This issue of *Development Outreach* takes stock of some new and existing models of Southern-led and Triangular cooperation and knowledge exchange. We know the models are shifting when Mexico exports an innovative poverty reduction tool to New York City, and Brazil increases its humanitarian aid by 20-fold over a three-year period (*The Economist*, July 2010). Countries of the South want to learn from those who have climbed out of the trenches, who speak the same language, who have grappled with the same problems. The challenge now is to connect, coordinate, and capture the useable knowledge and experiences that will help shape and take these new models to scale, which means learning more about what works and what doesn’t. The multilateral development banks and others in the development community such as NEPAD in Africa, ASEAN in Asia, and the OAS in Latin America, can help create the space for this—physically and virtually—by connecting, brokering, documenting, and sharing the knowledge born of success (and failure) that can make solutions travel.

Articles in this issue present stakeholder perspectives on South–South cooperation from regional organizations, nongovernmental, and multilateral agencies. The final section of the magazine offers examples of SSG in practice, including summary cases prepared for the Bogotá High Level Event on South–South Cooperation and Capacity Development. As this issue’s guest editors point out, the new models of South–South cooperation are being driven by a “double-sided demand”—the demand to learn and the demand to share knowledge, coming together in a happy convergence of interests. With strong leadership and commitment by all stakeholders, South–South cooperation can unleash the power of regional and local knowledge and forge best-fit development solutions.

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NILS-SJARD SCHULZ
BY SANJAY PRADHAN

AS YOU OPEN THIS ISSUE of Development Outreach, I invite you to join me in a vision of the future.

Imagine, just a few years from now, a developing country official who is struggling with a difficult problem: perhaps re-integrating demobilized soldiers back into their communities that have been torn by conflict, or helping the desperately poor climb out of poverty through targeted assistance programs.

She taps into a series of online platforms that enable her not only to describe and measure the problem precisely, but also to instantaneously identify how five other countries have tackled a similar challenge in different ways. Imagine that she has access to user-friendly summaries of each country’s reform program and its outcomes.

She then connects electronically with her counterpart from the country with the most relevant experience, who is eager to share his knowledge. Together they get the right people involved, design an action plan of country visits, videoconferences, and detailed technical consultations.

And imagine that for all this, financing is available—and quick, either from her country’s budget or from a rapid-response trust fund.

Our practitioner then implements reforms to tackle her challenge and reports back on the results, so that others can in turn benefit from her experience and provide feedback.

Now imagine that hundreds of these South-South exchanges are taking place through a global platform that enables countries to quickly learn about how others have tackled pressing development challenges. And imagine that these exchanges are taking place not just South-South, but North-South and South-North, as countries seek to learn about innovations around the globe.

This is of course the vision of an ideal future. But the power of South-South cooperation and experience exchange is very real and various models are being refined around the globe. The enormous collective potential of scaled-up South-South cooperation and capacity building could be transformative. But right now most examples consist of relatively ad hoc initiatives.
SO HOW CAN WE TURN OUR VISION INTO REALITY?

This issue of Development Outreach, “The South-South Opportunity,” is one small contribution to that cause. It is an attempt both to capture the state of the South-South agenda today and to provide inspiration for the development community as we move ahead with the dream.

The first section on Perspectives introduces the key players, the agenda, and current thinking. The following section on Practices is an overview of South-South learning in action. The last section on the Bogota High-Level Event on South-South Cooperation and Capacity Development, and the evidence gathered by the international Task Team on South-South cooperation, describes how that remarkable event, which took place in March 2010, was a major milestone in scaling up the South-South agenda.

I would like to offer my heartfelt thanks to the authors and editors of this issue. South-South cooperation can indeed be a valuable complement to traditional North-South cooperation. Let us join forces to unleash its transformative power by forging a new generation of instruments for South-South cooperation in the service of poverty reduction.

Sanjay Pradhan is Vice President of the World Bank Institute.
AFRICAN COUNTRIES, like Nigeria, with an emerging information technology (IT) industry, are examples of how globalization has opened up vast new opportunities. Information technology and business process outsourcing is a multibillion dollar talent-driven industry with a market that is still untapped. Africa is keen on exploring this new frontier which has the potential to create thousands of quality jobs for its young people. But to do so, it must nurture the right skills. Where can these be found?

We immediately think of India as the natural choice. A world leader in IT and related services, India employs some 10 million people in the industry and generates about US$50 billion a year in IT exports. Yet, only 20 years ago it was a low-income agricultural economy, much like Nigeria today. India has the know-how and experience in how to build a business process outsourcing industry. They understand the manage-
ment processes, they have the firms that can assess and address the skill gaps with high-quality training, and they have developed a successful industry association. So India’s trajectory resonates with Africa’s ambitions. And what’s more: India is interested in sharing its experience.

**Double-sided demand**

This happy convergence of interests opens powerful opportunities for South-South Knowledge Exchange. Let’s call it the power of double demand: the desire to learn and the desire to share. Countries from all income levels want to learn from the practical experiences of their peers: the practices that work and the pitfalls to avoid. Practitioners want to be connected to each other across countries and regions. It stems from a belief that development solutions work best when they are designed with peers and partners who have faced, or are facing, similar challenges. South-South Knowledge Exchange is about the power of peer learning, about ownership, and about the diversity of development choices.

But developing countries do not only want to learn from the experiences of others. They also want to share their own. Especially for middle-income countries (MICs), this offers an opportunity to be providers of development cooperation, to become active players in the global development architecture. In countries such as Indonesia, Vietnam, South Africa and Colombia, South-South has become a key component of their foreign policy and development plans. It opens markets, helps validate locally developed solutions, facilitates regional and subregional integration processes, and links institutions and communities with common interests, both within and across regions.

**Picking up speed**

South-South Cooperation, usually defined as the exchange of resources, technology and knowledge between developing countries, has been going on for more than 50 years. It was first promoted by the United Nations, mainly among the G-77, a coalition of developing countries that looks after the joint economic interests of its members and helps increase their negotiating power.

Today, South-South Cooperation involves a complex mosaic of governmental and nongovernmental actors, and instruments ranging from one-off activities to budget support and large-scale loans. The World Bank estimates that, in 2008, South-South Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) accounted for one third of the total $780 billion of FDI going to developing countries, and the proportion is growing. South-South also plays an increasingly relevant role in development cooperation: in 2008, the UN ECOSOC estimated that bilateral development partners in developing countries contributed $12 to 15 billion in concessional financing and export credit to other developing countries. And, although difficult to quantify in financial figures, it is clear that technical cooperation and knowledge exchange have become very prominent among the growing group of middle-income countries.

The South-South agenda has seen a remarkable surge in recent years. First of all, the management of global public goods has gained importance, some of which depend mainly on actions by Southern countries. Second, in the aftermath of the global economic crisis, deep changes are underway in international relations and global governance. Developing countries are acquiring more voice and influence. This new inclusiveness is neatly reflected in the G20. In this swiftly changing world with multiple poles of growth across the globe, the G20 offers an opportunity to countries like Brazil, Indonesia and South Africa, to place the South-South agenda at the forefront of the global development debate, which will intensify as the 2015 deadline for the Millennium Development Goals approaches.

**Multipolar sources of knowledge**

It is in this context that the exchange of knowledge and experience has an enormous potential role to play in the emerging global development architecture. Today, answers to development challenges can come from anywhere. Many developing countries have designed and implemented solutions that have no precedent in the “rich world.” Look at the microfinance models in countries like Bangladesh and Indonesia, some of the rapid bus transit systems in Colombia or Brazil, or the use of mobile technologies for all kinds of services in Africa and elsewhere. Those same developing countries are building strong and reputable academic institutions and development think tanks. This has huge implications for the diversity, sources, and availability of development knowledge and experience.

In 2007, New York City Mayor Michael Bloomberg visited Toluca, Mexico to learn about the Oportunidades Program and Conditional Cash Transfers as a means of combating inner-city poverty. Brazil is helping many Latin American countries to establish “human milk banks,” and Cuba provides know-how in literacy programs to a major donor like Spain. It is clear that the Western monopoly on development expertise has come to an end. In today’s world, useable knowledge can travel in any direction: South-South, South-North, East-West, you name it. The term “South-South Cooperation” will soon be passé.

So what will it take to deliver on this transformative agenda that we like to call the South-South Opportunity? This opportunity is a challenge presented to us—the development community—by the changing global context: a challenge to invest in a more demand-driven model of cooperation that promotes horizontal relationships, invests in local capacity, and moves away from one-size-fits-all solutions? First of all, it certainly means that direct exchanges between countries at various stages of development should become the rule rather than the exception. Secondly, it is not just about doing more, but about doing it right. And finally, this agenda belongs to us all. We all have key roles to play.

Let’s go back for a moment to Nigeria and its desire to learn from India how to build an IT outsourcing industry. An exchange did take place in 2009, which resulted in a plan to develop an Industry Association in Nigeria, modeled after the
existing one in India. However, this exchange happened only because of a set of brokering mechanisms that connected the desire to share with the desire to learn. In this case, it was the multidonor South-South Experience Exchange Trust Fund, hosted at the World Bank, which heard the demand, helped mobilize the supply, and provided the funding. But there was also NEPAD (New Partnership for Africa’s Development), which, through its e-Africa Commission, played a key role in identifying and articulating the demand. Multiple brokering mechanisms are emerging at the local, regional, and global levels, and this is good. It is wrong to think that one “killer application” will one day solve all South-South brokering requirements. We need a thriving market of South-South brokers, who operate in an open, transparent, and self-coordinating way. IT, including the social media, can help the demand find the supply and make the exchanges happen once the match is made.

As we take South-South exchanges to scale, we need to keep taking stock of what works and what doesn’t. The assumption is that South-South, when designed with respect for local leadership, and implemented with accountability among those involved, leads to more sustainable solutions and strengthens local capacity. But without hard evidence on the comparative advantage of South-South we will not be able to influence the global agenda. The work being done by the United Nations Development Cooperation Forum, the DAC-Working Party on Aid Effectiveness, together with the work of the Task Team on South-South Cooperation, and other regional and subregional platforms and initiatives, is critical. Equally important are the initiatives to mainstream South-South Knowledge Exchange practices in development organizations.

We’re all in it together

Finally, we all need to take this agenda forward. Countries on the supply side need to document their development experiences and make them ready for export. On the demand side, countries need to embed horizontal cooperation in their development plans, and to articulate their learning needs carefully. Regional and global multilaterals should mainstream South-South approaches in their business lines and develop funding and brokering mechanisms for low- and middle-income countries, and for short-term as well as longer-term projects. Traditional donors need to become fully aware of the unique win-win opportunity to develop capacity in one country to thereby affect more sustainable change in another country, and they need to adapt their cooperation strategies accordingly. Parliamentarians and Civil Society Organizations can ensure that governmental peer learning fosters democratic ownership and human rights. Academia and the private sector can help enrich the agenda and engage more with governments and other stakeholders.

Above all, it is up to the countries of the South to realize the transformative power of this agenda. This is not about recycling the mistakes of the past. This is about a new approach to development that fosters solutions that meet local needs, build on local capacity, and are rooted in transparency and mutual accountability. Only then can we deliver on the South-South Opportunity.

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Han Fraeters is Manager of the Knowledge Exchange Practice at the World Bank Institute.

New York Mayor Michael Bloomberg speaks with Beatriz Zavala, Mexican Minister of Social Development during a visit to learn about the governmental program “Opportunities” (Oportunidades), which aims to deliver economic support to low-income people.
Rise of the Global South and Its Impact on South-South Cooperation

BY HARDEEP S. PURI

OVER THE PAST TWO DECADES, a fundamental transformation has taken place in the global economy caused by the impressive economic growth of developing countries like China, India, Brazil, and South Africa. The economic center of gravity is inexorably moving toward the developing South. The remarkable upsurge in cooperation between developing countries, characterized as South-South cooperation, must be understood as part of this larger story.

Dramatic strides have been made in reduction of absolute poverty levels from 1.8 billion in 1990 to 1.4 billion in 2005, led primarily by the efforts of China and India. This has been possible because of the combined impact of rapid GDP growth and large-scale targeted development interventions.

Developing countries today hold more than US$5 trillion in foreign exchange reserves, which is nearly double the amount held by affluent countries. In 2007, no fewer than 85 developing countries recorded per capita income growth faster than the OECD average of 2.75 percent. India and China have sus-

South African International Relations Minister, Maite Nkoana-Mashabane, inspects the world’s cheapest car, the Tata Nano, during a 2010 visit to India aimed at boosting trade ties.
tained average growth four times faster than the OECD countries in the present decade. According to the International Energy Agency, China surpassed the United States to become the world’s largest energy consumer in 2009.4

Structurally, there has been a shift of manufacturing capacity to Asia which has emerged as the engine of growth in the beginning of this century. Developing countries are gradually moving up the global value chain. Further, the technological capacity of developing countries has grown by leaps and bounds. According to one estimate, about 40 percent of the world’s researchers are in Asia.5 Developing nations can tap into a whole spectrum of technical know-how within their ranks. New centers of technical excellence have sprouted up that are being nurtured to accelerate socioeconomic progress. The growing economic clout of emerging economies has also translated into their enhanced participation and stronger voice in the global governance architecture, the G-20 at the level of Heads of State/Government being a case in point.

