is the focus in Asia, and capacity development for peace-orientated cooperation in Africa (Besharati & MacFeely, 2019).

Another pending issue concerns the lack of definition among the Southern

Providers that has been at discussion in several multi-stakeholder forums such as the Delhi Process Conferences on South-South Cooperation and Triangular Cooperation. After all these years, countries still do not agree on the contours of the magnitude of SSC, nor do they share a common understanding of the term. On the contrary, the Conference's final document avoids making the difference between countries that provide and those that receive within the SSC equation (in line with the Nairobi outcome document). China still referring itself as a developing country might be one explanation to this.

A persistent issue in BAPA+40's outcome document is the reluctance to evoke the DAC countries' infamous commitment to progressively allocate 0.7 per cent of their Gross National Income (GNI) to Official Development Assistance (ODA). If it is true that the Nairobi outcome document of the High-level United Nations Conference on South-South Cooperation did not mention it either, the notion that "SSC is not a substitute for, but rather a complement to, North-South cooperation" implies that traditional donors must respect their historic commitments. Likewise, the most important contemporary multilateral negotiations on development cooperation call upon the need to attain the 0.7 per cent goal articulated in the Addis Ababa Action Agenda in paragraph 51; and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in paragraph 43 and target 17.2. When asked about the matter in Buenos Aires, a lead negotiator of the document noted that an explicit mention of the 0.7 per cent pledge was not needed as long as the financing for development commitments were reaffirmed.³ That may also let us imagine that radical official delegations

might not be willing to explicitly renew the emblematic commitment, or even refer to the crucial requirement of allocating additional financial flows to support SSC.

In terms of effectiveness, the BAPA+40 outcome document falls short to meet the expectations created. That is to say, it paves the way for some interesting roads. For example, paragraph 11 acknowledges the need for improving SSC effectiveness. Nowadays, the agenda of the Global Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation is the only one that addresses effectiveness in this domain. A probable conclusion to concerns of Southern Providers have manifested against the OECD-led process, which carries the risk of diffusing the intended differentiation between SSC and ODA.

Mexican South-South Cooperation

In synthesis, Mexican SSC can be explained as an assembly of continuous solidarity rapport with traditional partners (mainly in Central and South America), materialised in IDC programmes and projects with a limited scope; sustained by a well-honed political discourse that sustains a clear positioning strategy within multilateral fora.

Historically, Mexico's trajectory as a Southern Provider can be traced to the 1900s, when the government offered humanitarian assistance to the United States (Figueroa, 2016). Nevertheless, instead of detailing the long and complex institutionalisation process, the second part of this paper presents the components of the Mexican IDC System, established in 2011 before proposing an analysis of the foreign policy that the new federal government aims to deploy.

Establishment of a Mexican IDC System

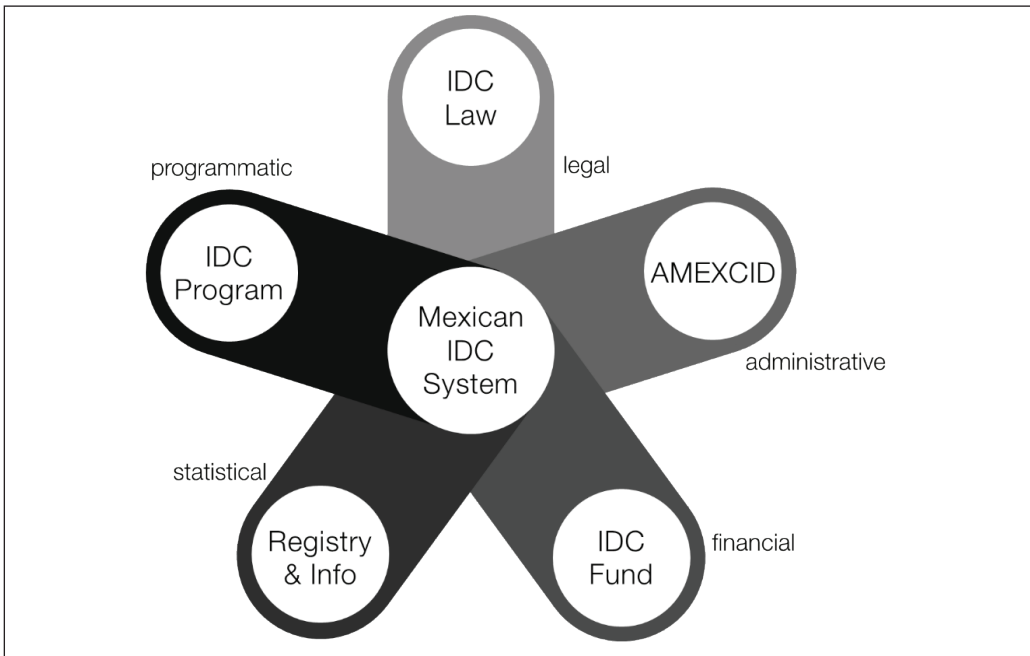
Eight years have passed since the Mexican IDC System was established on five pillars: the IDC Law approved in 2011, constitutes the legal pillar; AMEXCID represents the administrative pillar; the IDC Program (PROCID) is the programmatic pillar; the IDC National Registry (RENCID) and the InfoAMEXCID platform form the statistical pillar; and the IDC National Fund (FONCID) the financial pillar. Though Mexico's engagement in development cooperation goes back to several decades, a coherent and comprehensive system was not established until 2011. The goal was to implement an institutional architecture to coordinate, operate, register, disseminate, administrate, and control the allocated cooperation resources (AMEXCID, 2016).

As presented in Figure 1, the Mexican IDC System comprises of five linked

instruments designed to serve the executive arm of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. If these five pillars are exclusively managed by public policy, different non-traditional constituencies (i.e. NGOs, local governments, academia, and private sector) try to advocate regarding their orientation. International affairs units within the different ministries also intend to influence the Mexican IDC System's evolution; informally, although de facto, the notion of the Mexican IDC System applies to both as a whole, with the five pillars and the relevant actors that interact within the domestic configuration.

Efforts have been guided by the need to assume the mandate whilst shaping the five pillars. Supported by the IDC Law, unlike other similar Southern Providers (e.g. Brazil's ABC), AMEXCID's role has been crucial since its creation in 2011. Between 2013 and

Figure 1: The Renewed SSC Policy of Mexico



Source: Based on Author's own analysis

2015, the Agency carried out the first exercises to assess Mexico's IDC flows, formulated a Programme for the 2013-2018 period, created an IDC Fund and tried to plan a comprehensive Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) strategy. Nevertheless, AMEXCID's political foundations out-passed its technical aspirations. Indeed, the Agency was designed to be a coordinating entity, entitled to orient IDC efforts of the different bodies of the federal public administration. Despite the progress made to develop its capacities to implement projects and programmes, policy formulation and multilateral positioning constitute AMEXCID's core.

Preceded by a couple of discontinued attempts, the IDC National Registry (RENCID) platform quantifies Mexican IDC flows since 2013. In concrete terms, resources went from US\$ 268 million in 2011 to US\$ 317 million in 2017, that is an increase of 18 per cent in six years (AMEXCID, 2018). In 2017, 88 per cent of the total flows were allocated to international organisations as country contributions; 7 per cent to scholarships for foreign students; 0.11 per cent to financial cooperation; 2.48 per cent for coordination costs (AMEXCID's operations); 2.09 per cent to technical cooperation; and 0.45 per cent was for humanitarian aid (AMEXCID, 2018). It is worth noting that Mexican officials estimate that there are still several development cooperation projects that are channelled through informal mechanisms, implemented by non-traditional IDC actors (i.e. local governments, foundations, and civil society organisations), or even not considered by stakeholders as development cooperation-oriented. This might contribute to underestimating the total Mexican IDC flows.

Result of a complex history of sometimes opposed and sometimes merged conceptions of international cooperation (Cortés Zea, 2016), the Mexican IDC System presents six particularities. They can be summarised as follows: i) Mexico's membership to the OECD/CAD as a permanent observer since 1994; ii) its dual character as a recipient and provider of IDC, simultaneously; iii) AMEXCID's regional, technical and scientific cooperation faculties, linked to its cultural, tourism, and economic promotion functions; iv) an IDC Programme that explicitly assumes SSC's founding principles,⁴ and at the same time those defined by the effectiveness agenda;⁵ v) an indissociable link between national and international development; and vi) an original methodology to quantify Mexican IDC flows. This is to say, Mexico's singularity as a Southern Provider comes from the analysis of the interaction of the six particularities, and not as an aggregated comprehension of each one of them.

New Government, New Development Cooperation Priorities

In a broader view, IDC is not presented as a priority by the new Mexican federal administration. The two pages dedicated to foreign policy in the 2019-2024 National Development Plan (Presidencia de la República, 2019), compared to the importance given to specific social programmes in the same document, illustrate the endogenous approach that will be granted to the issue. Nevertheless, if we look closely, development cooperation is presented as the link that shall guide relations with both Mexico's northern partners, especially those with the United States; as well as those with

Latin-American neighbours, emphasising on Central America. Moreover, there is an explicit call to recover the normative principles of Mexican foreign policy that are inscribed in the Constitution since 1988.⁶ International development cooperation is one of those seven principles (DOF, 2019), and therefore has constitutional status.