**Dynamism in South-South Cooperation**

**Cooperation Amongst** developing countries has risen to unprecedented levels since the decade of the nineties fuelled by the growing prosperity of the developing South. There is a two-fold impact manifested in the increasing number of countries actively engaged in South-South cooperation and the significant scaling up of South-South initiatives by individual countries.

Today, no fewer than 25 countries have robust South-South cooperation agendas that encompass a wide spectrum of technical and economic engagement. Countries like India and China are investing one billion dollars, and more, annually on assistance to fellow developing countries. Others like Saudi Arabia, Brazil, South Africa, Venezuela, and Malaysia also have large technical and development assistance initiatives.

A greater push toward regional and subregional integration, enhanced trade and investment flows, and greater development assistance flows are the visible signs of this invigorated cooperation between developing countries. For instance, South-South trade has grown on an average by 13 percent every year since 1995, accounting for 20 percent of world trade in 2007.6 Asia accounts for over 75 percent of such trade.

South-South investment has shown similar dynamism creating new engines of growth. Outward Chinese FDI is in the region of US$1 trillion. Multinational companies from India, Brazil, and South Africa are also stretching beyond their borders in greater numbers and leaving their mark in Africa, Asia, and Latin America. The Indian conglomerate Tata has emerged as the second largest investor in Sub-Saharan Africa.

The intensification of South-South exchanges under the broad rubric of technical and economic cooperation has meant that its share in overall development cooperation flows has risen to about 10 percent or US$17 billion of total development cooperation flows at the end of 2009. In fact, South-South flows registered an increase of 63 percent between 2006 and 2008.7

**A Different Development Cooperation Paradigm**

Countries engaged in South-South cooperation do not like to be viewed as donors or recipients. Instead, they describe such cooperation as an expression of solidarity born out of shared experiences and sympathies, and guided by the principles of respect for national sovereignty and ownership.8 Unlike the case of North-South cooperation, exchanges between Southern countries do not flow out of international ODA commitments and are not measured by universally recognized benchmarks of ODA.

There has been a concerted push led by OECD countries to superimpose the principles of donor-recipient relationships flowing out of the Paris Declaration and the Accra Agenda onto South-South Cooperation. This is perceived as an attempt to co-opt Southern providers into the international aid architecture and mitigate the burden of obligations undertaken by Northern donors. As developing countries galvanize efforts to achieve the Millennium Development Goal (MDG) targets by 2015, the need for Northern donors to meet their ODA commitments is even more pressing.

In spite of the great strides made by developing countries as a group, it is important to recognize the remarkable diversity that prevails between indi-
vidual countries in terms of their levels of growth. Such heterogeneity is underpinned by the proximity of their historical, cultural, and developmental experiences, lending to South-South partnerships their distinctive quality of solidarity and voluntariness. It offers a model of development cooperation that is typically demand-driven allowing for greater policy space for the partnering country unburdened by stringent conditionalities and accompanied by lower transaction costs.

The challenge in the coming years is to capitalize on the success and growing dynamism of the larger developing countries and transfer them through sharing of expertise, resources, and experiences to other countries where it is needed most. It is here that multilateral institutions like the United Nations, and even the World Bank and IMF, can step in and play a catalytic role.

The Role of the United Nations

The United Nations through its strong operational arm can play an important role in strengthening South-South Cooperation as a practical modality for development partnership. It enjoys an unparalleled advantage in this regard by virtue of its universal membership and strong mandate for development. The Nairobi Conference on South-South Cooperation in December 2009 emphatically reaffirmed this role of the United Nations.

However it is constrained by the fact that the United Nations mirrors the priorities of traditional donors. The truth is that the UN invests not nearly enough on supporting South-South cooperation. In fact, the Special Unit for South-South Cooperation in the UNDP is the only dedicated unit focused on the promotion of South-South Cooperation. The increase in South-South cooperation has occurred outside the ambit of the United Nations. The United Nations for the most part has remained a spectator to this exponential growth and, at best, has documented it.

With the profound changes in the global economic landscape, the United Nations is trying to catch up to this new reality by making efforts to more systematically facilitate South-South cooperation. It is engaged in, inter alia, preparing a specific framework of operational guidelines for the entire UN system to implement the recommendations of the Nairobi Conference. The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), by far the UN’s largest operational arm, has adopted South-South cooperation as one of the principal approaches for capacity development.

The UN through its network of developmental agencies has a universal presence in developing countries which can be leveraged to enable sharing of best practices and experiences. For instance, the 135 country offices of UNDP give it an unparalleled ability to identify capacities and gaps in developing countries and support South-South exchanges. It can facilitate seamless knowledge exchange utilizing the web of UN country offices at its disposal.

The UN is well-placed to document best practices in terms of what works and what does not, with a view to replicating and scaling up successful programs elsewhere. The IBSA Trust Fund for Poverty and Hunger Alleviation is one such move in this direction of triangular collaboration. It is funded by India, Brazil and South Africa (IBSA) and managed by the UNDP with the objective of sharing the developmental experiences and best practices of these countries in combating poverty and hunger with other developing countries.

The United Nations also needs to shore up support to vulnerable developing countries to achieve the internationally agreed development goals. The special needs of Africa can be addressed through meaningful triangular cooperation initiatives between UN and Southern contributors, to supplement existing bilateral and multilateral efforts. The similarity of developmental experiences and technological levels renders such programs closer to home-grown efforts, adding to their effectiveness.

The world of today is dramatically different from the one we inherited in 1945 when the foundations of the post-war international economic order were laid and the governance architecture took roots. The emerging economies of the developing South are reshaping the world we inhabit in a fundamental way. The rise in cooperation between developing countries is not a transient phenomenon. It is here to stay. The challenge in the coming years is to harness the potential of such expanded cooperation to contribute in eradicating poverty and effecting broad-based development gains for vulnerable populations across the developing world.

Hardeep S. Puri is Ambassador and Permanent Representative of India to the United Nations.

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4 According to the IEA, China consumed 2.252 billion tons of oil equivalent in 2009, 0.4 percent more than United State’s 2.17 billion tons. This data is contested by the Chinese Government.
5 UNESCO Institute of Statistics, “A Global Perspective on Research and Development,”
8 It encompasses financial flows, such as loans and grants for social and infrastructure investment projects and programs, as well as the sharing of experiences, technology, and skills transfers, preferential market access and trade-oriented support and investments.
WHY SHOULD PARTNERS in South-South cooperation care about aid effectiveness? What is the relevance of the commitments embodied in the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness (2005) and the Accra Agenda for Action (2008) to development actors? These are questions I frequently hear.

On the one hand, there are fundamental differences in the interests and characteristics of providers of South-South cooperation (SSC). However, they largely regard themselves as peers in mutually beneficial relationships and reject the concepts of “donors and recipient countries.” On the other hand, there is the value of the aid effectiveness principles. These principles—country ownership and leadership, alignment, harmonization, managing for results, and mutual accountability—are drawn from over fifty years of good practice by the Development Assistance Committee (DAC) at the OECD. They reflect what the 24 largest traditional donors, accounting for over US$120 billion of Overseas Development Assistance (ODA) in 2009, have identified as problems and solutions in making aid more effective.
Are these actors and principles mutually exclusive? My answer is no. The aid effectiveness principles have broad universal appeal. And, as can be seen from the broad-based membership of the Working Party on Aid Effectiveness and even broader engagement in its Paris Declaration Monitoring Survey, many developing countries share this view. The problem is not one of relevance, but of inclusion: for the longest time, the perspectives and experiences of partners of SSC have been largely overlooked by traditional donors. There is an urgent need to engage with partners in SSC to jointly shape policies based on experience and evidence.

I am convinced that the five key principles of aid effectiveness are not far removed from a potential and complementary set of principles that would guide effective South-South development cooperation practices. I also believe that partners in SSC have a lot to teach DAC donors, for example, about how to respect local ownership and priorities, as well as mutual accountability. The voice and experience of actors of South-South cooperation is critical in jointly shaping the future of development cooperation.

Finding synergies between South-South cooperation and aid effectiveness—Why does it matter?

Finding synergies between South-South cooperation and aid effectiveness—What are the synergies?

South-South cooperation and aid effectiveness—What are the synergies?

What do we know about South-South cooperation and its synergies with aid effectiveness? Unfortunately, still very little. I firmly believe that there is a rich and diverse set of experiences of South-South cooperation relevant to development challenges. While research on South-South cooperation is increasing, it appears to be largely focused on financial flows or on a limited number of emerging economies. We also need to look at the experiences of practitioners of SSC themselves.

One encouraging effort has been the work led by the Task Team on South-South Cooperation (TT-SSC) hosted by the Working Party on Aid Effectiveness (WP-EFF). Since its launch in September 2009, the Task Team, led by Colombia, has focused on evidence of what works and what doesn’t and on ways to adapt the aid effectiveness principles to SSC. It has also identified complementarities between South-South and North-South cooperation. So far, it has captured over 110 stories of SSC practitioners worldwide, particularly experiences of South-South technical cooperation led by middle-income countries as both providers and recipients of development assistance.

The TT-SSC’s initial findings captured in the Synthesis Report on South-South Cooperation and Aid Effectiveness reveal some interesting trends. For example, it appears that South-South technical cooperation respects country ownership, supported often by high-level political commitments to set up and implement SSC. SSC also seems to be often aligned with partner country policies. However, it appears more limited in terms of using a country’s public financial and procurement systems. It is often emphasized that South-South cooperation does not impose conditions—a key priority for partner countries. Further, it does seem that South-South technical cooperation is more efficient, often using cheaper and more adapted human resources and methods. Mutual benefit and “horizontal partnerships” appear to be a key aspect of SSC, based on perceptions of shared development challenges and experiences. The emphasis is on trust, mutual respect, peer-to-peer learning, and “win-win” outcomes.

At the same time, there is still scope to improve practices and share lessons. The main challenge—also identified in the Accra Agenda for Action—is to support and empower partner countries to manage all development resources in achieving national development objectives. High-level political agreements do not automatically translate into effective SSC and can bypass national development policies and systems. Many providers of South-South cooperation have limited country presence and institutional capacities, which implies limitations for coordination with other development actors and for scaling up. Most SSC is in the form of project-based technical cooperation, which raises the risk of tied aid and hampers efforts to scale up and to achieve long-term results. Measuring and evaluating impact is also a challenge, as many do not have statistical systems to capture their development assistance flows, coming from a large number of development cooperation providers.
There are some tensions and criticism of the aid effectiveness agenda, perhaps more on an ideological level. They concern the relevance and applicability of commitments and concepts, including the definition of overseas development assistance (ODA). I would urge pragmatism for the sake of supporting partner countries and their development objectives. If we focus on having a frank and open discussion on what works and what doesn’t, we can bridge the North-South and South-South cooperation divide. We need to move the discussion forward to recognize the value in both types of cooperation. The recent discussion at the United Nations Development Cooperation Forum in June 2010 was an encouraging step in this direction. I am also pleased to see the emergence of a regional agenda, for example that of the Organization of American States (OAS), which is taking the issue up within its own framework and membership.

Working together toward realizing MDG 8 on “global partnership for development”

The Year 2010 is a critical juncture in shaping the future of development. The United Nations High-Level Plenary on the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) in September 2010 is an important opportunity to agree on actions to speed up progress toward the MDGs. The OECD is fully committed to the MDGs and is ready to contribute to successful outcomes and follow-up toward 2015.

One of the key ingredients for achieving the MDGs is to maximize and leverage the resources and knowledge of all partners for development. Providers of South-South cooperation play an important role among the increasingly diverse actors in development. Their real and meaningful engagement in a global partnership for development—as embodied in MDG Eight—is urgent. It is encouraging that more and more providers of South-South cooperation engage toward this Goal, including at the OECD. For example, more enhanced engagement partners of the Organisation and providers of SSC take part in our thematic committees, such as on tax, education, and decentralisation. On development, the Development Assistance Committee is welcoming more opportunities to share knowledge and experiences, for example by building statistical capacities (Mexico), observing DAC Peer Reviews (South Africa), and taking part in DAC high-level meetings.

Looking forward, I encourage and welcome providers of South-South cooperation to seize opportunities for global partnerships for development. Perhaps inspiration can be drawn from the experiences of the OECD, which engages stakeholders in a political decision-making process based on technical expertise, statistics, and best practices. I stress the importance of anchoring policies in evidence, facts, and figures. Frank and open discussion among all development stakeholders, mutual and peer learning and monitoring of what works and what doesn’t is key as we improve “development” effectiveness to achieve the Millennium Development Goals by 2015.