The 'still unofficial' annex to the National Development Plan (NDP)⁷ is more specific, dedicating one measurable goal to foreign policy. In this regard, it is significant to observe how foreign policy shrunk from the entire axis as represented in the National Development Plan 2013-2018 – “Mexico, an actor with global responsibility (DOF, 2013) “ – to a unique measurable goal within the first general axis “Justice and rule of law” of the subsequent plan. Mexican government sets Goal 1.6 to “Conduct foreign policy in accordance with constitutional principles and articulated with domestic policy priorities” (Cámara de Diputados, 2019). Besides, one paragraph is dedicated to IDC:

“For its part, IDC is an effective public policy to foster sustainable development for our country and our partners, in accordance with the 2030 Agenda. Therefore, Mexican cooperation must be articulated with more partners and increase its capacity to channel resources, goods, knowledge, technology, and experiences to the priority regions, mainly Central America and the Caribbean, in order to contribute to generating welfare and prosperity conditions to reduce forced migration” (Cámara de Diputados, 2019).

To measure progress in achieving the goal, the NDP proposes the indicator

1.6.2, “Mexican high impact initiatives approved in multilateral fora.” In addition, two strategies are mentioned: propel an active, inclusive, and committed participation in multilateral fora and mechanisms to address global challenges and search for global solutions to local problems; and contribute to sustainable human development in Mexico and in our partners, mainly in Central America and the Caribbean, through IDC.

In addition to the official publication of the National Development Plan (NDP), the federal administration must deliver the sectoral programme of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, its internal regulation (which will reorganise its institutional engineering), as well as the new PROCID in January 2020. Such documents are expected to be a technical declination of the National Development Plan, considered as a political manifesto more than a planning roadmap. The assembly of the different instruments constitute the contours of a foreign policy conceived from an “endogenous approach”, that is, intrinsically formulated to serve domestic development goals rather than international agreed commitments. In other words, a foreign policy that will not be assumed as a priority throughout the next six years.

The above-mentioned approach must be seen as a result of the ongoing rupture with the previous domestic political environment, as well as a renewed mandate that it is being transmitted to the entities responsible for the country's foreign policy. Development cooperation policy is certainly not the exception; on the contrary, we are being active witnesses of the structural changes that will transform the Mexican IDC System as we know it. While former governments saw AMEXCID

as a de-concentrated entity of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (with policy and administration autonomy), the new administration's reform aims to reposition AMEXCID as the implementation agency of the different under-secretariats of the Ministry, responsible of defining domestic foreign policy.

Towards a Consolidation of the Mexican IDC System

Since the beginning, AMEXCID resulted as an assembly of existing general directorates that were already part of the Mexican Ministry of Foreign Affairs (except for the one in charge of the planning and IDC policy, established in fact, but not formally, in 2013). This often translated into challenging coordination of the different areas and joint actions, because of the previous belongings of the then new AMEXCID's general directorates.⁸ Nonetheless, Peña Nieto's administration (2012-2018) assured a certain continuity of the way IDC was conducted before the Law was adopted in 2011, other than the political will to materialise the five pillars of the Mexican IDC System, thematic and geographical priorities, as well as allocated resources remained stable.

On the one hand, the following section will introduce first-hand information about the renewed AMEXCID that will coordinate (and gradually implement) Mexican SSC during the 2019-2024 period, from an institutional endogeneity approach. On the other hand, it will draw a preliminary analysis of the dilemma that the country will face when implementing the Comprehensive Development Plan for northern Central America (as the flagship

IDC program under the López Obrador presidency).

A Renewed AMEXCID for the Next Six Years

The 2013-2018 period complied with what is stipulated by the IDC Law, focusing the government's efforts to legitimate AMEXCID as the coordinating entity of every federal actor involved in IDC programs and projects. Notwithstanding, the deal changed when the new government took office, and precisely, in February 2019 when Ms. Laura Elena Carrillo Cubillas was designated as the new Executive Director of AMEXCID. Ever since a profound restructuring plan of the Mexican IDC System has been announced.

Specifically, the planned reform consists of six institutional adjustments (AMEXCID, forthcoming). First, the general directorate for cultural and education cooperation was dislocated from AMEXCID and relocated within the office of the Minister of Foreign Affairs as a Cultural Council for Cultural Diplomacy (though, this change was introduced before the designation of the new head of the Agency) (SRE, 2019). Second, the former action areas (IDC policy; technical and scientific cooperation; Mesoamerican and the Caribbean cooperation; academic cooperation; humanitarian aid; cultural and tourism promotion; and economic promotion) evolved into the following action axis: scientific and technological diplomacy; economic and entrepreneurial diplomacy; citizenship diplomacy; education diplomacy; sports diplomacy; and humanitarian diplomacy.

Thirdly, new institutional engineering is being introduced. The recently

established AMEXCID was designed to directly respond to geographic (Mesoamerica and the Caribbean), thematic (scientific, technical, education, and cultural cooperation), technical (planning and policy), and economic (economic and tourism promotion) priorities. The renewed AMEXCID for the 2019-2024 period will be reorganised around areas responsible for: coordinating IDC policy; project analysis and evaluation; project implementation; IDC reception; and IDC offer. The fourth institutional adjustment is closely related, as it implies a will to move from an AMEXCID with the only mandate to coordinate domestic IDC efforts, towards one with the faculties to become an implementation Agency of IDC projects and programs.

The fifth change concerns an agenda to expand AMEXCID's capacities as a coordinator of IDC flows that enter the country. Besides the creation of an area entirely designed to address ODA received by Mexico, a series of thematic priorities (clearly aligned to the National Development Plan) have already been predefined: promote well-being through scientific and technological progress; detonate investment projects mainly on infrastructure in the south-south-east region; ensuring dignified conditions for migrants when they enter the Mexican territory; foster the use of clean technologies and renewable energies for a sustainable environment; strengthen the functioning rule of Law, as well as institutions and democratic mechanisms based democracy; provide universal health care, and ensure higher levels of investment and research to prevent and treat sickness (AMEXCID, forthcoming). This might as well be considered as

counter-intuitive to the spirit of the IDC Law, conceived to enhance the offer, scope, and flows of Mexican IDC (DOF, 2011).

Finally, the sixth change foresees a reorientation of AMEXCID's efforts as a provider of IDC towards its contribution to the Comprehensive Development Plan (CDP). This sets firm geographical (Guatemala, El Salvador, and Honduras vs. Latin-American and the rest of the world) and thematic limitations (migration issues vs. a series of former development challenges).⁹ In other words, the "concentration strategy" aiming to focus IDC efforts in few countries wins (under the risk of losing previously occupied spaces), against the "fragmentation strategy" that prefers minor IDC projects in several countries (in order to assure a greater presence in the globe).

Comprehensive Development Plan Dilemma: How to Implement?

The renewed AMEXCID claims the CDP as the priority of Mexican IDC offer in the years to come. As previously explained, this means that domestic efforts will be refocused in a plan that includes three countries from Central America, aiming to address urgent migration issues from a developmental perspective. Announced in December 1st, 2018 (the day president López Obrador took office) with the signature of a memorandum of understanding with Guatemala, El Salvador, and Honduras, the CDP was presented by the Foreign Minister of Mexico as a "Marshall Plan" for the region (Camhaji, 2019). Technically entrusted to the UN Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), and actively promoted by its Executive Secretary, Alicia Bárcena, the goal is to

agree on a long-term development agenda that seeks to solve structural problems and address human mobility in its expulsion, transit, and return phases (CEPAL, 2019).

Following the protocol event, ECLAC presented a roadmap for the CDP on May 20, 2019, to the Mexican government (SRE, 2019). The document draws a detailed diagnosis of major socio-economic challenges faced by the three countries of northern Central America: insufficient growth, low productivity, low investments and weak taxation; productive development, trade facilitation, industrialisation, technology, and innovation; logistic and energetic integration, the need for a regional environmental policy; climate change, migrations, disasters, and emergency; societies with high rates of poverty, inequalities, and violence; and historic regional migrations (CEPAL, 2019). Thereupon, it proposes a set of 30 ambitious recommendations that refer, step by step, to ECLAC's own approach to development.

A daring move to redefine its position in the region (unofficially considered as its "natural zone of influence"), Mexico will have to answer three strategic questions.¹⁰ First and foremost, where will the financial resources come from? Since the announcement, Mexican officials set the objective to mobilise US\$ 20 billion to finance the CDP, an astounding goal well beyond the approximately US\$ 300 million allocated annually by the country to SSC. The idea behind Mexico's lobby before the government of the United States, is to convince them to invest resources in the plan and move past from a security-driven to a development-driven approach to tackle regional challenges (though the

northern neighbour has not confirmed the scope of its contribution). If the European Union, Spain, and Germany have also announced their participation to the CDP, only Mexico has formally committed to investing US\$ 100 million, of which an initial disbursement of US\$ 30 million will go to the project "Sembrando Vida" in El Salvador (Ponce, 2019).

Mexico will have to answer a second question: how to ensure ownership from recipient countries? Besides some informal consultations with Central American diplomats just before Lopez Obrador took office, there is not much information about the origin of the CDP. Moreover, it is highly possible that the plan was designed to meet the new government's interests in the region, rather than to respond to a demand-driven IDC policy. In addition to Nayib Bukele's enthusiasm (the newly elected president of El Salvador), Mexico must persuade Guatemala and Honduras that this represents a real opportunity to attenuate the economic and social problems of the region, while addressing the most urgent issues raised by the phenomenon of forced migration.

The third question directly concerns AMEXCID, as it poses the following dilemma: who will implement the CDP? Coordinated by the Under-secretariat for Latin America and the Caribbean (within the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Mexico), the political nature of its mandate will eventually need AMEXCID's expertise to implement the projects that the plan would comprise of, even though its contribution has not been formally defined yet, nor requested until very recently. Furthermore, officials at the highest level will have to decide how does the Mesoamerican Integration and

Development Project¹¹ agenda fit into the CDP. It is still too soon to figure out what will be the conjunction of such complex intergovernmental efforts, but sooner or later, the rest of the Mesoamerican countries will have to be involved somehow. Moreover, AMEXCID's role in implementing the CDP remains to be defined.

Conclusion

As we have observed throughout the paper, the Second High-level United Nations Conference on South-South Cooperation is embedded (and can be comprehended) within the new configuration of international development cooperation post-2015. Regardless of the critical analysis that can be made about it, the outcome document manages to reinvigorate the debate surrounding the differentiation of SSC from traditional cooperation, and its capacity to achieve international development goals.

Also, we have gone through the six particularities portraying Mexican SSC, before proposing an analysis of the foreign policy that the new federal government aims to deploy. Thus, one can try to decipher the priorities that will guide Mexico's development cooperation during the López-Obrador's presidency (2019-2024), a declination of an institutional endogeneity perspective. The third part presents first-hand information on the reforms that will be embodied by a renewed AMEXCID. The challenge that represents having enough domestic capacities to implement the Comprehensive Development Plan in Guatemala, El Salvador, and Honduras, constitutes the last section of the document.

It can be noted that Mexico's efforts towards development cooperation were geared towards its foreign policy

interests and thus accordingly the role of AMEXCID was identified. With the recent policy changes, Mexican foreign policy has become better aligned with its own domestic policies as well as linked to the policies of its neighbouring countries in Central America.

Having said that, can we consider that Mexico's quest to improve its role as a Southern Provider is taking SSC forward? To say the least, SSC is evolving. After a first wave strongly connoted with Third World revindications (clearly captured in the BAPA of 1978), the second wave of SSC (that begun with the surprising activism of the BIC countries in the early 2000's) will be most remembered by the expansion of total SSC flows. The second phase reached its peak with the China International Development Cooperation Agency announcement in 2018. Mexico's SSC followed the same path. After a long and disorganised first phase, the establishment of the Mexican IDC System in 2011 concluded a long institutionalisation process, pushed by the need to manage its increasing SSC.

But what comes next? How can Mexican SSC after the BAPA+40 conference be more different and successful than before? The notion of an "SSC 3.0" introduces some interesting clues. Emerging trends suggest that the third wave of SSC will mark the upcoming decade by a more outcome-oriented framing of economic diplomacy over solidarity approaches; find it more difficult to defend the non-interference principle; and show less idealistic and operational distinction from traditional donors (Mawdsley, 2019). Studying Mexico's profile should help us better understand the trend, considering its identity as a Southern Provider and its unique place within the new configuration of IDC.

Until then, the CDP wingspan in northern Central America foresees a net increase of Mexican SSC. Early projections indicate that allocated resources might rise from US\$ 300 million in 2018 to US\$ 500 million in 2019. This scenario implies that the ongoing reform of the Mexican IDC System will succeed in its enterprise to make AMEXCID the cornerstone of a complex system capable of implementing IDC projects. So in regard to a “Change of Wind or Wind of Change? (Malacalza, 2019)”, I would rather say that the field is clear to align SSC to the great development challenges of the South: climate change, poverty, empowerment, technology transfer, citizen security, inequality, social inclusion, and regional integration. The challenge is to transform SSC into an instrument capable of getting our societies closer, to share common goals and better distribute international development responsibilities; acknowledging the debate as a quality and effectiveness affair.

Endnotes

- ¹ Opposed to a planned, rigid, and pre-designed “architecture”, Norbert Elias’s concept of “configuration” allows us to comprehend an always changing global figure formed by their players.
- ² By the time of the publication of this article the proposed ‘Agency for International Development’ of Indonesia, 2019, may be launched.
- ³ In conversation with the Author.
- ⁴ Respect for national sovereignty, national ownership and independence, equality, non-conditionality, non-interference in domestic affairs and mutual benefit.
- ⁵ Ownership, focus on results, inclusive development partnerships, transparency and mutual accountability.
- ⁶ Section X of Article 89 states that the President has the faculties and obligation to conduct the country’s foreign policy guided by

the following principles: the right to self-determination; non-intervention; peaceful solution of controversies; outlawing the use of force or threat in international relations; equal rights of States; international cooperation for development; the respect, protection, and promotion of human rights; and the struggle for international peace and security.

- ⁷ At the time of publication of this article, it was not clear whether the mentioned annex was going to be officially published.
- ⁸ For instance, the general directorate for the Mesoamerican Integration and Development Project, belonged to the under secretariat for Latin America and the Caribbean of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.
- ⁹ Social development, education, health, disaster prevention, economic development, science and technology, infrastructure, environment, and climate change.
- ¹⁰ The questions are freely inspired by Luis Felipe López-Calva’s thoughts on the subject, discussed during his visit to UNDP’s Country Office in Mexico, on May 30, 2019.
- ¹¹ Conducted from within AMEXCID, the Mesoamerican Integration and Development Project is a high-level policy dialogue mechanism conceived to build consensus, articulate cooperation efforts and attract resources to strengthen integration and development processes of 10 countries of the region (every country from the former priority region of Mexican IDC): Belize, Colombia, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, and Dominican Republic.

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India-Argentina Science and Technology Cooperation: A Case of Utilisation of Biomass as a Source of Energy



*Maria Jose Haro Sly**

“Argentina and India have important contacting points in which S&T cooperation can be successful – nuclear, agriculture, energy, TICs, are important areas for mutually beneficial cooperation projects.”

Introduction

The centrality of science and technology as a tool for countries to access well-being, autonomy and development is an undeniable fact. All aspects of people’s lives and the evolution of modern societies are, in some way, conditioned by techno-scientific advances and their control. However, the emergence and historical deployment of technological and scientific capabilities in different nations are heterogeneous phenomena and, undoubtedly, insufficiently explained.

In Latin America as in all the developing world, we suffer the effects of this uneven development. According to Juma (2005), the “technology gap” undermines the ability of developing countries to meet their basic needs, participate in the world economy and manage the environment. Prebisch in the 1950s already made it clear that one of the characteristics of technical progress is its not having penetrated equally in all activities or in all countries, which is of considerable importance in explaining structural differences and contrasts, and disparities which arise in the development process. The relationship of dependence between the centre and the periphery lies in the challenges faced by periphery countries to develop the technological innovation process autonomously and dynamically.

As one of the responses to reduce the gap among the countries, International Development Cooperation (IDC) programmes have developed different forms of cooperation: Financial Cooperation; Humanitarian Assistance; Technical Cooperation; Scientific and

* Member research project “South-South Cooperation and International Development”, National University of Quilmes, Argentina. Author expresses her gratitude to National Industrial Technology Institute researchers for their generous contributions to this paper. Views expressed are personal.

Technological Cooperation and Food Aid (Iglesias Puente, 2010; Ayllon, 2006). The IDC can be divided into two different perspectives North-South cooperation in which cooperation is made between one or more Northern countries (developed or central countries) with one or more Southern countries (semi-peripheral or peripheral), while South-South cooperation involves two or more countries in the developing world (Rosseel et al., 2009).

On the other hand, South-South Cooperation (SSC) is a comprehensive concept that covers a broad spectrum of collaborations between Global South countries (ROSSEEL et al., 2009). The objective of SSC is cooperation between partners, with emphasis on horizontal relations. According to the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), "While the volume of South-South development cooperation remains limited, the relative decline in North-South development cooperation has made its growth appear more spectacular" (ECOSOC, 2008, p.1). Among the strengths of SSC, Rosseel et al. (2009) highlight that past problem-solving experiences in similar contexts in the South can benefit countries. In addition, South-South foreign direct investment (FDI) and technologies tend to be more labour intensive, creating more jobs than Northern ones (Rosseel et al., 2009). SSC makes it possible to balance bargaining power in the North-South cooperation negotiations, which has indeed (albeit discursively) transited in building "true partnerships" rather than donor / recipient logic.

While there is an intrinsic inequality in the global system to generate a better distribution of science, technology and

innovation capabilities among different degrees of development, SSC in this area is seen as a way to promote development and technological transfers.

Considering this framework, this paper will discuss one of those technological transfers from India to Argentina in the biomass sector. Although there are many differences between both countries, as members of the Global South they share common problems and can cooperate in a more horizontal base. This cooperation with India had helped Argentina to generate important outcomes for developing new technologies in a strategic sector. This paper will consist, first, in a brief introduction about Indo-Argentine relations putting a focus on the Science and Technology agreements signed by both countries. Second, it will analyse a case study on cooperation in renewable energy, particularly the biomass sector, identifying the major agents of the cooperation, describing the process and further detachments of the collaboration. The research was conducted by documents analysis and interviews with representatives of the National Industrial Technology Institute (INTI).