Angel Gurría is Secretary General of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development.

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Bogota Statement—Towards Effective and Inclusive Partnerships
http://bogotahle.info
Evidence-based knowledge and innovation are critical for national development in Africa if the continent is to sustain the momentum of its transformation agenda. South-South Cooperation (SSC) is a mechanism that can contribute to this objective. Knowledge- and experience-sharing are taking place on different scales among African countries; but there is a need for coordination among these initiatives and with national development plans and processes. This will help scale up and institutionalize the practice of learning for development effectiveness as a capacity development tool.

Ample opportunities exist for Africa to generate, synthesize, harness, and utilize knowledge as a means of addressing the continent’s development challenges. But systematic documentation of experiences to support continuous improvement will be critical.

Globally, we are witnessing a second generation of SSC in which mutual learning among countries and non-state actors is fast becoming a core priority. Africa too is integrating knowledge and learning in its South-South initiatives as a public good for development. The success of this approach implies the building and nurturing of new multistakeholder relationships within the coordination architecture.

South-South mutual learning as a public good

Socioeconomic progress in the global economy of the 21st century demands innovative mechanisms for national and regional capacity development. More and more, mutual learning is being used more methodically as a main input to public policy design and development at all levels of gover-
nance. Given that knowledge is in effect the “capacity for effective action” in achieving development results, national and cross-regional learning will be central to maximizing Africa’s development prospects.

The emerging SSC movement gives high priority to the exchange of good practice and experiences through structured mutual learning at both the national and continental levels, as a complement to the overall development process. Knowledge and learning platforms hold the potential to foster national, subregional, and cross-regional fertilization of ideas and innovation and to help monitor and evaluate learning in SSC exchanges. Such platforms can facilitate better organization and alignment of information flows, thereby linking demand for knowledge to supply. Strategic partnerships and South-South alliances can help strengthen institutional approaches for sharing development solutions.

New opportunities: African mutual learning experiences

**China, India, and Brazil** are playing prominent roles in the evolving global political and economic architecture. The G20, as the premier forum for international economic cooperation, offers new opportunities for Africa and African countries to leverage South-South exchange practices. Under the aegis of the African Union, the New Partnership for Africa’s Development (NEPAD), since its inception in 2001, has acted as a regional facilitator in promoting and connecting African countries and institutional actors for mutual learning related to the continent’s development priorities and agenda. It has supported both South-South and North-South knowledge exchange.

The development priorities identified by the African Union and NEPAD, have been guided by sectoral policy frameworks. These regional frameworks resulted from information and innovation exchanges in multistakeholder collaborations and partnerships. Sectoral priorities and frameworks include: Agriculture and Food Security through the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP); Infrastructure, based on the continental framework of the Programme for Infrastructure Development in Africa (PIDA); and the Africa-wide Capacity Development Strategic Framework (CDSF). Other continental frameworks that offer mutual learning space for African development actors include the Consolidated Plan of Action (CPA) for Science and Technology, and the Environment Action Plan (EAP). The regional approach of gathering and sharing African experiences on common sectoral and thematic agendas has allowed the African Union and NEPAD to facilitate the creation of platforms for learning among countries and across subregions.

**Africa’s innovation on peer review for mutual learning**

Other regions can learn from these frameworks. In particular, the African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM) is a unique illustration of intracontinental collaboration developed by African countries under the NEPAD framework. At the core of the self-monitoring review mechanism is a facility that promotes peer exchanges across countries on good governance and other development issues. This peer learning instrument is used to foster accountability and government efficiency.

Operationally, the APRM is a learning process among peers at the highest political level focusing on political, economic, and corporate governance and socioeconomic development. It supports citizen-driven development through capacity development. The APRM helps strengthen African institutions and systems of governance by connecting them to a robust learning network. As an African-owned process the APRM is an innovative tool for introspection which is an important part of learning. Participating countries can, voluntarily, benchmark best governance practices against global norms and standards. African countries learn from each other and are also able to showcase innovative thinking on governance issues.

Essential lessons learned from the APRM since its inception in 2003 include leadership in support of citizen empowerment; strategies to increase women’s participation in parliaments; and self-reliance in mobilizing and utilizing domestic resources for development. These outcomes are captured in the National Programmes of Action (NPoAs) developed by each peer-reviewed country, and in which capacity development is a substantial part.
CDSF as regional platform for intra-Africa learning

Africa’s development efforts are often hindered by the dearth of implementing capacities required to translate development policies into practice at the state and institutional levels. Adequate capacity to align resources from development aid with national priorities is also a challenge.

Africa is consciously making capacity development a key priority, and has adopted a continent-wide strategy on capacity development—the NEPAD Capacity Development Strategic Framework (CDSF)—by decision of the 14th African Union Summit of February 2010. This framework offers a common approach for diagnosing and addressing fundamental systemic, organizational, and individual capacity challenges. Focusing on the need to capitalize on African resourcefulness, the framework stresses solutions, impact, and results-based innovation. It promotes both “hard”—technical and “soft”—strategic and less tangible skills.

The CDSF is built on six strategic cornerstones, or capacity development priorities as defined by Africans: including leadership and citizen transformation, and unlocking African potentials, skills, and resources for development. The main thrust of the CDSF is to enhance the capacities of capacity developers and institutionalize integrated approaches and evidence-based knowledge and innovation systems that support continuous improvement. Therefore, this integrated approach is a key qualitative leap forward for Africa’s development.

Mutual learning as the key to capacity development: Knowledge as Capacity for Action

CDSF offers space for policy formulation and practices that supports the building, sharing, and scaling up of knowledge and experience across countries. It promotes cross-regional learning and the improvement of North-South partnerships. When applied to SSC, CDSF helps integrate knowledge and learning within African countries and institutions, including Regional Economic Communities (RECs).

Capacity Development and political support for mutual learning in SSC exchanges

At the heart of the CDSF is the realization that for capacity development to be effective, political ownership and leadership at all levels is a necessary condition. By using the CDSF’s six cornerstones to benchmark for quality and alignment, African development actors will help connect and disseminate local knowledge on intra-Africa and interregional SSC opportunities.

High priority is placed on harnessing African resources, including human and institutional capital. Forging creative and results-based partnerships among Africans and the global community will support the attainment of Africa’s development objectives, including the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). In addition to the need for political commitment, deeper engagement of regional bodies, civil society, the private sector, academia, and development partners is also fundamental.

Africa platform on development effectiveness: Evidence-based knowledge and innovation

In 2009, African countries took an important step in establishing the Africa Platform on Development Effectiveness. This platform, coordinated by the NEPAD Agency in conjunction with the African Union Commission, connects existing communities of practice for mutual learning and develops capacity through peer-to-peer learning on the three interrelated themes of Aid Effectiveness, South-South Cooperation, and Capacity Development. In furtherance of this objective, African leaders at the Kampala 15th African Union Assembly in July 2010, endorsed the Platform based on the recommendation of the NEPAD Heads of State and Government Orientation Committee (HSGOC).

Such innovations and the NEPAD Agency’s role as the Africa regional platform coordinator for the global Task Team on South-South Cooperation present many opportunities to
South-South Knowledge Exchange as a Tool for Capacity Development

BY TALAAT ABDEL-MALEK

SOUTH-SOUTH COOPERATION (SSC) has been gaining momentum as an effective mode of development assistance, complementing the more traditional North-South approach. The Accra Agenda for Action (AAA), agreed at the High Level Forum3 (HLF3) on aid effectiveness in September 2008, underlined the importance of SSC for the benefits it offers both aid recipients and providers. This exchange of development experiences, whether it takes place between governments, organizations or individuals, holds great potential.

The key question is how SSC knowledge exchange can address one of development’s most pressing challenges, namely weak institutional and human resource capacities. The World Bank, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), and others have identified this gap as a serious issue.

This article outlines the essential elements of capacity development (CD); it then identifies how SSC knowledge can facilitate CD and the obstacles to tapping its full potential. The article concludes with a few recommendations.

Capacity Development defined

ALTHOUGH SEVERAL DEFINITIONS exist, they all describe the same fundamental concept reflected in the OECD definition that CD is "The process by which individuals, groups and organizations, institutions and countries develop, enhance and organize their systems, resources and knowledge; all
reflected in their abilities, individually and collectively, to perform functions, solve [development] problems and achieve objectives.”

Capacity in a development context consists of a number of elements. It includes institutions, human resource skills and knowledge, the internal environment (operating systems, management and leadership qualities, performance appraisal and incentives, and so forth), and the external environment (legal, political, judicial, and technological), all of which shape any entity’s performance. This is true whether we refer to a single institution (such as a public enterprise or authority), a whole sector or subsector (such as water and sanitation), or a local or national policy-making entity (such as a governor, a minister, or a cabinet of ministers). A proper understanding of capacity and what it takes to strengthen it requires the adoption of a holistic approach that takes all the above elements into account.

One of the major disappointments of international technical assistance during the past half century has been the lack of an integrated perspective on CD. Most funding and technical expertise tended to concentrate on the training of human resources, supplemented by ad hoc policy advice. We have learned from experience that human resource training alone cannot deal with institutional capacity weaknesses. The role of South-South knowledge

**Given the above,** what role does South-South (SS) knowledge exchange play in upgrading capacities for development? No definitive evidence-based answer is yet available. However, recent pioneering efforts have examined how aid modalities, including SSC, are contributing to capacity development. Three major events took place in 2010. The NEPAD-sponsored workshop on capacity development and aid effectiveness in Pretoria addressed the African perspectives; the UNDP “Capacity IS Development” in Marrakesh took a broader global perspective; and the Bogota High-Level Event “South–South Cooperation and Capacity Development” explored the relationship between these two variables.

Under the leadership of the Task Team on South-South Cooperation, hosted by the Working Party on Aid Effectiveness at the OECD/DAC, more than one hundred case stories on South-South cooperation in the context of aid effectiveness were prepared for the Bogota meeting. More than 133 countries were involved in this. With notable exceptions, most cases did not sufficiently analyze the “how and why” of CD work. Several reasons help explain this, including the lack of expertise in CD among both SSC providers and recipients (as well as the case writers); the tight time constraints within which case stories were prepared; the urgency of many non–CD assistance needs, and the more demanding or longer-term requirements of integrative CD work.

The following section describes three streams of work involving three sets of CD actors: providers, recipients, and the SS knowledge network.

**Knowledge developers and suppliers**

Let us take these in reverse order, starting with the suppliers and developers of SS knowledge. A great deal of knowledge on CD has been accumulated in the past 10–15 years, including the special capacity needs of fragile states. However, two observations are in order.

First, we have yet to build a truly international CD network to integrate the excellent work done by numerous sources. The proliferation of SS knowledge developers and suppliers is understandable as a first phase. However, the time has come to speed up the SS knowledge refinement and consolidation process, and expand its scope to address more diverse capacity needs. Recent international initiatives have brought suppliers and other CD actors together to discuss common CD issues. A leading example is the World Bank Institute-sponsored South-South Knowledge Exchange Platform, which is also part of the broad coalition reflected in the Task Team on SSC. The latter has created an international network while preparing the Bogota Event, and is now building the South–South knowledge exchange agenda for the Korea HLF. The Learning Network on Capacity Development (LenCD) is another example of a professional forum for exchanging CD expertise.

Second, our current knowledge is more conceptual and theoretical than practical and applied. There is definitely a need for a conceptual framework and a set of analytic tools to guide developers and users of SS knowledge. But it is important to move quickly from concepts to practice, focusing on implementation to illustrate the how and why of actual CD work in different settings. This will encourage potential users and assistance agencies to take a more holistic approach in their CD policies and transform the SS exchange “industry” from being supply–driven to becoming more demand–driven.

It is all very well on the conceptual level to underline the importance of dealing with the issue of incentives when upgrading institutional capacity; yet we lack the analysis to show how this can be tackled successfully in concrete situations. Similarly, the use of “parallel units” to support senior (ministerial) decision-making levels, bypassing traditional bureaucratic structures, aims at speeding up policy implementation. In theory, it is easy to conclude that such practice is at best a short–term, if not short sighted, solution to weak capacity. But we have not offered a better pragmatic alternative.

**Knowledge providers**

The providers of SS knowledge are the practitioners (consultants, communities of practice, NGOs, and the like) who make use of SS knowledge to help deal with clients’ capacity bottlenecks. Add to these, bilateral and multilateral assistance agencies that fund projects with capacity development components. Several barriers constrain their applying a holistic approach to CD. These include lack of knowledge about capacity development requirements; failure to carry out proper diagnosis of capacity needs; disinterest in taking what some would perceive as a high–risk approach (as compared to training); organizational inertia; and the extra cost associated
with such an approach. Add to these the clients’ reluctance to take ownership of CD initiatives and to make the commitments necessary for successful implementation.