A Brief Introduction to India-Argentina Bilateral Relations

Argentina established diplomatic relations with India two years after its independence and founding of a new country in 1949. India opened a Trade Commission in Buenos Aires in 1943 and it was converted into an embassy in 1949. Argentina had established a consulate in Calcutta in the 1920s and in 1950, while it was later transferred to Delhi as an embassy. Argentina also opened a consulate office in Mumbai in April 2009 during the visit of

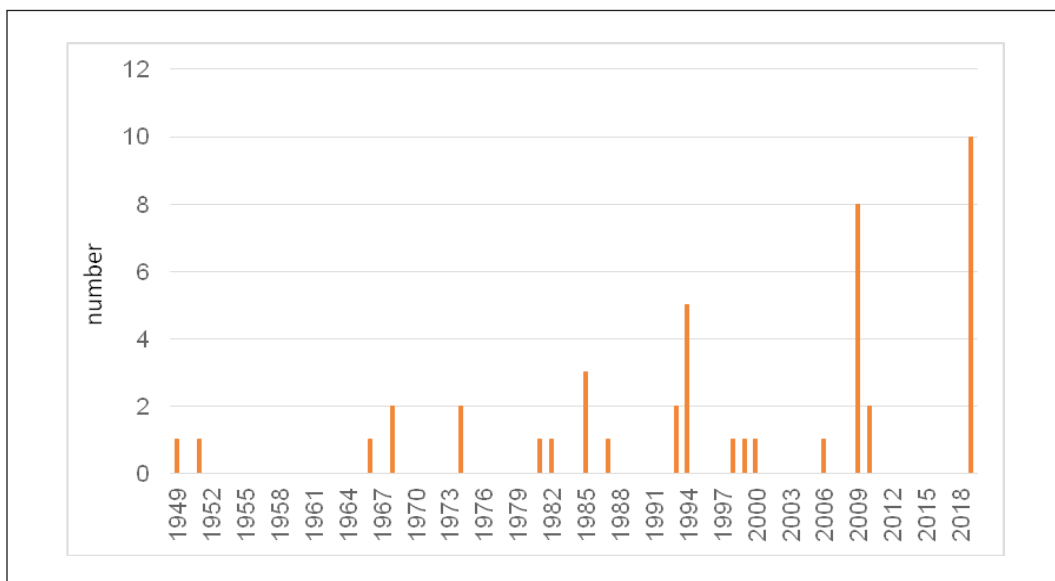
President Cristina Fernandez de Kirchner. (MEA, 2017).

Several Argentinian Presidents have visited India since 1961 – Argentine President Arturo Frondizi visited India in December 1961, the first state visit of an Argentine president; General Reynaldo Bignone, as the last dictatorial president, visited India in 1983 to attend the Non-Aligned-Movement summit; President Raúl Alfonsín was the chief guest during India’s Republic Day celebration in 1985; President Carlos Menem visited the country in March 1994; President Cristina Kirchner in October 2009; and recently President Mauricio Macri went to India in commemoration of the 70th anniversary of Argentina-India bilateral relations (Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India, 2019). On the other hand, in 1968, Indira Gandhi was the first Indian prime minister to visit Argentina. President Zail Singh visited the country in April 1984 and

Narasimha Rao visited Argentina in 1995 to attend the G15 Summit.

As it shows in Figure 1, the bilateral contacts have been sporadic, despite 70 years of bilateral relations only 44 bilateral agreements have been signed, and half of them were during the last 10 years, demonstrating an increase every time there is a commemoration of a new decade of relations (60th and 70th anniversary, in 2009 and 2019 respectively). Fundamentally, the political ties became a bit more fluid in the last decades when trade with India became more important. Argentina’s imports from India include organic chemicals, vehicles and auto-parts, lubricants, machinery, sound and image devices and garments. Argentina’s exports are soybean oil (India is the first destination of Argentinian soybean oil, importing 48 per cent of the total exported in 2017), petroleum,

Figure 1: Bilateral agreements between Argentina and India



Source: Prepared by author based on reports from Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Worship of Argentina (2019).

copper, sunflower oil, leather, wool and ferroalloys (OEC MIT, 2019).

An important aspect to mention is that 40 per cent of the bilateral agreements signed between Argentina and India are related to Science and Technology cooperation, mostly in the nuclear sector, as shown in Table 1. For this research, this paper will concentrate in the Industrial technology agreement, as it will be discussed in the next section.

Table 1: Areas of Science and Technology cooperation between Argentina and India

General Science & Technology Agreements	3
Agriculture	2
Earth Science	2
Nuclear	5
Medical Science	1
Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs)	2
Industrial technology	1
Antarctic	2
Total	18

Source: Prepared by author based on reports from Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Worship of Argentina (2019).

Biomass Bilateral Cooperation

The National Industrial Technology Institute, commonly known as INTI, is an Argentine federal agency in charge of the developing of industrial technology. It was established in 1957 and plays since then an important role in the development of the industrial technologies in the country.

The INTI is a public body, for the generation of science and industrial

technology. It focuses on technological development, from raw materials to consumers, in its entirety, and is an innovation network because it has centers dedicated to different industrial sectors, different aspects of technology, quality, and metrology, among others. There are fundamental sectoral centers and some transversal ones, such as chemistry, biotechnology, physics, electronics and then the sectors that are the regional ones located in the provinces and that have more to do with the needs of the different regions. INTI currently has 60 centers with more than 3000 workers.

The financing of the INTI is 80 per cent by the state, from the national budget, destined mainly to the payment of salaries. Then it has a percentage that is a minimum of an import tax and a 20 per cent that it collects via billing for services, thereby conforming to a mixed budget.

In general terms, INTI is linked to Latin America as they provide services and technical assistance to the region that are financed by the Foreign Ministry through the South-South Cooperation and Triangular Cooperation fund. They cooperate with Uruguay, Chile, Paraguay, Honduras, Cuba, Nicaragua, Mexico, among others. They also developed some recent projects in different countries in Africa and in diverse sectors and areas. There is also a very strong collaboration with Brazil, through EMBRAPA, and IMETRO and with the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB).

They have more than 20 projects internationally with developed countries including Japan, Germany, China, Slovenia, and with institutions such as the International Atomic Energy Agency, the Europe AID and Horizon 2030, which

are the development funds programs of the European Union.

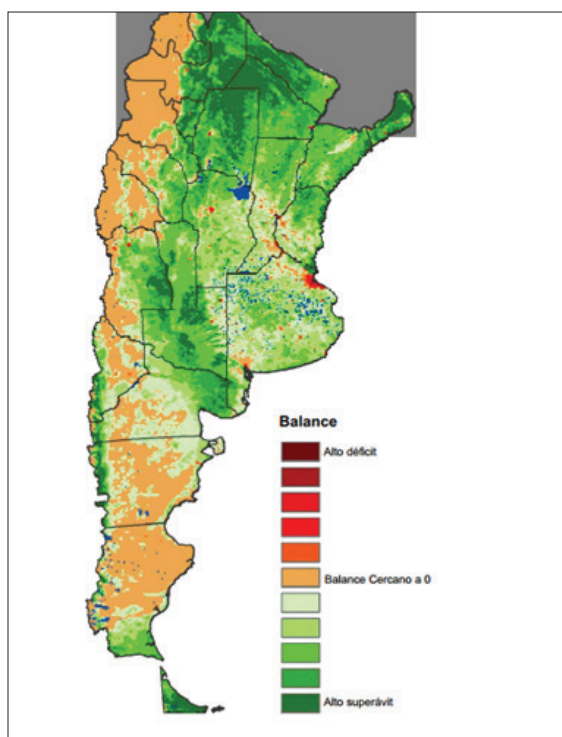
Technical Cooperation with India

In 2009, INTI signed a cooperation agreement with the National Research and Development Corporation of India in the industrial technology sector, with the intention to promote exchange of scientists, researchers, technicians, and experts; exchange of information on scientific and industrial technology; promote joint research and development activities (R&D) of mutual interest and exchange of the corresponding results; contract services or technical assistance; encourage technology transfer; among others.

In 2010, INTI in cooperation with the municipality *Presidencia La Plaza* at Chaco Province, a national company working in biomass projects AGVE, and an Indian company Ankur Scientific Energy Technologies (Ankur Scientific), installed the first biomass gasifier in Argentina with the capacity to produce 250kW of electricity.

This municipality is a forest based town with 70 resident families engaged with sawmills for their livelihood and work. They produce furniture on a medium-scale, and the waste of the production was contaminating the region. Argentine economy is hugely based on agricultural and forestry activities. Thus the necessity to encourage projects based on biomass energy, a strategic goal. As can

Figure 2: Biomass Potential in Argentina by Region



Source: FAO and INTA (2009).¹

be seen in Figure 2, Argentina has a big potential for biomass projects considering the high level of biomass rich resources distributed in the north and central area of the country.

The INTI renewable energy departments located in Tucuman (northwest of Argentina), were in charge of the consulting, conceptual engineering, and mounting of the plant. They researched the international developments of this technology and visited India and Germany looking for the best technological option for this projects. They decided for the Indian technologies because of its favourable cost-benefits ratio. According to INTI researchers, the Indian technologies offered by Ankur Scientific fit better to Argentinian context. On the other hand, the municipality offered the land and the labour hours of the mounting process; AGVE [full form] financed it, and the Indian company offered the technologies and know-how for the biomass gasifier.

This biomass gasifier was a big step in the advancement of the biomass production in Argentina, although it was a medium scale and demonstration plant rather than industrial and of large scale. INTI developed several training courses with universities, research institutes, and companies. It established a very good relation with Ankur Scientific and still has scientific and technical cooperation. They mostly exchange data on different biomass resources quantifying calorific value, ash content, humidity, photometry, and the technical specificities of each biomass in order to adapt gasifier's technology.

Nevertheless, this first gasifier suffered several problems, mostly related to the difficulties of financing and cooperation

with the Municipality. Because of the lack of financing, they could not afford a complementary equipment to dry and crush the biomass input, which was a central requirement for the optimal functioning of the plant. The connection between the plant and the electric company supplier did not work properly. Moreover, a twister rased the plant blocking its well-functioning. INTI has a plan to recover it, but as the country was in the midst of a structural adjustment programme, the scientific sector faced the financing problem.

Yet, the links between INTI and Ankur Scientific strengthened, as in this year a new biomass gasifier was installed in Cordoba, to produce 600kW of power from peanut shells. This private peanut factory applied for the RENOVAR [full form], a national programme to promote renewable energies in the country. This programme guarantees price benefits in long term deals to buy the energy produced from renewable sources. The company contacted INTI and expressed gratitude for its experience from the previous project in managing and developing this kind of biomass gasifier. INTI researched the most updated technologies internationally and visited China, Thailand, and India. Once again, they decided in favour of Ankur Scientific. The researcher at INTI explained that Indian technology in this segment was more adaptable to Argentina's needs, mostly because Indian technologies are less automatised and encourage human labour techniques, which is an important aspect considering the increasing unemployment rates in Argentina. The INTI researcher stated, "We don't need a super developed technology completely automatised in the middle of a poor area with no contact with

the community involved". Moreover, the environmental and security aspects of the plant are more suitable to Argentinian laws in this regard.

The project was successfully implemented, Ankur Scientific engineers came to Argentina, together with INTI and the infrastructure company installed the plant. It also has an electric generator from SIEMENS Brazil. The project worked pretty well, though what they identified sometimes as a problem during the installation, were the language and inter-cultural communication barriers between construction workers and Indian engineers. This plant is successfully selling energy to the electric network.

Thanks to this cooperation with Ankur Scientific, INTI's research department on Renewable Energy is one of the most experienced in the country and is being consulted to make Lab proofs of biomass sources and biomass gasifiers. As one of the detachments of this cooperation, INTI is developing with a national company a prototype of a small movable gasifier for agricultural residue from the cane crop able to produce between 15 to 20kW. For the extended agriculture land in Argentina, this movable gasifier could work well in different areas; it will be economically accessible; and will increase access to electricity in rural areas where there is no network. It would allow farmers to connect the irrigation pump using the energy from their own crop waste rather than the diesel they are using nowadays, contributing to the environment and generating economic savings enforcing regional development. Also INTI is cooperating with the National University of La Rioja to develop a prototype of a gasifier able to generate biogas from olive

production waste. The project is in the starting phase but serves as an example of how this bilateral cooperation with India has generated important know-how able to be adapted to the national needs in a smaller scale, but in a strategic area which was not developed before.

Moreover, INTI is working with the Argentine Institute for Standardisation and Certification (IRAM) in approving the norms and certifications for solid biofuels as biomass sources and pellets. Doing so they are settling the standards in a new area of the energy production of the country.

Final Considerations

As this paper shows, the SSC in science and technology between India and Argentina has brought good example of a successful effort, in which the collaboration helped opening new areas of technological energy developments in Argentina. With the cooperation encouraged by INTI and Ankur Scientific and other third parties, Argentina has established its first biomass gasifier. It constitutes an important step for the country, considering the important biomass resources that were not researched nor exploited before this cooperation.

Although the cooperation is still limited to few cases, there is a huge potential for developing more collaboration programmes in the near future. Argentina and India have important contacting points in which S&T cooperation can be successful, the nuclear, agriculture, energy, TICs are important areas for mutually beneficial cooperation projects. It is important to expand and maintain the collaboration, until now it seems that only when there's a presidential visit or

new decade anniversary, diplomatic ties are reinforced.

INTI has been learning from India biomass technologies and can help to improve India's development in other sectors in which Argentina has a long technological tradition. Also INTI has a long experience in South-South Cooperation and can also develop triangular cooperation programmes with India in cooperation with countries in Latin America.

For reinforcing bilateral relations and South-South collaborations, the need of the hour is to encourage a better understanding of the potential opportunities and the real situation of the partner, its needs, demands, and technological offers.

Endnote

¹ The supply/demand balance at the pixel level is calculated by means of accessible and potentially available productivity for pixel-level energy and the consequent deduction of consumption at the pixel level; Translation of the labels: from reddest to greener: high deficit, balance near zero, high surplus. The yellow dot indicates the location of the Municipality in which the biomass gasifier has been installed. Accurate attempt to quantify gross disbursements of these flows come from the Organisation for Economic

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ONE VILLAGE, ONE PRODUCT: ARGENTINA-JAPAN COOPERATION

Japan's International Cooperation Agency (JICA) launched its "One Village, One Product" (OVOP) project in Argentina, which is designed to encourage social development in the provinces of Catamarca, Misiones, Chaco, Salta and Buenos Aires.

OVOP proposes that a certain population choose one or more local products, to develop them on a large scale and compete in the global market, with the consequent development of the regional economy, thus promoting the creation of genuine labour opportunities, based on three fundamental principles: acting locally, thinking globally; development of human resources and promotion of autonomy and creativity. OVOP has already been launched in China, the United States, the Philippines, Malaysia, Thailand, Australia, Colombia, Peru, Brazil and Ecuador.

OVOP method has three main points: ownership (at the end of this project, it is expected that Argentina has new tools that will be implemented and continue to expand activities in a sustainable way with other provinces, even after the project is finished), training for local human resources and inclusion and market orientation, as noted by Mr. Hiroshi Nishiki, JICA representative in Argentina.

OVOP is based on the work of local communities, who through their own or unique products (goods, services or events), become self-managers of their development. In this way, the aim is to improve the quality of life of the inhabitants of the localities, fostering the development of the capacities that make it possible to give greater added value to their resources, in order to promote identity, respect for the local culture, and a sense of belonging and the feeling of pride.

JICA is disbursing around three million US dollars at this stage of the undertaking. The programme will provide technical assistance for five years to promote the strengthening of social economy groups and organisations that provide support (national government, provincial, INTI, INTA, NGOs, etc).

Source: MercoPress. (2019, July 11). Cooperation agreement between Argentina, Japan launched. MercoPress. Retrieved from: <https://en.mercopress.com/2019/07/11/cooperation-agreement-between-argentina-japan-launched>

Approaches to Development Cooperation and Traditional Norms and Culture: An African Dilemma



*Olawale R. Olaopa**

“While the aid approach is welcome, it is a mere palliative measure.”

Introduction

Various strategies are being explored for effective resolution of the multifaceted challenges that Africa faces (Ogunmola & Badmus, 2009). Almost two decades ago, the UN Millennium Summit adopted the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) to add to prospect for development of developing countries. The goals have since become important tools for monitoring human progress across nations. Consequently, various African countries demonstrated their commitments through a number of initiatives. Unfortunately, most of the MDGs goals were not realised, especially in Africa. This led to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, operationalised via SDGs, which has placed considerable demands on public finances and capacities needed for improvement and effective international support. Whether this framework is sufficient to develop a global partnership for development, will be focused in this paper.

Implementing any global development agenda requires incorporating comprehensive framework of international cooperation. Applying an expanded growth agenda like SDGs, given its antecedents, depends on two elements of cooperation (Kaul, 2013a; Kaul, 2013b; Kaul and Conceicao, 2005). That include development cooperation with attention directed basically on assisting the recipients on policies aimed at reducing poverty and encourage all countries, regardless of their development status, to develop interest to participate in international cooperation for sustainability. However, the current international development cooperation

* Ph.D. Department of Economics, College of Business Administration, Imam Abdulrahman Bin Faisal University, Dammam, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. Views expressed are personal.

neither encourages participation nor conforms to the standard definition of cooperation. International relations articulate cooperation as that which ensues once “actors adjust their behaviour to the actual or anticipated preferences of others” (Axelrod & Keohane 1985: 226 as cited in Sebastian, 2014; Axelrod, 2000). Thus, (international) cooperation refers to interactions initiated to accomplish shared objectives when stakeholders’ desires are neither same nor incompatible (Sebastian, 2014). This implies that the objectives of both the provider and recipients vary and the only way by which cooperation could be fostered is for the two to adjust their conducts for hitch-free cooperation and sustainable development, in manner acceptable to all parties.

Not minding the dearth of visible and well-defined parameters for development, it is the general consensus that it is all encompassing. Development is about people, societies, opportunities, threats and consequences, productivity, and efficiency. Most policy makers and practitioners, development partners and other stakeholders linked to aid-led development process have tended to ignore this reality. Instead they perceive poverty reduction and global partnership as provision of quite a number of aids, grants, loans and other financial assistance. Although aid can be remedy for developing economies trapped in low investment quagmire, they can also be counter-productive as evident in the case of Zambia (Easterly, 2002).