There are, of course, practitioners who are at the leading edge of SS knowledge. There are also development assistance agencies that are reviewing current policies and practices. An example is the European Commission (EC) Backbone Strategy on reforming technical cooperation, the World Bank’s capacity development initiatives, and the OECD/DAC working party on aid effectiveness and associated support posts. But more needs to be done. The urgency of switching from conceptualization to implementation cannot be overstated. Meanwhile, triangular cooperation can play a significant role in facilitating horizontal SS exchange.

Knowledge clients

This brings us to the third group of CD actors, and in many ways the most important of the three. How much demand is there for SS exchange in capacity strengthening? Evidence suggests that demand remains very limited, though the needs appear substantial. This gap represents the main challenge facing all three groups of CD actors. Clients’ reluctance to own CD initiatives makes it difficult to move beyond the perceived higher risk of embarking on CD undertakings which may be costly in financial or political terms, and the difficulties of identifying and accessing SS knowledge relevant to an institution’s CD needs. The behaviors of the three sets of actors tend to reinforce one another, creating some kind of non-virtuous circle! The number of serious CD initiatives has been limited by the theoretical orientation of CD developers and suppliers, the mixed performance of CD providers and training-focused CD support by funding agencies, and the reluctance of CD clients to assume ownership and leadership roles.

Whether we talk about SS knowledge exchange or North-South support, Southern ownership is a prerequisite for sustainable outcomes. It has taken Africa a few years to develop a coherent Africa-wide CD strategy, which is now being launched. A prime deterrent has been the lack of strategy endorsement by top political leadership. This political prerequisite does not necessarily mean country leadership; what matters is the commitment to action and the involvement of top management of the institution or sector concerned. This is not a costless exercise in terms of time, human, and financial resources. But looking at this side of costs alone is a jaundiced view; CD costs should be compared with those incurred in the absence of capacity upgrading including foregone opportunities for improved performance and in some cases for institutional survival.

Two successful examples illustrate this point. The first is the (currently ongoing) transformation of Egypt’s subsidy system into the more efficient and equitable cash transfer system. Top political and ministerial leaders, aware of the serious shortcomings of the old system, were determined to change it. Advice was obtained through the World Bank, acting as a facilitator, from three ministers from Latin American countries that have successfully adopted the cash transfer system. Action was taken following a consultation process and the new system was successfully piloted before extending it nationally. The second example comes from Nigeria where the minister of finance decided to reform the pension system. Through the World Bank, the minister was able to connect with the right counterparts in Chile who provided the experience-based knowledge needed for action.

Recommendations

Four recommendations may be put forward to tap the potential of SS exchange as a tool for capacity development.

First, the new relationships being forged through international networks should focus on refining and consolidating the supply side of SS knowledge and setting professional standards for those involved in delivery. This is akin to an infant industry which must attend to quality and credibility as a top priority.

Second, providers and developers of SS knowledge should make more concerted efforts to identify CD implementation initiatives and analyze their outcomes; and spend less time developing more concepts and frameworks, which do not add much to our knowledge. International development partners should refrain from offering supply-driven initiatives, and instead support (technically and financially) the undertaking of CD needs analysis and implementation of recipient-led action plans.

Third, Southern CD leaders and champions need to play a catalytic role by bringing together key policy makers, in a Southern-led platform, to exchange views and experiences about CD needs, potential benefits, and constraints. This role could be instrumental in translating the huge CD needs into demand-based initiatives which can then be effectively met through SS exchange partnerships.

Fourth, it is essential to strengthen the broker/intermediary function in SS knowledge exchange. International and regional platforms or networks, through their interactive databases, have the key task of connecting potential users seeking relevant SS experience to those who can supply it. The role of regional platforms is particularly important because these are closer to where the needs are and are more familiar with the country settings in which CD initiatives would be launched.

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BY AMBASSADOR ALFONSO QUIÑONEZ

SOUTH-SOUTH COOPERATION (SSC) is a longstanding form of collaboration which has recently gained momentum, especially in the Americas. Two key elements explain the growing importance of SSC, its new modalities, and their contribution to triangular cooperation schemes.

First of all, most countries in Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC) are middle-income countries (MICs) and many have developed strong institutional capacities and public policies. They have overcome challenges by sharing and learning from their experiences, and have supported development efforts in other countries of the region facing similar challenges. Sharing knowledge across borders has promoted solidarity and cooperation, which is flourishing in LAC.

Beyond finance

LAC HAS UNDERSTOOD THAT cooperation among peers implies the transfer of technical and human capacities, which are at least as important as financial resources. The region has been an incubator for new ideas, new financial instruments, and new approaches to development, such as budget support and programmatic lending. Export guarantee schemes, foreign trade financing, and public–private partners for infrastructure have expanded the range of financial instruments. And cooperation has enriched the debate around new socioeconomic approaches such as equality of opportunity for indigenous groups and community participation. The negative side effects of this diversity and innovation have been a greater fragmentation of international aid due to the increas-
ing participation of new actors (non-OECD countries, private foundations, social responsibility programs, and emerging donors), as well as the underutilization of some financial instruments (grants, regular loans, soft concessional loans). Empirical analysis of the impact of these new mechanisms has also been limited.

The Organization of American States recently identified 10 case studies on South-South and triangular cooperation as part of an exercise led by the Task Team on South-South Cooperation (TT-SSC). These cases illustrate a range of development experiences, including: promotion of small tourism enterprises, labor administration, the sharing of social protection strategies, disaster mitigation, and metrology. These are a small sample of a much larger set of experiences that should be documented, evaluated, and shared with other countries.

Scaling up these experiences in the region could foster synergies among countries and help expand the practice of South-South and triangular cooperation. This is imperative, since the influx of nonreimbursable cooperation to the region is shrinking, not only relative to other regions but also to other external public and private sources.

South-South Knowledge exchange can alleviate the effects of the recent financial downturn and make development cooperation more effective. Identifying and collecting evidence of successful experiences can strengthen the Southern voice and ensure greater visibility and influence for LAC in the global discussions on aid effectiveness. This needs to happen quickly.

The Paris Declaration has stimulated interest in SSC, helped focus the debate, and identified what else needs to be done. However, the implementation of the principles and commitments made in the Paris Declaration and ratified in the Accra Agenda for Action has been less than expected.

A shifting paradigm

MORE THAN OTHER REGIONS. Latin America and the Caribbean has remained relatively detached from international discussions on cooperation for development following the Paris Declaration and the Accra Agenda for Action. Several factors explain why:

- LAC’s decreasing importance as an international cooperation recipient,
- A decline in nonreimbursable cooperation in the region relative to other forms of international development financing, such as foreign investment capital flows and trade, among others,
- An increased use of nonconventional cooperation mechanisms (South-South and triangular),
- Minimal involvement of LAC countries during the initial development of the Paris Declaration,
- The Paris Declaration’s emphasis on low-income countries, and
- Regional disengagement from the global process to promote aid effectiveness, which does not entirely correspond with the middle-income perspective of many LAC countries, that emphasizes mutual and shared commitments in cooperation effectiveness.

However, despite its diversity, LAC countries have many important common characteristics with respect to cooperation for development:

- Sustained economic growth in many LAC countries in recent years prior to the financial crisis has left them relatively less affected than countries in other regions.
- Many countries of the region are classified as middle-income economies.
- Social inequalities persist. In fact, the LAC region has the greatest inequality of income distribution, a situation that was aggravated by the financial crisis.
- Many donor countries are inclined to favor countries with higher relative levels of poverty (mainly in Asia and Africa) and this has led to a reduction in the flow of nonreimbursable cooperation to LAC.
- Because of their recent development successes many LAC countries are able to provide technical cooperation to other countries in the region, which has contributed to an expansion of South-South, horizontal, and triangular cooperation.

Pulling together in the region

THESE RECENT TRENDS point to the need for regional dialogue and mechanisms to facilitate the process and engage all cooperation actors with which the Organization of American States (OAS) has been working, through its Executive Secretariat for Integral Development (SEDI). A little over a year ago, during the Inter-American Council for Integral Development (CIDI) special meeting of high-level cooperation authorities, the OAS launched the Inter-American Cooperation Network (CooperaNet) as a communication mechanism for all cooperation actors and institutions in the hemisphere.

Recently, within the framework of the High Level Event on South-South Cooperation and Capacity Development held in Bogota, Colombia the OAS/SEDI, in coordination with the Colombian government and other institutions (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, United Nations Development Program, Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean, Inter American Development Bank, Ibero American General Secretariat) convened and facilitated the Regional Dialogue on Cooperation Effectiveness in Latin America and the Caribbean, on March 26, 2010 in Bogota, Colombia. Some 100 individuals, including representatives from 20 member states, 7 other countries, and 24 international institutions, nongovernmental organizations and representatives of civil society, participated in the dialogue.

Two issues were analyzed during the dialogue: cooperation effectiveness in the region and how to ensure effective cooperation in Haiti’s reconstruction.

These discussions highlighted the importance of this type of space for exchanging information among cooperation actors about the processes and implementation efforts taking place at the regional and international levels to promote cooperation effectiveness. This type of forum also allows the region
to take a more active and coordinated role in international discussions and to influence and submit joint proposals to the Fourth High Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness to be held in 2011 in Seoul, Korea.

The key conclusions of the regional dialogue were:

- Latin America and the Caribbean have a great deal to contribute to the world debate on cooperation. It is important for them to have a more active and coordinated role, particularly in the events leading up to the meeting in Seoul.
- These fora are important for cooperation actors to exchange information and coordinate their cooperation processes. Regional dialogue spaces like the ones offered by the OAS, particularly CooperaNet, can be valuable in this regard.
- It is necessary to promote regional workshops to:
  - Acquire more knowledge on the processes that take place in the international context at various levels and with different actors.
  - Exchange lessons learned on the implementation of the principles of the Paris Declaration and the Accra Agenda for Action. LAC countries face an enormous challenge in articulating their views on cooperation effectiveness for the Korea HLF because these vary so much throughout the region. This dialogue is meant to illustrate the diversity and richness of ideas in the region. It is about better understanding the different interests, and helping to construct a new design for international cooperation that unites all actors and values their diversity.

The OAS continues to be committed to the process and has recently joined the Steering Committee of the Task Team for South-South Cooperation (TT-SSC) which it will supporting by bringing the Aid Effectiveness Agenda to a subregional level through a series of workshops and high-level forums for South-South knowledge exchange.

We are pleased that other partner institutions are also taking a leading role in this regional process, including the Ibero-American General Secretariat (SEGIB) Launched in 2008, and the Ibero-American Program for the strengthening South-South cooperation, which responds to regional institutional capacity-building needs.

Finally, effective cooperation depends on more than resources; it requires new institutions as well as changes of mindset, culture, attitude, and focus. This can only be achieved by building capacity among all cooperation actors, by involving academia, and by focusing clearly on collecting evidence that can inform high-level policy making.

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scale up and foster learning, analysis, and practices through the continents’ institutions and to link with existing processes. This greatly supports Africa’s current efforts to promote evidence-based decision making by investing more in science- and technology-based knowledge. Pitching innovation as a driver of development, special efforts are made to systematically identify, harness, and use existing capabilities by sharing knowledge and learning at all levels. Therefore, while focusing on aid effectiveness and SSC, the Africa-wide Platform is also an important mechanism to mobilize for capacity development action.

Conclusions

Increasingly, Africa is investing in knowledge exchange to support national and regional development. With strong commitment, the continent will continue to build coalitions and alliances to promote Southern-led cooperation at the intra and interregional levels. This opens up opportunities to further strengthen mutual learning initiatives so that African know-how, good practices, and innovations can continue to contribute to global development thinking and actions. The Africa Platform, as an intra-African process, for instance, will be instrumental to the Continent’s coherent preparation for the 2011 Busan HLF4.

If Africa is to be globally competitive, greater investment in knowledge and learning will be required. Knowledge-based approaches to resolving Africa’s development challenges should be strengthened, with research and innovation helping to expand the SSC policy frontiers. Strategically designed institutional arrangements can facilitate the participation of multiple stakeholders, thus fostering the formation of social capital by enhancing SS networks for the exchange of knowledge.

Existing regional frameworks are critical in guiding and framing the knowledge and learning architecture in Africa. Only by grounding innovations in the realities of the continent can development investments achieve their desired results. Mutual learning, particularly in SSC exchanges, is a capacity development process that should be based on, as well as stimulate, local capacities and institutions. Ultimately, the success of this new paradigm depends on the establishment of new partnerships to foster more inclusive, equitable, and sustainable forms of development cooperation.

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BY GUIDO ASHOFF

TRIANGULAR COOPERATION is a relatively recent mode of development cooperation. It normally involves a traditional donor from the ranks of the OECD’s Development Assistance Committee (DAC), an emerging donor in the South, and a beneficiary country in the South. It has received increasing international attention because of particular advantages it is said to provide. At the same time, it poses several risks that could further complicate international development cooperation. To make full use of its potential, it is important to conceive it as a learning process, to identify the interests of the three parties involved, and to apply the internationally agreed principles of aid effectiveness. When these principles are applied, triangular cooperation can enrich international development cooperation.

Actors and factors

TRADITIONAL DONORS engaged in triangular cooperation make up roughly two thirds of the DAC membership with Japan at the top of the list, followed by Germany, Spain, Canada, and the rest. In addition some multilateral development banks such as the Asian Development Bank, and UN

Indonesian agricultural expert Joko Pfitoyo (R), who has been dispatched by Jakarta on behalf of the Japan International Cooperation Agency, talks with a local farmer in Antsirabe, Madagascar in January 2010.
agencies such as the United Nations Development Program (UNDP), also take part. Emerging donors participating in triangular cooperation can be found in Africa (Egypt, Kenya, Morocco, South Africa, Tunisia), Asia (China, India, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Vietnam) and Latin America (Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Mexico). Beneficiary countries are typically the less advanced countries many of which have long benefited from South-South cooperation.

Over the last two years, triangular cooperation has occupied an increasingly prominent place on global development agendas and in policy documents such as the Bogotá Statement and the 2010 UN Secretary General Report on development cooperation. To assess practices on the ground, the OECD engaged in a pilot mapping exercise (Yamashiro Fordelone 2009) and European donors have started a reflection process on triangular cooperation in the context of aid effectiveness (Schulz 2010).

Triangular cooperation consists mainly of technical cooperation aimed at capacity building and takes place mostly in the same region where both the emerging donors and beneficiary countries are located. It is often based on previous cooperation between traditional and emerging donors, that is considered successful and worth transferring to third countries. In other cases, emerging donors have gained experience in specific areas (for example, Brazil in the fight against HIV/AIDS), the transfer of which to other cases, emerging donors have the experience and capacity to provide high-quality development assistance, thereby mobilizing additional resources. Improving the quality of South-South cooperation by involving traditional donors and transferring successful experience. Using the experience and the support of traditional donors to build the capacity of their own development cooperation agencies. Increasing their visibility as emerging donors. Promoting regional cooperation and integration.

Opportunities and risks

**Triangular cooperation** is perceived to have a number of advantages as outlined in the box. It should be borne in mind, however, that the objectives and interests of the three actors involved may not necessarily coincide.

The current debate on triangular cooperation has highlighted four risks:

- Lowering quality standards if emerging donors still do not have the experience and capacity to provide high-quality development assistance.
- Neglecting the alignment with beneficiary countries’ needs, priorities, and strategies if triangular cooperation is primarily designed to reflect the experiences and preferences of the traditional and emerging donors.

**Opportunities attributed to triangular cooperation based on the objectives of the participants**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Traditional Donors</th>
<th>Emerging Donors</th>
<th>Beneficiary Countries</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Increasing aid effectiveness: transferring successful aid experiences to third countries (scaling up)</td>
<td>Scaling up South-South cooperation by involving traditional donors and thereby mobilizing additional resources</td>
<td>Increasing the value for money of development assistance by contracting less expensive experts from emerging donors instead of experts from traditional donors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increasing aid efficiency: reducing costs by contracting experts from emerging donors</td>
<td>Improving the quality of South-South cooperation by involving traditional donors and transferring successful experience</td>
<td>Benefiting from the similarities between emerging donors’ experiences and their own needs as they look for more appropriate solutions to development problems</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Creating synergies: using the comparative advantages of emerging donors</td>
<td>Using the experience and the support of traditional donors to build the capacity of their own development cooperation agencies</td>
<td>Benefiting from the linguistic and cultural similarities with the emerging donors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Substituting aid programs in third countries for programs by emerging donors</td>
<td>Increasing their visibility as emerging donors</td>
<td>Keeping more easily in touch with experts from emerging donors after completing the projects (experts from traditional donors could be out of reach once projects are completed)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phasing out development cooperation with emerging countries in an orderly manner</td>
<td>Promoting regional cooperation and integration</td>
<td>Promoting regional cooperation and integration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Building the capacity of development cooperation agencies in emerging donor countries to increase the capacity of the international development cooperation system</td>
<td>Sensitizing new donors on the principles and procedures of effective aid as agreed in the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness and the Accra Action Plan</td>
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Source: Ashoff (forthcoming); Altenburg and Weikert (2007); UNDP (2009); Yamashiro Fordelone (2009).
Promoting triangular cooperation and ensuring its effectiveness

The potential and risks of triangular cooperation were vividly discussed during the Bogotá High Level Event on South-South cooperation and are reflected in the case stories produced by the Task Team on South-South cooperation. In summary, the following points are crucial:

- Identify the common interests of the three actors involved: Triangular cooperation is not an end in itself. It can reach its potential and generate added value only if it is based on shared interests and commitment.
- Apply the principles of the Paris Declaration: Although the implementation of the Declaration is itself a multifaceted learning process (implying that agreed modalities may be subject to revision), its five principles remain valid and should be fully applied to triangular cooperation. Ownership by the beneficiary countries is key. Traditional and emerging donors should harmonize their approaches and align them with the beneficiaries’ needs, priorities, and systems. Managing for results is a joint challenge for the three actors and forms the basis for mutual accountability.
- Make use of complementarities: Triangular cooperation should aim at projects that reflect comparative advantages and are based on successful experience gained in previous cooperation.
- Ensure sufficient management capacity: Triangular cooperation places additional demands on the management capacity of all the actors. This applies particularly to emerging donors. Their role as development partners requires them to develop the capacity to manage the whole project cycle together with the beneficiary countries. Traditional donors can make an important contribution by supporting the capacity building of aid agencies in emerging donor countries.
- Evaluate and exchange experiences, identify lessons learned, and distill good practices: Case studies show that the aforementioned risks do matter in practice. Yet they are not cast in stone. Keep in mind that there are learning curves. To climb these curves, evaluation of triangular cooperation and mutual learning are crucial.

Does triangular cooperation constitute a major change in international development cooperation?

The scale of triangular development cooperation is still rather limited compared to traditional North-South coopera-
South-South Cooperation and Knowledge Exchange

A perspective from civil society

BY ANABEL CRUZ

South-South cooperation (SSC) has been receiving increased attention lately and the reasons are manifold. On the one hand, developing countries are gaining greater influence in the world economy: 40 percent of the world’s population now lives in the BRIC countries (Brazil, Russia, India, and China), which already account for 25 percent of the global domestic product.

On the other hand, the number of countries not belonging to the OECD’s Development Assistance Committee (DAC) that contribute to official development aid has been rising, especially among the middle-income developing countries.

SOUTH-SOUTH COOPERATION is not new. It has been around for several decades in the form of economic integration, cultural exchanges, and technical cooperation. Traditional North-South cooperation, however, with resources coming from the rich northern countries to the poor southern ones has been supplemented by other models. Indeed, middle-income countries have been taking on various roles, not only as recipients of development aid, but also as providers of development cooperation. New actors and approaches have entered the development cooperation landscape.

Radio DJ talks to listeners at a community radio station operating from the Ekhaya Multi Arts Centre in Durban, South Africa.
Among numerous other examples, Brazil stands out because of its South-South cooperation with Angola, Mozambique, Paraguay, and Argentina in the field of education, including projects for school capacity building and reducing illiteracy.

Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) have often warned about the problems associated with the delivery of aid, denouncing top-down practices and calling repeatedly for an end to the conditionalities that developed countries often impose on developing countries. CSOs have had high expectations for South-South Cooperation (SSC) as a practice based on the principles of solidarity, and the role of CSOs and the principles of SSC were explicitly articulated at the Accra Agenda for Action (AAA) of the 2008 Third High Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness. It was affirmed that: “South-South cooperation on development aims to observe the principle of non-interference in internal affairs, equality among developing partners and respect for their independence, national sovereignty, cultural diversity and identity and local content. It plays an important role in international development cooperation and is a valuable complement to North-South cooperation.”

CSOs have indeed been struggling to make SSC a vehicle for horizontal conversation and knowledge exchange. Civil Society and its allies, such as media and academia in many situations, have been intent on ensuring that the mistakes made in other forms of international cooperation should not be repeated in SSC practices. South-South cooperation presents an important opportunity for CSOs, if it can be transformed into South-South learning and serve as a tool for generating policy and institutional change.

How can horizontal partnerships be built?

IF SSC CAN BE A PLATFORM based on solidarity, then it should also be a means for building horizontal partnerships that can promote learning exchange. Furthermore, the five principles of the Paris Declaration are also valid and applicable to SSC: ownership, alignment, harmonization, managing for results, and mutual accountability. But are they really present in SSC?

The recent High Level Event on South-South Cooperation and Capacity Development, hosted by the Government of Colombia in Bogota, (March 24–25, 2010) was attended by more than 400 participants, including ministers, vice ministers, heads of cooperation agencies, delegates from multilateral organizations, representatives from CSOs, parliaments, and academic institutions with an active involvement in the cooperation architecture. They discussed how to promote and implement good practices in SSC and capacity development to support countries in achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). The final declaration discussed by the participants highlights two sine qua non requirements for SSC: it has to be a Southern-led process and it has to generate evidence-based information and good practices on which to base effective and widespread knowledge exchange.

Indeed, CSOs attending the High Level Event in Bogota identified some important pending tasks for actors involved in South-South, so that learning and knowledge exchange can really happen in a horizontal and transparent ways:

- **Stronger institutions to generate reliable data.** There was consensus on the need to generate quantitative and qualitative data for measuring, assessing, and accounting for the inputs and results of SSC. Fragmented systems and weak institutions cannot produce reliable and timely information. Solid and well-equipped institutions are a precondition for generating knowledge and for exchanging relevant and usable information about SSC.
- **Coordination among different actors.** Coordination among all involved stakeholders in SSC (governments, socially responsible corporations, civil society organizations) is another condition for an effective and just process.
- **Mutual accountability** is a requirement for horizontal learning and all actors are responsible. Accountability needs to receive more attention, at all levels.

The role of Civil Society

CSOS HAVE A CRUCIAL ROLE to play in ensuring that the renewed attention to SSC becomes an effective tool for poverty eradication and for horizontal learning exchanges.

In this regard, CSOs associated with the Reality of Aid Network are calling for donors and recipients in SSC to help strengthen development effectiveness by taking important measures, such as:

- South-South Cooperation must be aligned to national development and poverty reduction strategies, and these strategies should be developed through broad-based processes with the participation of parliaments, CSOs, academic institutions, and independent media.
- South-South cooperation projects must be executed with greater transparency, and mutual accountability must be enhanced, including that of Southern donors and countries to each other and to their citizens. More actors must be involved in assessing aid and development effectiveness. CSOs are also part of the process of mutual accountability and are prepared to be accountable to multiple audiences by means of diverse mechanisms, especially self-regulation in its different expressions and formats.
- South-South Cooperation cannot be loaded with old practices and conditionalities and all partners must be transparent and open, so that developing country partners are well informed about the eventual comparative advantages of goods and services provided through their aid relationships.
- South-South Cooperation best practices should be studied, promoted, and disseminated among both developed and developing country actors, and international organizations.

continued on page 37
Managing Knowledge in Organizations

Summary of an interview with Marshall Van Alstyne and Hind Benbya

Knowledge exchange among practitioners in low- and middle-income countries is now at the forefront of global development policy formulation. But the question of how to connect the right people with the right knowledge at the right time isn’t new. Knowledge Management (KM) has been an established discipline since the 1990s. We talked with MIT’s Marshall Van Alstyne and Montpellier’s Hind Benbya about the state of knowledge management and information exchange in organizations today, and how new practices like knowledge markets can help us find better solutions to some of today’s trickiest development challenges.

How has knowledge management changed since the 1990s?

Expectations from knowledge management (KM) have changed significantly since the 1990s. In particular, early KM approaches mostly sought to support employees in their everyday tasks and to create revenue streams by exploiting knowledge. The organization’s main concern was: How can we use KM to prevent reinventing the wheel?

Most organizations believed in the potential value of KM, but adopted a top-down strategy that relied heavily on deploying a large sophisticated repository—either by codifying...
knowledge or linking individuals through information technology (IT)–to overcome geographical and temporal barriers to accessing information and expertise.

Yet, few companies succeeded in reaping benefits from their KM investments. Most of their mistakes relate to unrealistic expectations for IT-based solutions that are often hyped by vendors. Several of these mistakes are summarized in Table 1.

Recent approaches to managing information and expertise recognize that the implementation challenge is complex and evolutionary.