While the aid approach is welcome, it is a mere palliative measure. Development practitioners can take advantage of an approach that fully considers traditional practices in the development process (UNESCO, 1995; UN, 2013) for effective service delivery

and everlasting transformation. States’ failure in this regard coupled with lack of organisational connection between formal and indigenous institutions are responsible for development crisis in Africa. This view was corroborated by Dia (1996) when he advised that the greatest auspicious means to makeup for the state system’s inadequacies and its imposed institutions in Africa is to identify “the structural and functional disconnect between the informal, indigenous institutions rooted in the regions’ history and culture, and formal institutions mostly transplanted from outside”. This, according to Dia (1996), is with a view to guaranteeing “a reconnect between state and civil society”, and to recognise the capacities of local institutions for ensuring diversities, democratic participation and development. Thus, SDGs, though useful as uniting point of call for development and a foundation for identifying achievement, still leave out as much as they include. This becomes obvious in the failure of various agendas, development cooperation and partners to modify their programmes and actions to the real preferences, traditional norms, culture and values, of the indigenous people and societies of Africa to which aid is directed. This concern has, therefore, created a rebirth of another strategy to development rooted in the hitherto neglected potentials of Africa’s traditional beliefs in the development discourse.

Obviously, African states have shown commitments to the implementation of SDGs since their declaration through a number of policy initiatives. However, evidence has shown that the likelihood of achieving these goals remain daunting challenges for Africa. A critical barrier to planning for achievement of these variables of SDGs continues to be majorly the prevailing religious beliefs and cultural

norms in Africa, in spite of the clamour for African solution to African problems. Specifically, the issue of '*Oke ni owo a funni'gbe*' ('Givers' hands are always on top or Givers never lack') to the achievement of the development of a global partnership for development through the developed countries' pledge of sustainable debt relief and increased trade and technology programmes for the developing countries may not be easily realised. This is particularly so given the African belief that '*Ajoje ko dun bi enikan ko ba ni*' (it will not be enjoyable to eat together if only one party is the regular provider). This simply means that 'there is joy in cooperative effort rather than the single effort of one being the regular provider'.

While both the African traditional religions and Islam and Christianity support giving of alms and charity, this must be unconditional contrary to the continent's experience in aid and grants from developed world. It is equally customarily and traditionally believed that continuous acceptance of gifts will make the receiver a perpetual taker. This has to be considered and reconciled for effective implementation of Goal 8 component of the SDGs. This is essential in a globalised world dominated by countries of diverse socio-economic interests and political muscles, and where there seem to be no culture of free gift and unqualified generosity. This coincides with African belief that it is better to be cautious in search of resilient resolution in times of challenges than to hurriedly accept solution of unclear terms. It also corroborates that which argues '*Gbogbo alangba lo d'anu dele, a ko mo eyi t'inu nrun*' (All lizards lie flat on their stomach and it is difficult to determine which has a stomach ache). This literally means that 'the physical appearance could

be deceptive of what is in the mind'. With regards to development cooperation, it translates to the fact that one cannot really understand the exact reasons or aim behind giving of aid or assistance by development partners. This, among several other African beliefs, will adversely affect the achievement of the global agenda for sustainable development.

What Needs to be Done, Why and How?

What is required is to first correct the misconception associated with development cooperation as exemplified in its framework of giving and receiving of aid is to show that it is a process of partnership, cooperation, collaboration, specialisation and exchange of resources and ideas involving diverse actors, including the recipients, in development effort. In this way, the indigenous community becomes more actively involved. To achieve this is to effectively harness these African resources (tradition, religion, culture and custom) based on the principles of cooperation and openness for sustainability. This is critically important given the pronounced general attitude and attachment of Africans to cultural norms and values and its pervasiveness in the determination of the success or otherwise of any policy agenda but hitherto neglected due to the formalisation of the policy agenda.

Harnessing resources should involve assigning responsibilities in a bottom-up fashion and encouraging greater consideration of societies' diversities, endowments, rules and stakeholders, in line with the identified target for development cooperation. The process must involve, teaching the African people to properly understand, appreciate and be confident about the utility, efficacy of their indigenous resources and encourage

them to strengthen its weak points for improvement and modification, with respect to the vital areas of SDGs, based on societal dynamics (Sahlins 2000; Harvecort et al. 2002; Nwaka, 2009). There is need for policy shift, on the part of government, from being elitist to one that originates from the grassroots and encourages genuine collaboration among the state, the indigenous people, their societies and other public organisations - with special interest in harnessing, transforming, and utilising indigenous principles and material resources in all areas of human endeavours (Nwaka 1999; Ray and Reddy, 2003). All 'donor' agencies should stop engaging foreign professionals with dearth, little or no knowledge and familiarity with the local terrain and the problems they sought to resolve. All these, among others, will ensure a more and equal form of partnership, as envisioned by and among the developing countries for a strengthened development agenda.

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Lexicon and Syntax of Development Cooperation: In Support of an Equity Criterion for Development Assessment



*Milindo Chakrabarti**

“The metric to be developed has to capture the net gain or loss in access to these aggregate of resources while evaluating a process of designed development.”

Economists, for quite some time, believed that a dash of inequality in the system contributes to its efficiency (for example, see Okun, 1975). The unshakable faith in the “trickle down” process also called for more emphasis on efficiency in policy actions. A trickle down process believes that accumulation of capital by the rich will ultimately result in some benefits downward to those who are not that privileged. The emergence of “Washington Consensus” during the late 1980s is often attributed to such faith on the efficacy of “trickle down”. Thus efforts to reduce inequality were considered secondary to the primary objective of enhancing efficiency in an economy. The criteria devised by the Development Assistance Committee (DAC) of Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) in 1991 for evaluating a development programme looked for its contribution to “efficiency” and failed to capture “equity” as a potent criterion for assessment purposes. The lack of concern for considering “equity” as a criterion for assessment in development design has, perhaps, contributed to rising inequality, not only among nations, but also within countries. The criteria of “impact” used by DAC might have been used to capture “inequality” in a selective manner. But it need not necessarily has been confined to assess the nature and extent of inequality created or reduced through a development action. The present note argues in support of identifying equity as a criterion for assessing development outcomes.

* Managing Editor, DCR and Visiting Fellow at RIS.

Make no mistake, persistent inequality between developed and developing countries and quest to facilitate a convergence between them was the prime mover in the emergence of the discipline of “development economics”. The objectives behind the birth of the idea of development cooperation were no different. However, over the years both inter-country and intra-country inequalities have been steadily rising and have become a matter of concern today. The entire body of literature capturing the centre-periphery or dependency theories was aligned with the issue of inequality prevailing between the developing and the developed countries.

Inequality has by now been established as not a factor contributing to the efficiency of a socio-economic system. Rather studies, especially since the beginning of the present millennium, observe the relationship between efficiency and inequality to be inverse (Aghion et al., 1999; Bowles, 2012; Acemoglu et al., 2013, Ostry et al., 2014; CEPAL, 2018) suggesting that a reduced inequality is accompanied by an enhanced efficiency. Thomas Piketty identified a basic principle behind inequality. Concentration of wealth happens when the rate of return on capital is greater than economic growth. Such a phenomenon contributes to rising inequality in a society as we have been observing over the last few decades. Dabla-Norris et al. (2015) further confirmed the failure of the trickle-down effect as they found that a rise in the income share of the top 20 per cent reduces medium term GDP growth.

The difficulties in identifying an empirical relationship between the two lie in challenges in appropriately measuring inequality (and measuring efficiency as well). Measuring inequality has been

a methodological challenge. Efforts have been made to measure it from an income perspective. Perspectives from consumption have also been pursued to measure it. It is often argued that these two do not necessarily move at same pace and, may be, in the same direction.

To get through these methodological challenges, one may consider inequality from the perspective of access to resources and derive a qualitative measure of inequality. In an earlier issues of *Development Cooperation Review* (November 2018; April-May 2019), we deliberated on the relevance of access in facilitating sustainable development and argued that lack of development can be linked with a phenomenon of lack of access to resources. Simultaneously, it may also be argued that increased access to resources augments the pace of development. The present discussion argues further in favour of identifying equity as a criterion for assessing development activities with “access to resources” as the measuring rod.

A new approach to understanding human development through the lens of equity is surely the need of the day. The fundamental objective of Agenda 2030 that calls for “leaving no one behind” within a stipulated time period is purely an attempt to enhance access to all the four resources mentioned above to those enjoying a restricted access to them. All the sustainable development goals (SDGs) from SDG1 through SDG 17 are clear calls for increased access to one of these resources or another. The need of the hour is to devise an analytical method to capture the extent of inequality in a multidimensional framework – that need not be purely quantitative – based on the idea of access. Such an analytical structure can then be suitably used to assess the

creation or otherwise of inequality through the development initiatives used so far.

A typical example of the same may be used in evaluating a health related programme. Access to health services can create simultaneous access to enhanced educational resource through reduced morbidity and mortality, increased access to employment opportunities by reducing disability adjusted life year (DALY), reduce gender inequalities among others. Simultaneously, increased access of stakeholders to the governance mechanism of health service facilities would facilitate further access to health related facilities. Extant mechanisms of estimating the changes in mortality or morbidity rates may not necessarily capture the nature of change in the access regime across all the resources. Further, the proposed assessment mechanism would be far more cost efficient in fulfilling all the objectives of assessment.

Several efforts at development cooperation through the operations of IBSA Fund – a fund created with contributions from India, Brazil and South Africa and managed by UN Office for South-South Cooperation (UNOSSC) – has been effective in attacking inequality in developing countries, mostly categorised as least developed countries. The initiatives ensure access to resources linked to agriculture, health, education, energy and water, besides institutional resources like governance and empowerment.