- First, the system must be highly dynamic, and evolve as users, business processes, and the environment change. Therefore all knowledge-related roles and structures must continually change and adapt. Beyond defining update periods, organizations now pay careful attention to document version control and life cycle.
- Second, motivating knowledge workers to share their expertise implies rewarding workers in proportion to their contributions, combining social and material rewards, and defining both individual and team-based incentives.
- Third, KM systems are useful for effectively exploiting and transferring existing practices and techniques as well as standardizing work practices, but they remain limited for managing nonroutine knowledge. All successful organizations must deal with nonroutine problems.
- Emerging models of collaboration, specifically the role of Web 2.0 technologies–blogs, wikis, and knowledge markets–provide a solution for managing nonroutine knowledge such as coping with a changing environment or how to respond in a crisis. These have become an important source of new products, processes, services, and forecasts.

**What is the future of knowledge exchange?**

**Effective knowledge exchange** will combine the earlier, highly structured systems with newer, more open and participatory tools and environments. The 80–20 rule illustrates the current state of knowledge exchange. Existing systems enable organizations to share work practices across locations. They support the exchange of the most common 20 percent of codified knowledge. **Emerging solutions for exchange, such as knowledge markets, help firms experiment with the remaining 80 percent.**

**Tell us about knowledge markets. How are they useful?**

A knowledge market is a forum for matching information demand with information supply, together with the material and social incentives to encourage effective trading. Now that the Internet has linked us all so closely, we need better mechanisms to help us find “who knows what” and to reward people who provide valuable information. The size of the problem—that of creating and moving information to the people who need it—is so large that applying market principles is one of the best ways to find solutions.

Knowledge markets provide opportunities for matching knowledge seekers with sources. A good match helps generate, combine, and rank ideas and also helps develop new solutions, products, and services. Markets are great for facilitating the reuse of existing information, for creating new information to address previously unsolved problems, and for effectively using information resources, including peoples’ time.

**How can we cut through the clutter and improve access to relevant development knowledge and expertise?**

**First,** employ mechanisms that let people raise their professional reputations by helping others. Using status cues in online communities motivates experts to speak up and self-identify. And, experts will help quickly cut through the clutter of less relevant information.

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**TABLE 1: COMMON MISTAKES IN KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MISTAKE</th>
<th>CAUSE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Thinking that by relying on a specific technology KM can capture best practices, success stories, and lessons learned that could then be reapplied by others.</td>
<td>Emphasis is often placed on the technology rather than on how it should operate, what problem it is supposed to address, and how it will integrate with the overarching technology strategy.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Implementing a KM program because competitors did so and achieved benefits.</td>
<td>The implementation of KM should derive from a company problem or opportunity. The KM leader should assess which department or existing process is most likely to provide a context for a KM initiative, and start the implementation there.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Failing to address the important question from a knowledge worker’s perspective of “what’s in it for me?”</td>
<td>Knowledge workers are unlikely to exchange their expertise without a fair return on their time, energy, and opportunity costs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Considering KM as a deterministic, static, and one-time-event.</td>
<td>KM is a dynamic, evolutionary process. Each stage requires distinct management practices in order to be effective. Organizations should tailor their efforts to their particular KM maturity stage in order to extract more value from their knowledge assets.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source: Authors.*
Second, reward the brokers. People who are really good at what they do are often busy doing it. They often do not have time to browse lists of other people’s open issues. But organizations also have many gatekeepers and brokers who know the best people for different tasks. These gatekeepers can help match problems to opportunities and this too can prevent clutter. Just make sure they also get recognition.

Lastly, reward members of the community for providing context. When a solution worked in Taiwan but needed adaptation in Tanzania, the people who provided the modification also need to be recognized or compensated. Clutter is partly a function of finding apparently relevant answers that turn out not to work. So, it helps to have context on how to apply them in new ways.

In a sense, these steps address both the false negatives, like not being able to find the right people, as well as the false positives, like finding apparently relevant information that isn’t.

Knowledge markets do all of this.

**Explain the difference between absolute and relative rewards and their different effects on organizational behavior**

Organizations often face a tradeoff between effort and information sharing. These are tied to reward systems but in ways that many people miss. Let me give you a simple example. How do organizations promote people? Typically, they want to reward the “best” people, whatever that means. Now imagine that there are seven candidates for a single promotion. Each person is likely to work hard at being the best. But if Sarah gets the job, then Sam can’t get it. If Sam is close to getting promoted, he is unlikely to want to share his best ideas with Sarah for fear that she will perform better than he does. Then she beats him to the promotion. This is a relative reward system where everyone is rank ordered and prizes go to the top. Relative reward systems promote competition. This leads to high individual effort but little information sharing.

Now consider a reward system where anyone who meets a specific goal is rewarded. Suppose, for example, the goal is to provide successful loans to 100 small businesses. In this case, when Sarah meets her goal it does not mean that Sam cannot also meet his goal. Sarah and Sam can pool their ideas. All seven coworkers can help each other attain the same goal, so collaborative knowledge trading helps teams cross the finish line together. This is an absolute reward system where everyone can potentially succeed. Absolute rewards promote collaboration and information sharing. The problem is the potential for free riding. Simon might simply borrow the ideas of Sarah, Sam, and the others and add no effort of his own.

The best incentives for stimulating knowledge exchange balance competition and collaboration. Absolute incentives encourage sharing but employees can coast on the work of others. Relative incentives discourage sharing but employees work harder individually.

Use more relative incentives when problems require greater speed or diversity of approach, and when solutions are substitutes. InnoCentive runs a competitive external market where diverse solvers from around the world compete to find the best solutions to R&D challenges. Answers are strictly ranked, prizes are strictly limited, and contestants cannot see each other’s work. Use more absolute rewards when problems require complex coordination and solutions are complements. InnoCentive also runs a collaborative internal market inside client sites that offer online team rooms. Partial answers appear on discussion boards, and prizes go to whole groups of mixed expertise with little concern for individual rank.

**How can governments and large institutions like the World Bank meet new demands for knowledge and expertise?**

Large organizations that have a wealth of information and talent often have difficulty accessing it. Managing information flows laterally and vertically, across specialties, locations and countries, has proven particularly challenging. Managing the growing demands for expertise in diverse contexts requires decentralizing information exchange by providing access to diverse sources, not just the central repository. Meeting unanticipated needs implies providing access to untapped knowledge. Markets provide the most common form of such decentralization.

Management must support the change in power that follows from a change in the sources of expertise. And management must accept, or at least acknowledge the market verdict. When people pose better questions and post better answers, the knowledge market should empower staff to influence important management decisions, not just fringe issues.

Knowledge markets provide a solution to arbitrage the gap between problem and opportunity. They represent the information equivalent of just-in-time production, and help people pull information and contacts when needed. A knowledge market opens an institution to new forms of governance and creates completely new roles for those who would manage expertise. Truly democratizing knowledge requires an open organization where employees can deliberate, argue, vote, compete, and collaborate horizontally across fields of expertise.

Marshall Van Alstyne is an Associate Professor at Boston University and a Research Scientist at MIT.

Hind Benbya is an Associate Professor at the GSCM Montpellier Business School (Groupe Sup de Co Montpellier).

Van Alstyne and Benbya’s article “Internal Knowledge Markets” is forthcoming in the Sloan Management Review. For a complimentary copy, please visit http://ssrn.com/abstract=1652432.

Interview conducted by Aaron Leonard, World Bank.

Endnote

South-South Learning in the Trifinio Region

Transforming borderlands into areas of peace and development

BY JAIME A. MIRANDA, KARIN SLOWING, AND JULIO CÉSAR RAUDALES

THE CREATION OF THE TRIFINIO REGION, a sensitive biosphere reserve in northern Central America where the borders of El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras meet is a unique example of South-South Cooperation (SSC). Based on their experiences and lessons learned from the joint management of the Plan Trifinio, the three Central American countries created a tri-national entity that redefined their borderlands as a consolidated area for integration and development. The three countries, which share similar development challenges, recognized that this was the most effective way of responding to the social and environmental challenges they were facing.

The advantages of a tri-national horizontal partnership

THE TRIFINIO REGION, created in 1998, has been a successful transnational partnership in a politically and socially complex environment with a population of more than 670,000. The three countries recognized the importance of a partnership that looked beyond their geographic differences and artificial boundaries. The partnership has two main objectives: access to water and citizen participation.

One of its achievements has been to reformulate the concept of border from a zone of tension (a no man’s land or armed border), into that of a shared development zone. Many countries in the region have wanted to transform their borderlands, which have traditionally been marginal areas, into areas of economic integration where the provision of global public goods could be managed jointly.

The Trifinio Region covers some 7,541 square kilometers: Guatemala has 44.7 percent of the area, El Salvador has 15.3 percent and Honduras has 40 percent. It includes 45 border municipalities around the cloud forest atop the Montecristo massif. The population of the Trifinio shares common characteristics defined by a unique environment and a common past.

The creation of the Trifinio Region in 1998 has become a model strategy for South-South learning and has created a framework for decision making by the three partner countries, reflecting a participatory, democratic, and coordinated process of horizontal cooperation and investment. The success of this new approach can be attributed to its focus on solving specific problems that are important to its people.

The plan is also considered a model of bottom-up regional integration, because consultations are held on all initiatives with local governments (a total of forty-five municipalities from the three countries) and with local civil society, who together make up an Advisory Committee. The committee’s role is to provide comments on any project to be developed in the Trifinio Region and which could be reproduced in other Latin American border areas.

The elements that define the relationship

WHILE IT IS CLEAR that environmental and socioeconomic homogeneity has been a key success factor, several other features have also supported a close partnership:

Developing shared resources in the Trifinio Region.
- A common desire for solutions to the lack of access to public services. Because of their distance from economic and political centers, the municipalities of Honduras are forced to look for development solutions in neighboring towns: for example, in Guatemala for basic health and educational infrastructure and in El Salvador for food. Undertaking joint solutions to shared problems also makes larger scale projects possible (economies of scale).
- Economic complementarities in the area of trade, and the desire for a temporary solution to the economic problems caused by war. Tourism and migration have played an important role as temporary solutions to unemployment.
- Safety and crime prevention, especially in the fight against drug trafficking and stolen vehicles.
- The protection and sustainable use of watersheds, especially the rivers of Lempa and Motagua, through projects with economic and social benefits.

The main challenges

The operational framework of the Trifinio Plan calls for strengthening institutions that can support a tri-national entity, can implement the plan, and can ensure the integrity and consistency of the actions carried out in the common region.

The governments have given the Region financial, administrative, and technical autonomy: It can enter into contracts and other legal agreements; and is represented by the Plan Trifinio Tri-national Commission (CTPT), composed of the vice-presidents of the three countries. The CTPT was authorized by treaty as the entity in charge of carrying out the Plan Trifinio under a clearly defined legal framework. An Advisory Committee brings together municipal and departmental representatives and civil society organizations, which helps ensure accountability and the transparency of the process.

Trilateral coordination, however, still presents challenges. Political momentum among the three governments needs to be sustained. The partnership between central government agencies, local governments, and civil society also needs to mature in order to achieve broader ownership and community participation in the development of the Trifinio.

Results and lessons learned

The creation of a tri-national region has not infringed on national sovereignty. On the contrary, it has contributed to strengthening national leadership, provided a legal framework that allows for the execution of tri-national programs and projects, promoted trans-border cooperation and the management of shared natural resources, and responded to common development strategies and the environmental preservation of the Region. Thus the Trifinio experience has been closely aligned with national priorities and systems. On the other hand, the creation of a regional entity has helped to harmonize decision making, coordination, and the execution of the entire Plan among the three countries, promoted harmonization and coordination among development partners, and between all the governmental and nongovernmental actors in the area, through their inclusion in the Trifinio Region’s organizational structure.

Trifinio has faced several obstacles. It has been dependent on external financing or international cooperation, and has sometimes encountered difficulties in defining tri-national agendas and in covering a wide geographical area that is diverse and politically fragmented. However, the Region has succeeded in building a tri-national integration process in Central America which has been a pilot demonstration project for the management of (sub) regional public goods. It is also a stellar example of participatory planning and effective South-South cooperation in line with the Accra Agenda for Action, the Bogotá Statement, and other multilateral commitments.

Nevertheless, the partnership process and the autonomy of the Region could still be improved. This requires greater political will from the central governments, better coordination of joint actions between the municipalities and associations, and stronger human and institutional capacities for implementation.

Jaime A. Miranda is Vice Minister for Development Cooperation, El Salvador.
Karin Slowing Umaña is Secretary of State for Planning and Programming, Guatemala.
Julio César Raudales is Vice Minister for Planning and International Cooperation, Honduras.
China’s International Poverty Reduction Center as a Platform for South-South Learning

BY ZHONG WU, PHIL KARP, AND YAN WANG

After attending a South-South experience-sharing event in China, a number of African officials wondered: “How come China is able to develop and retain its implementation capacity, whereas our countries suffer from brain-drain?”