The relevance of “access” and equity as a criterion for assessment is further emphasised as we enter the phase of Agenda 2030. The growing trend of inequality is also putting a considerable pressure on achieving sustainable use of resources. The objectives of “leaving no one behind” are difficult to be achieved in a world that is getting increasingly

iniquitous. It is also a matter of concern that growing inequity can also miserably add to inefficiencies in resource use. The stated emphasis of the forthcoming Human Development Report (HDR 2019 [Forthcoming]) on inequality also underscores the growing concerns for equity.

To conclude, we would argue that “equity” should be consciously included as a criterion for evaluation of development intervention, in general and development cooperation, in particular. The analytical framework for using this criterion may be structured around the idea of “access” to help capture the multidimensional characteristics of inequality.

Does this mean that efficiency has no role to play in an assessment framework? Certainly not. Efficient use of resources is a necessary condition for sustainability, even though not sufficient, given our emphasis on “allocative efficiency” and “technical efficiency” that does not consider the creation of negative externalities in the process. A simultaneous emphasis on “distributive efficiency” may stem the rot. The conditionalities, often imposed in the name of development cooperation, may ensure access to some economic resources in exchange of reduced access to the other types of resources – natural, political and even, social. The metric to be developed has to capture the net gain or loss in access to these aggregate of resources while evaluating a process of designed development. Inequality, in its growing trend, has created concerns not only in terms of efficiency, but also in terms of sustainability and these two terms are not independent of one another. Need to identify equity as a criterion for assessing development outcome and using “access to resources” as the measuring rod cannot be overemphasised.

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INDIA-RUSSIA SPACE COOPERATION

India-Russia begin talks on the Gaganyaan Mission and the possibilities for production of space systems in India, keeping in mind the 'Make in India' initiative. Cooperation in futuristic technologies including new space systems, rocket engines, propellants and propulsion systems, spacecrafts and launch vehicle technology have been discussed. Space cooperation talks have begun between ROSCOSMOS and GLAVCOSMOS, from the Russian side, and ISRO and Human Space Flight Programme, from the Indian side.

Russia also expressed interest to see India participate in the International Space Station, and offered its full support for this purpose. Cooperation in space has emerged as a key area of cooperation between the two countries with a focus on the high technology. India is rapidly growing its capabilities in outer space, and Russia sees India as a key partner for promoting peaceful uses of outer space.

In a joint statement, both countries had emphasised the importance of mutually beneficial cooperation in area of outer space. They have agreed to further intensify cooperation in exploration and use of outer space for peaceful purposes, including human spaceflight programmes, scientific projects, as well as agreed to continue developing cooperation on the BRICS remote sensing satellite constellation.

Source: Roy, S. (2019, July 13). Gaganyaan Mission: Doval meets Russia's space agency chief. *The Indian Express*. Retrieved from: <https://indianexpress.com/article/india/gaganyaan-mission-doval-meets-russias-space-agency-chief-5827148/>

SSC in Statistics

Intra-Regional Trade in SADC

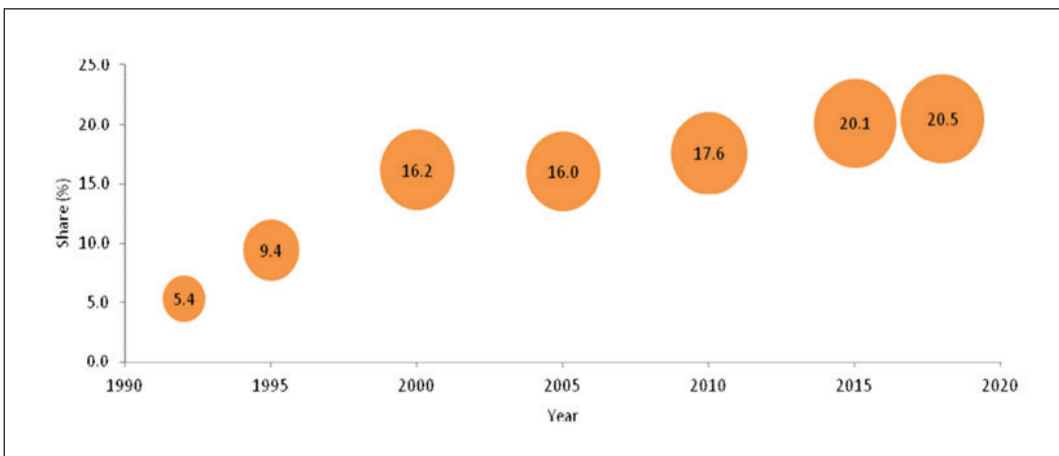


*Sushil Kumar**

The Southern African Development Community (SADC) was setup in 1992 (The predecessor of the SADC was the Southern African Development Co-ordination Conference established in 1980) with the main objectives of development, economic growth, alleviate poverty, peace & security, enhancing the standard and quality of life of the people of Southern Africa, and support the socially disadvantaged. These objectives are to be achieved through increased regional integration, built on democratic principles and equitable and sustainable development among the member countries.¹

Currently SADC comprises 16 member states, namely Angola, Botswana, Democratic Republic of Congo, Comoros, Lesotho, Madagascar, Malawi, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, Seychelles, South Africa, Swaziland, Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe.² It brings together 344.81 million people constituting 4.54 per cent

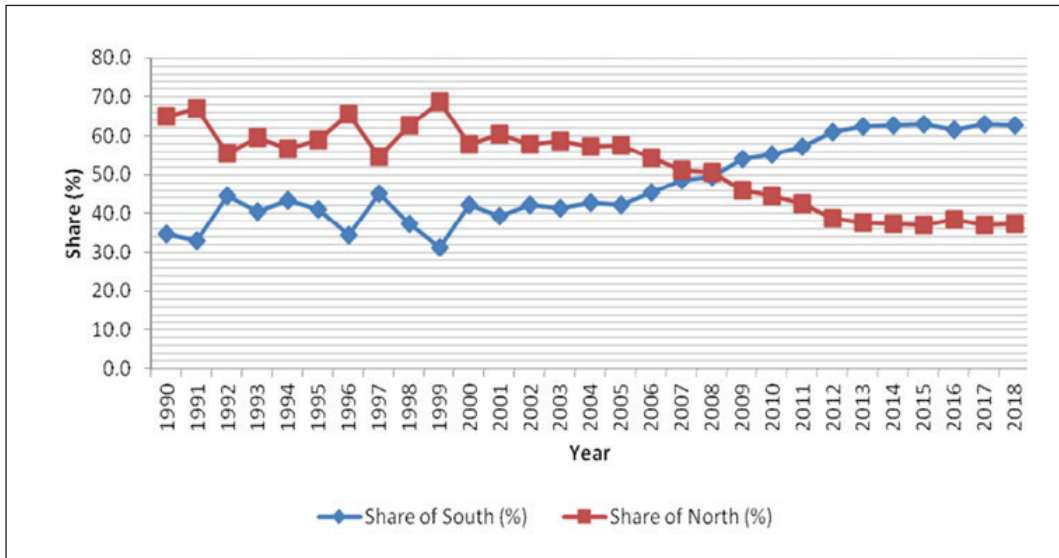
Figure 1: Intra-SADC Trade as Share of Total SADC Trade (%)



Source: Estimated from UN Comtrade database

* Consultant, RIS

Figure 2: SADC trade to South and North as per cent of its Total Trade



Source: Estimated from UN Comtrade database

of the world population and combined GDP of US\$ 758.56 billion. South Africa is the largest economy in the region, accounting for 56.51 per cent of the region’s economy, followed by Angola (13.11 per cent), and Tanzania (6.89 per cent).

SADC’s total trade increased more than six fold, from US\$ 40.14 billion in 1992 to US\$ 263.11 billion in 2018, growing at a compound annual growth rate of 7.49 per cent over the period. In the case of exports, SADC total exports have risen from US\$ 21.38 billion in 1992 to 127.90 billion in 2018. In regard to imports, SADC’s total imports were US\$ 135.21 billion in 2018 growing from US\$ 18.76 billion in 1992.

Intra-Regional Trade (IRT) in SADC has increased from US\$ 2.15 billion in 1992 to US\$ 53.90 billion in 2018. Intra-SADC trade as share of total SADC trade also grew from 5.4 per cent in 1992 to 20.5 per cent in 2018 (see Figure 1). According to the World Trade Organisation, SADC ranks first among African RTAs in terms of value of exports, representing 37.3 per

cent of total African exports in 2017 and Intra-SADC trade has increased since the creation of an FTA in 2008 and is the largest amongst trading blocs across Africa.³

In terms of growth rate of the intra-regional trade of SADC, it grew at the rate of 11.05 (based on constant price 2010-11) during the period 1992-2018. It is important to note that the same for the European Union countries and member countries of North American Free Trade Agreement grew at the compound annual rate of 5.26 per cent and 3.97 per cent, respectively during the same period.

SADC’s total trade as percentage of total trade with the South (all countries who are not members of the OECD) climbed from 44.52 per cent in 1992 to 62.68 per cent in 2018, while trade with the North declined from 55.47 per cent in 1992 to 37.31 per cent in 2018 (see Figure 2). The share of South-South trade in total southern trade increased from 42.77 per cent in 1992 to 60.82 per cent in 2018.