The short answer is that China has institutionalized a learning process to capture lessons from its own development experience and that of others. To this end, the International Poverty Reduction Center in China (IPRCC) was set up to serve as a platform for South-South learning and capacity development. Established in 2005 by the Government of China, IPRCC is supported by a number of international organizations including UNDP, the World Bank, the UK Department for International Development, and the Asian Development Bank. IPRCC was conceived at the Global Conference on Scaling Up Poverty Reduction held in Shanghai in 2004. Soon after, at the United Nations 60th Anniversary Summit on Development Funding, Chinese President Hu Jintao announced that “the International Poverty Reduction Center in China (IPRCC) was established in Beijing...”
with a mission to make contributions to the global poverty reduction.” The IPRCC has since become one of the flagship organizations in China for South-South cooperation and has represented China in several international fora including the Task Team on South-South Cooperation and the associated High Level Event on South-South Cooperation, in Bogota, Colombia.

Why is IPRCC becoming such an important platform for South-South learning? To this question we need to understand IPRCC’s role in a broader context (Figure 1).

First, IPRCC’s credibility is rooted in China’s rapid development and poverty reduction that took place in the span of one generation, and which have been an inspiration to other developing countries. When China started its reform 30 years ago, it faced tremendous uncertainty. No one knew the specific path to the envisaged “end model.” No one expected that in the three decades following the initiation of pro-market reforms in 1978, China would achieve the most rapid poverty reduction in human history. Using the new international poverty line of $1.25 a day in 2005 purchasing power parity (PPP), it is estimated that in the 24 years after 1981, over 635 million people in China were lifted out of poverty and the proportion of the population living in poverty fell from 84 percent to 16 percent (Chen and Ravallion 2008). Naturally, policymakers and development practitioners would very much like to understand what has worked in China, why, and how.

Second, the IPRCC was established with the firm belief that learning from countries that are in similar stages of development can be more relevant than learning from highly advanced countries, especially in the early stages. This is partially because capable institutions cannot be imported or created overnight. China’s experience points to the efficacy of first developing home-grown and second-best institutions such as the Household Responsibility System, Special Economic Zones (SEZs), and Township and Village Enterprises and then developing capacity through learning-by-doing. Only in a later stage were modern institutions adopted, such as the laws and regulations required by the World Trade Organization (WTO) principles. China took pragmatic approaches based on the experience of countries that were closer to its own stage of development, at the time of the opening-up process. So SEZs, for example, were adopted from Hong Kong, Taiwan, and Singapore’s experience in the early 1980s, but adapted to China’s own characteristics. After difficult initial stages in its own development process, China is now well-placed to contribute to global poverty reduction by sharing its rich and diverse experiences at various stages of development.

Third, IPRCC benefits from the significant attention and resources that the Chinese government devotes to South-South cooperation, serving as an important window for South-South learning and experience sharing. The Chinese government has invested heavily in training and technical assistance programs for officials from other developing countries, particularly in Africa. IPRCC’s activities are a part of this bigger picture.

Fourth, IPRCC has a unique governance structure and institutional setup, involving a range of important domestic and international partners. Nationally, IPRCC falls within the administrative structure of China’s State Council, but with links through its board of trustees to the National Development and Reform Commission, Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Commerce, and Ministry of Foreign Affairs. On the international side, it is supported by the World Bank, UNDP and other international donors, and has succeeded in attracting world renowned experts including several Nobel Laureates as its senior advisors.

Fifth, IPRCC is an attractive knowledge resource for development practitioners around the world, especially those from Africa. In the last five years, IPRCC has provided training to nearly 600 officials and development practitioners (see Table 1). It has developed a unique approach to training and experience-sharing, which it implements with local and international partners, including the World Bank. The typical model involves workshops in Beijing where participants are able to interact with government officials and researchers, followed by week-long field visits to the poor regions and coastal areas. Since development practitioners come from countries with varying socioeconomic backgrounds, they have a range of needs and interests. By organizing field visits to different parts of the country, IPRCC can satisfy a range of learning

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**FIGURE 1: IPRCC AS A PLATFORM FOR SOUTH-SOUTH LEARNING AND COOPERATION**

*Leading Group of Poverty Alleviation and Development
Source: Authors.*
needs covering various sectors and levels of government. IPRCC training programs address not only general knowledge about China’s development experience, but also specific institutional approaches (for example, farmer water-user associations, microfinance, disaster management, and community-driven development). Participants can witness with their own eyes, the “what” and “how” of China’s development.

Sixth, the IPRCC is becoming a center of excellence for South-South learning, attracting talent from the government and academic sectors, including top universities and research institutes. One of the reasons that China can build and retain implementation capacity is that officials in organizations like IPRCC remain a part of the system and therefore benefit from stable career development opportunities. At the same time, the fast-growing Chinese economy and dynamic development of enterprises and institutions have attracted new talent.

Challenges and implications for South-South Cooperation

Delivering on the South-South Cooperation Agenda will depend on the development of effective institutions, including those of the state, the parastate, the private sector, and civil society. The uneven development performances across countries are largely determined by the quality of institutions, which ultimately shape incentives for learning, experimentation, and entrepreneurship.

Therefore, we need dynamic institutions like IPRCC that can attract talent at home and abroad, and serve as platforms and facilitators for South-South learning. However, IPRCC is still a young organization with limited in-house capacity for conducting research and producing training materials that meet the needs of diverse groups of development practitioners. It needs to invest in staff capacity and to bring in international expertise, especially on issues such as development effectiveness, monitoring and evaluation, and impact assessment. This should not be done in isolation, since capacity can best be developed through mutual learning and knowledge exchange. Hence IPRCC is using mechanisms such as visiting scholar programs, and staff exchange programs with multilateral and bilateral institutions and other development think tanks.

IPRCC embodies many of the ideas and principles of the “Bogota process” in which it was an active participant. It is very much a Southern-led institution, but one which welcomes and leverages the experiences and resources of other partners, while retaining its own unique characteristics. It seeks to promote mutual respect and win-win outcomes with its partners. IPRCC also firmly recognizes that South-South learning and sharing of knowledge and experience for countries in all phases of development is key to capacity development.

We believe that IPRCC offers a useful institutional model that is relevant to other countries. Indeed it is our firm view that the emergence of a network of flexible institutions, like IPRCC, that effectively analyze and document their own countries’ experiences and share these through South-South learning would make a significant contribution to poverty reduction and to sustainable capacity development.

Zhong Wu is Director General of the International Poverty Reduction Center in China (IPRCC).

Philip Karp is a Lead Specialist at the World Bank Institute.

Yan Wang is a Senior Economist at the World Bank Institute.

Endnote


### TABLE 1: RAPID GROWTH OF IPRCC SINCE ITS ESTABLISHMENT, 2005-2010

<table>
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<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2005</th>
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<th>2009</th>
<th>2010*</th>
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<td>7</td>
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**Source:** IPRCC.

The numbers for 2010 are estimates up to July 15.
FOLLOWING YEARS of war and devastation, the citizens of post-conflict countries look to the government with high expectations for a better quality of life. These countries, however, face severe institutional and human capacity constraints and normally have no other option than turning to donors for help in reconstructing their societies.

And yet the very significant aid investments in Africa over the past decades have yielded little; a pressing need exists to improve aid effectiveness and the sustainability of development programs. The Regional Capacity Building (RCB) Project funded by the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) is an example of how South-South partnerships can help address this challenge. The project aims to improve governance and service delivery in three post-conflict countries, Burundi, Rwanda, and Southern Sudan. It builds the capacity of public sector training institutions and government officials responsible for service delivery in the priority areas of water, agriculture, health, and peace and security.

This five-year project is an example of how the Paris Declaration can be translated into action and of how Southern voices have not only been heard but have in fact initiated and driven innovative projects funded by Northern partners.

PALAMA (Public Administration Leadership and Management Academy), the South African public sector training academy, has established effective partnerships with three management development institutes (MDIs): Ecole...
Nationale d’Administration in Burundi, the Rwanda Institute for Administration and Management in Rwanda, and the Capacity Building Unit of the Ministry of Human Resource Development in Southern Sudan. Multilateral partnerships have been forged among PALAMA, the implementing agency, CIDA, the donor, and the three MDIs, representing both South-South and North-South partnerships.

Advantages of South-South Partnerships

The comparative strength of South-South over North-South partnerships is that they give expression to existing networks, and to regional policies, agreements, and programs. Of central importance to South Africa’s foreign policy is its commitment to the African Union/NEPAD program and bilateral relations with African countries, particularly post-conflict countries. South Africa recognizes that the capability of African leadership to critically assess needs and formulate and implement indigenous solutions to African challenges is key to sustainable development in the region.

The strength of the RCB project is that the partnerships are based on mutual trust, respect, accountability, sharing of information, and equal relations. This has been possible because all four countries share similar histories, contexts, and visions for the future. They all have a colonial past and a history of racial and ethnic turmoil, and have all emerged from conflict situations, including South Africa with its history of apartheid. The four countries also share similar public sector challenges such as limited resources, poor service delivery, and public servants who are inadequately prepared to carry out their roles and responsibilities. Each country is aware that its success in achieving peace, stability, development, and growth depends on other countries in the region pursuing similar goals that are also aligned to the aspirations of the African Union (AU) and the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

A stable and well-resourced implementing agency from the South, such as PALAMA, can act as a catalyst for change, a role model, and a broker between donor and beneficiaries by helping donors understand the African context and its development challenges. It can identify workable solutions and help build trust in donors’ motives among other Southern partners, and ensure sound systems of accountability.

The divergent levels of development among the partners are seen as strengths since the more developed countries are emulated, and provide peer learning and support. RIAM, for instance, was able to field questions related to project charters, legal agreements, and budgeting processes. This prompted the more cautious partners, who may have suspected the implementing agency’s motives, or possible collusion with donors, to buy into the ethos of trust, equal relations, and mutual respect cultivated within the project.

CIDA has been highly supportive of the project’s organic development through strong South-South relations; and its presence at planning sessions as an unobtrusive participant has bolstered trust among the donor, PALAMA, and the country MDIs.

In the traditional model where donors or foreign agencies implement the project, there is less of an understanding of local contexts and of sustainable and indigenous solutions; and the foreign agency is less likely to be accorded the same trust level as an African implementing agency such as PALAMA. When donors are directly involved, partner countries become disempowered. This is evident in Southern Sudan, where beneficiaries are disengaged and rely on the donor to do the technical work. Donors may view this as a lack of know-how or commitment to the project. In the RCB project, the empowerment of the four CBU staff has been enormous. When the project began, the staff did not engage in planning on a regular basis, were uncertain about their work program, and appeared to be confused by the diverse demands of the many donors. Now, a year later, the CBU staff meet weekly, have clear work plans, and are more vocal at meetings—particularly with donors.

Thus, independent of donor involvement, the partners jointly defined problems related to governance and service delivery, conducted needs analyses, and developed an effective program of interventions.

Challenges

The challenges to South-South learning include sustaining the commitment of key stakeholders and maintaining the continued involvement of project champions and project managers over the life of the project. Each MDI has a project coordinating team of five staff, led by a project coordinator who reports to the directors general (DGs). These teams, and in particular the project coordinators, have served as the project champions in the partner countries. The overall champion is the project leader, also responsible for the conceptualization of the project, who together with a project management team, heads the project on behalf of the implementing agency and is accountable to the DG of PALAMA. An ethos of trust and mutual respect has been cultivated throughout the project.
particularly between the project leader and the country project coordinating teams. This has been crucial to accountability and sustainability of the project across the partner MDIs. In addition, the project champions, led by the in-country DGs have evoked strong support from the Ministers of Public Service and Human Resource Development in the three countries who have jurisdiction over the MDIs.

Changes in political, MDI, or project leadership present a challenge because continuity at all levels is important if high-quality project outcomes are to be achieved within the specified deadlines. Continuity between the design and implementation phases is crucial in an innovative project such as this where the project model, including the governance and management structure, multilateral cooperation, capacity development, and curriculum and training, is being designed as the project is being implemented—a praxis model. The Rwandese Minister of Public Services and Labour, for example, has been an avid champion from the outset. However, the simultaneous exit of the DG and project coordinator at RIAM held up the implementation for several months. By contrast, in Burundi the consistent presence of the project coordinator from the inception of the project has ensured outstanding implementation, despite numerous political changes in the ministry and in the leadership of the MDI.

Thus, the day to day managers rather than the political or institutional leadership seem to be critical to ensuring high-quality deliverables. However, political and institutional support remains an important factor in ensuring overall project success.

The new draft overseas development assistance (ODA) policy of the South African National Treasury makes the point that where project managers are changed midway through the project lifecycle, deadlines are often missed and the quality of the deliverables suffers.