Endnotes

¹ See: <https://www.sadc.int/about-sadc/overview/>

² Comoros was admitted to SADC at the 37th SADC Summit of Heads of State and Government in August 2017, then became a full member at the 38th Summit of Heads of State and Government on August 2018 in Windhoek Namibia (see <https://www.sadc.int/member-states/>)

³ See EXIM Bank working paper 85 (2019) on India-SADC Trade and Investment Relations: Harnessing the Potential

Reference

EXIM Bank. (2019). India-SADC Trade and Investment Relations: Harnessing the Potential, Working Bank 85, Export-Import (EXIM) Bank of India.

SSC AND BEE-KEEPING

The Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA), Argentina and four Caribbean countries, including Barbados, Dominica, Saint Lucia and Saint Kitts and Nevis, will participate in a regional South-South Cooperation project to strengthen the bee-keeping industry by increasing the productivity of beehives. The project – ApiCaribe – will be developed through triangular cooperation between the Ministries of Agriculture of the four countries, Argentina and IICA.

ApiCaribe seeks to foster scientific apiculture as an integrated agricultural practice that allows for improving crop productivity, by supporting pollination and the production of honey and other beehive products; this, in turn, will allow for boosting producers' income and well-being, stated Beverly Best, Director of External and Institutional Relations at IICA.

Argentine specialists will facilitate the installation of Perone beehives, a new variety of beehives that are more productive than the Langstroth beehives that are traditionally used in the Caribbean countries. IICA has supported Caribbean apiculture and will now coordinate the provision of advisory services by specialists from Argentina, the world's third largest exporter of natural honey. Due to its rich diversity of flora and fauna, the Caribbean region has great potential for apiculture.

The initial phase, launched in July 2019, will be implemented over the course of one year. As part of the second phase, the project would be scaled up to include other Caribbean countries and would be implemented based on each country's specific needs and priorities with respect to the development of its bee-keeping industry.

Given its nature, bee-keeping requires a healthy physical environment to thrive; consequently, it serves as a barometer for nature, indicating the quality of air, water, soil, and sources of pollen and nectar within a given space. Additionally, honey production generates very little waste, making apiculture an ideal industry for adopting a bio-economy approach.

Given Caribbean countries' high level of vulnerability to climate change, as well as apiculture's great potential to generate socio-economic benefits in rural communities throughout the region, this project affords a valuable opportunity to guide these economies towards sustainability.

Source: Editor-CS. (2019, July 23). South-South cooperation will allow for strengthening beekeeping in the Caribbean. Observer, St. Kitts & Nevis. Retrieved from: <http://www.thestkittsnevisobserver.com/regional-intl-news/south-south-cooperation-will-allow-for-strengthening-beekeeping-in-the-caribbean/>

SAARC & DISASTER RISK REDUCTION

South Asia is the world's fastest growing region, most countries are now classified middle-income countries and enjoy improving social indicators. Between 1990-2017, the average human development index in the region increased by 45.3 per cent, making it the region with the fastest growth in human development globally.

The region is also one of the most disaster-prone in the world, facing a diverse set of hazards due to its ecological and geographic diversity. Moreover, as it is home to a quarter of the world's population, who are increasingly living in dense urban areas, the region hosts one-third of the global number of people affected by disasters.

"A combination of rapid economic growth and rising disaster risk poses grave obstacles to the development trajectory of the countries in the region. For development to outpace disaster risk, a transformational change in the way we address disasters needs to take place – with a primary focus on risk prevention and building resilience," noted Dr. Animesh Kumar, Deputy Chief of the UN Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNDRR) in Asia-Pacific.

The interim unit of the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation Disaster Management Centre (SDMC-IU) and UNDRR co-organised a regional workshop for all eight SAARC Member States to accelerate their disaster risk management efforts. Participants were drawn from the national disaster risk management agencies and ministries responsible for planning and finance. The workshop was supported by the UNDRR Global Education and Training Institute and the International Recovery Platform Secretariat. The workshop covered a number of interconnected issues that all countries must address to build their disaster resilience and ensure their development investments are risk-informed. This starts by ensuring overall coherence in the government's approach to development, climate action and disaster risk reduction.

The importance of the workshop to the SAARC countries, noted the common challenges and the risks faced by member states and therefore requires mechanisms to address them collectively. Moreover, it was noted that risk-based knowledge should be at the forefront of all planning and development decisions.

Ms. Zeeniya Riyaz of the Maldives Ministry of Planning and Infrastructure noted that in the Maldives, development used to be ad-hoc. As a result, large-scale land reclamation projects increased the country's vulnerability to disasters.

Building on the common challenges and shared risks among the SAARC Member States, the workshop will result in a roadmap to revise the regional SAARC Disaster Risk Management Framework to align it with the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The workshop also benefited from technical support and advice by the Asian Development Bank, Asian Disaster Preparedness Center, World Food Programme, UNICEF, Japan International Cooperation Agency and SEEDS-India.

Source: UNDRR. (2019, July 12). Accelerating disaster risk reduction in South Asia to keep up with development. UN Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNDRR). Retrieved from: <https://www.unisdr.org/archive/66579>

Guidelines for Contributors

1. DCR is a refereed multi-disciplinary international journal. Manuscripts can be sent, as email attachment, in MS-Word to the Managing Editor (milindo.chakrabarti@ris.org.in).

2. Manuscripts should be prepared using double spacing. The text of manuscripts should not ordinarily exceed 1500 words. Manuscripts sent for peer review section may be limited to 5000 words. Such submissions should contain a 200 word abstract, and key words up to six.

3. Use 's' in '-ise' '-isation' words; e.g., 'civilise', 'organisation'. Use British spellings rather than American spellings. Thus, 'labour' not 'labor'. (2 per cent, 3 km, 36 years old, etc.). In general descriptions, numbers below 10 should be spelt out in words. Use thousands, millions, billions, not lakh and crore. Use fuller forms for numbers and dates – for example 1980-88, pp. 200-202 and pp. 178-84. for example 'the eighties', 'the twentieth century', etc.

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Call for Contributions

We invite contributions from interested readers on issues related to development cooperation in general and South-South Cooperation in particular. Contributions may also capture theory, practice and associated debates on development cooperation. Reviews of latest publications - books, monographs, reports - are also welcome. Any institutional upcoming events on development cooperation may also be captured in DCR. The contributions should be restricted to not more than 1500 words.

For editorial information, contributions, feedback and comments: mail to milindo.chakrabarti@ris.org.in and dgoffice@ris.org.in

Introduction of a Section on Peer Reviewed Articles/Essays

In keeping with suggestions, feedbacks and accumulated experience, we have decided to introduce a section, containing peer reviewed full length articles/essays. Interested scholars willing to contribute are requested to send in their manuscripts (preferably in not more than 5000 words) to the editorial office.

About Development Cooperation Review

Development Cooperation Review (DCR) aspires to capture holistic narrative around global development cooperation and fill an important knowledge gap towards theorisation, empirical verification and documentation of Southern-led development cooperation processes. Despite growing volumes of development partnerships around the Southern world, there remains an absence of detailed information, analysis and its contribution to global development processes. Even though there have been sporadic efforts in documenting some of the activities, a continuous effort in chronicling the diverse experiences in South-South Cooperation (SSC) is still absent. RIS, in joint publication with GDI, FIDC and NeST has endeavoured to launch DCR, a monthly periodical, to fill this gap.

About Research and Information System for Developing Countries (RIS)

RIS is a New Delhi-based autonomous policy research institute envisioned as a forum for fostering effective policy dialogue and capacity-building among developing countries on global and regional economic issues. The focus of the work programme of RIS is to promote South-South Cooperation and collaborate with developing countries in multilateral negotiations in various forums. [@RIS_NewDelhi](#)

About Global Development Initiative (GDI)

Established at RIS, the Global Development Initiative (GDI) aims to institutionalise knowledge on India's development initiatives and promote their replication as part of knowledge sharing in Asia and Africa with the help of its institutional partners, including civil society organisations. It attempts to explore and articulate global development processes within a micro framework and works as a unique platform to collate and assimilate learning processes of other countries towards promotion of equity, sustainability and inclusively based on multi-disciplinary and multi-functional approach.

About Network of Southern Think Tanks (NeST)

Knowledge generated endogenously among the Southern partners can help in consolidation of stronger common issues at different global policy fora. Consequent to the consensus reached on many of these issues at the High-Level Conference of Southern Providers in Delhi (March 2013) and establishment of the subsequent Core Group on the SSC within the UNDCF (June 2013), the Network of Southern Think-Tanks (NeST) was formally launched at the Conference on the South-South Cooperation, held at New Delhi during 10-11 March 2016. The purpose of the NeST is to provide a global platform for Southern Think-Tanks for collaboratively generating, systematising, consolidating and sharing knowledge on SSC approaches for international development. [@NeST_SSC](#)

About Forum for Indian Development Cooperation (FIDC)

FIDC aims to encourage detailed analysis of broad trends in South-South cooperation and contextualise Indian policies by facilitating discussions across various subject streams and stakeholders based on theoretical and empirical analysis, field work, perception surveys and capacity building needs. [@FIDC_NewDelhi](#)

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Core IV-B, Fourth Floor, India Habitat Centre
Lodhi Road, New Delhi-110 003, India.

Ph. 91-11-24682177-80 Fax: 91-11-24682173-74-75

Email: dgoffice@ris.org.in Website: www.ris.org.in

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