To mitigate the negative effects of changes in political or institutional leadership, the project leader meets with the new leaders soon after their appointment, and they are regularly updated on project progress. Forums in which ministries, departments, policy and research institutions and donors, exchange knowledge, help promote efficiency and donor harmonisation, and avoid duplication. Suggestions for improving the project that come out of the forums are readily implemented.

Conclusion

FROM A SOUTHERN PERSPECTIVE, there is concern about a growing dependence on donors, which has happened in post-conflict countries where key personnel defer decision making to foreign agents because they may not be aware of how to do things differently. While it is still too early to judge the success of this project, the evidence so far indicates that South-South partnerships help ensure better use of aid through improved program design based on local knowledge, are genuinely participatory, and are responsive to the local context.

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In Bogota, some of these recommendations seemed to be taking shape and gaining support. The 110 cases of South-South and triangular cooperation presented at the High Level Event told stories as a source of learning and possible replication. I hope this book is the first of many more learning products.

CIVICUS and its member organizations and allies are taking action in the form of cooperation among peers and promotion of civil society knowledge exchange between developing countries. The CIVICUS Civil Society Index (CSI) is an excellent illustration. The CSI is a participatory needs assessment and action planning tool for civil society around the world. It aims to create a knowledge base on, and momentum for, civil society strengthening initiatives. The CSI is initiated and implemented by, and for, civil society organizations at the country level. It actively involves, and disseminates its findings to a broad range of stakeholders including: government, donors, academics, and the public at large.

Civil society stakeholders make use of participatory and other research methods to create knowledge about civil society and to assess its state or condition. This assessment is then used to collectively set goals and create an agenda for strengthening civil society. Besides the activities at the country level, partner organizations implementing the CSI conduct a variety of other exchange initiatives: sharing their results, trying to find common patterns, and seeking solutions to shared problems. Regional exchanges, for example, in Latin America, are currently very active, and are an emerging form of South-South cooperation and knowledge exchange.

Anabel Cruz is the Founder Director of ICD (Communication and Development Institute) in Uruguay and the Chair of the Board of CIVICUS: World Alliance for Citizen Participation.

Endnote

1 The Reality of Aid Network (RoA) is the only major North-South international nongovernmental initiative focusing exclusively on analysis and lobbying for poverty eradication policies and practices in the international aid regime. Measures presented here can be further explored in their most recent report on South-South Cooperation.
FEW OTHER REGIONS in the world have been hit so hard by so many wars and domestic conflicts as the countries in the Great Lakes Region and the Horn of Africa over the past fifteen years. Traders and brokers of small arms cool-headedly spotted the opportunities in these regions. Local demand was huge as many militia and rebel groups needed weapons and didn’t particularly care about international trading regulations or conventions. As a result, Northeast Africa and the Great Lakes Region are awash with small arms and light weapons. It will take many more years before this problem will be brought under control completely. Members of Parliament (MPs) have plans to continue to devote their unique capabilities and mandates—to make laws, monitor their implementation and give a voice to people who suffer from the impact of small arms—to the struggle against this scourge.

African MPs are dealing with issues that cross borders, and that affect constituents who cross borders, including the promotion of regional public goods and the containment of what can be referred to as regional public “bads.” They need to make decisions with the knowledge of what neighbors are doing, sometimes also requiring joint decisions and policies. They also need to take policy debates outside the political sphere to be able to reach consensus on innovations and in order to take bold steps. Parliamentarians are strengthened in their knowledge and their resolve through South-South sharing of experiences and lessons in a peer learning environment, as this case story illustrates.
Building South-South exchanges into parliamentary agendas

**AWEPA, TOGETHER WITH UNDP**, has been supporting parliamentarians and parliamentary leaders in South-South Cooperation for a number of years, including within the framework of the International Conference for the Great Lakes Region. Familiarizing parliaments with the Regional Pact on Stability, Security, and Development has contributed to curbing the scourge of illicit small arms.

According to the Millennium Project Report (January 2005), the priority for successful peacebuilding is an early and sustained investment in a long-term Millennium Development Goals (MDG)-based development framework, with attention to healthcare services, education, and income-generating opportunities. Also, in the aftermath of armed conflict, the weapons need to be collected and destroyed. *Experience from the Great Lakes Region of Africa demonstrates that government decrees alone are insufficient to make a success of small arms reduction programs.*

In order to implement the Nairobi Declaration on small arms reduction, which sat on a shelf for four years after government signature, parliaments had to take action. This work was coordinated by the UNDP-AWEPA program, which developed a special handbook for MPs, launched it in multiparty political forums, and introduced it in both national and regional parliamentary workshops. Thereafter, parliamentary action, including the harmonization of legislation, was supported and monitored for progress. The fruits of these collaborative efforts were incorporated into the Nairobi Parliamentary Action Plan for Peace in the Great Lakes Region (April 2005), and helped secure a joint parliamentary arms reduction initiative by the Democratic Republic of Congo, Burundi, and Rwanda.

**Motivation and incentives—The South-South momentum for Africa’s parliamentarians**

**THE STRUGGLE AGAINST** the proliferation of small arms and light weapons in Africa can claim a number of recent successes. The cooperative efforts of African parliamentarians can take credit for several of them. The Nairobi Declaration and Protocol, for instance, were signed in March 2000 by most countries in the Great Lakes Region and Horn of Africa and are internationally renowned and accepted as far-reaching instruments for curbing the use and illicit trade in small arms.

MPs passionately supported these international agreements, the ratification of which hinges completely on the legislators’ commitment and consent. In a related development, parliamentarians from Burundi, the Democratic Republic of Congo and Rwanda have made headway in harmonizing their countries’ laws against illicit small arms trade, making it much more difficult for illicit traders to find a safe haven. This initiative is seen as a source of inspiration for similar harmonization efforts elsewhere in the region and a prime example of the role MPs can play in South-South Cooperation.

Parliamentary SSC helps create space for the voice of the people in regional policy development. Without the participation of this key stakeholder, there is a democratic deficit in central planning. Because the development of mutual trust through confidence-building measures is a prerequisite to further regional harmonization, the benefits can be significant in the area of peace-building. Engagement with parliamentarians in North-South and triangular cooperation has the added potential benefit of exerting peer-to-peer Southern influence on Northern policy priorities. Parliamentary SSC can enhance North-South policy dialogue, by amplifying Southern voices and perspectives, and motivating Northern MPs to influence regional policies of donors.

Although it is impossible to generalize across different parliamentary systems and unique political environments, democratic processes appear to be strengthened when parliamentary SSC helps insufficiently informed MPs to gain knowledge, experience, and support networks. Such cooperation can also create a better working environment for parliamentary engagement by stimulating progressive dialogue and the countervailing voices of a broader spectrum of interest groups. Both bilateral and multilateral SSC tend to transcend domestic political constraints and open up policy space where little was previously available. These instances serve not only to stimulate new and innovative ideas for policy change but also to build the confidence of individual MPs and create incentives to strengthen checks and balances in the national context.

**Effectiveness, a natural mandate for South-South parliamentary learning**

**THE EFFORTS MADE** by African parliamentarians to cooperate with their regional counterparts have had positive spin-off effects for transparency and accountability in governance in general, and in relation to overseas development assistance (ODA) more specifically. Through regional and cross-national cooperation, parliamentarians are strengthening both formal and informal regional institutions, including Regional Parliamentary Bodies, such as the Pan-African Parliament (PAP) and the East African Legislative Assembly (EALA), and networks of, for example, women MPs. Their increasing knowledge, vigilance, and oversight of executive action have increased a sense of accountability, crucial for successful aid reform.

National leadership and ownership were demonstrated in this case by the leading role taken by the elected leadership of the national Parliament. After reaching regional agreement on issues related to the proliferation of small arms, parliamentarians were able to take the discussion forward in their countries with a renewed sense of urgency and legitimacy. *In the absence of parliamentary SSC, the bedding down of new policies, laws, and initiatives takes longer and entails more risk because of diminished ownership, transparency, and accountability.* Parliamentary and civilian oversight of military operations, and the external assistance for them, is an area where further attention is needed in this regard.

Through interparliamentary dialogue, exchange of experiences and cooperation, Africa’s parliamentarians have grown to know the Paris Declaration and to appreciate their role in
implementing the Accra Agenda for Action (AAA). To these ends, the Pan-African Parliament, Regional Parliamentary Bodies, a growing number of national parliaments, and African parliamentary networks in Africa are consolidating action plans to ensure their proper involvement in the aid reform agenda, both nationally and internationally. Others are becoming better informed and preparing to follow this lead. Working jointly and in cooperation with AWEPA and donor MPs, these parliamentary partners are expanding the democratic credentials of the new aid architecture. This indicates that South-South and South-North parliamentary cooperation, particularly if accompanied by sufficient resources for capacity building and networking, bodes well for future increases in aid ownership, accountability, and effectiveness.

The way forward for parliamentary South-South knowledge exchange

As this case illustrates, parliamentarians from the South can elicit important policy changes when working together toward common goals. Given that regional scourgess and the need for cooperative efforts to address cross-border challenges will remain relevant for years to come, strengthened communication channels between MPs of the South, particularly on a regional basis where the incentives for cooperation are strongest, could prove to be a powerful platform from which to launch other initiatives. Going forward, it will be important to monitor developments in the South-South parliamentary context to better understand how to unleash the potential synergies that exist, as scant evidence has been collected on this topic. Additional points of engagement and constellations are also worth exploring. These may include the systematic integration of MPs in relevant South-South executive-level cooperative efforts in country, or cross-continental exchanges, such as those between African and Latin American MPs. Given MPs’ close proximity to their constituents, parliamentarians are well placed to address a variety of citizen concerns, and have a distinct value-add that is unique to their mandate. Moreover, MPs can act as information conduits, communicating with citizens on good practices and lessons learned, thereby amplifying the spread of the initial South-South exchange. That said, parliamentary South-South cooperation must be monitored and supported if its potential is to be reached. Key components for success include a balance of strong incentives on the part of the MPs themselves, and sufficient international support and encouragement for collaborative parliamentary action. If given proper attention, critical space can be made available for the constitutionally mandated representatives of their citizens to make important strides together toward common goals.

Jeff Balch is Director of AWEPA, an international association of European Parliamentarians. It works in cooperation with African Parliaments to strengthen parliamentary democracy in Africa, to keep Africa high on the political agenda in Europe, and to facilitate African-European Parliamentary dialogue.
Helping Latin America Help Itself

South-South cooperation as an innovative development tool

BY PAMELA COX

Even before the massive earthquake struck Haiti early this year, the country was one of the biggest beneficiaries of South-South cooperation in the Americas. In fact, since 2004, the first UN peacekeeping mission made up mostly of South American forces has been serving in the beleaguered Caribbean nation.

Not surprisingly, in the first days after the disaster, MINUSTAH, as the UN mission is known, played a crucial role in maintaining order and coordinating the massive relief effort. They did it as they tried to cope with their own losses—the UN headquarters in Port-au-Prince had collapsed killing 101 people, the largest single loss of life in the history of United Nations peacekeeping.

Helping neighbors

Aside from the official international presence, scores of Latin American nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), many of them World Bank partners, were also quickly at work tending to victims. Brazil’s prominent NGO, Viva Rio, which...
had been running social and violence prevention programs in Haiti, quickly adapted its mission in the earthquake’s aftermath. It turned its community center into temporary shelter, offered capoeira classes to homeless children, and operated a project to turn human waste into fuel. (Capoeira is an Afro-Brazilian art form that combines elements of martial arts, music, and dance.)

Meanwhile, Argentina’s Pro Huerta Project, which helps Haitians grow their own food in small-scale organic gardens to improve nutrition, redoubled its efforts in areas badly affected by the earthquake. Within weeks after the quake, Argentina announced the shipment of thousands of seed packets and tilling tools, aiming to increase its contributions in the island by 50 percent.

There is no question that Haiti’s tragedy helped trigger a tremendous outpouring of solidarity from developing and even poor nations. And while the levels of support may have been unprecedented, this display of South-South cooperation was not altogether new in the development arena. In recent years, the exchange of expertise and resources between governments, organizations, and individuals in the developing world has proven to be an effective tool for relevant and sustainable reform.

In Latin America, Brazil has emerged as a leading force in this form of assistance. The South American giant participates in a variety of expertise-sharing ventures in Latin America and around the world, many supported by the World Bank. Bolsa Família, Brazil’s successful conditional cash transfer program that provides a subsidy to poor families in exchange for keeping children in school and receiving regular medical checkups, has been a centerpiece of Brazilian cooperation. Bolsa Família technical experts have shared their knowledge and discussed their challenges with counterparts from neighboring countries such as Peru and Colombia as well as distant India and China. Mexico too is a pioneer in this type of targeted welfare and its Oportunidades program is being replicated throughout the hemisphere, including in New York City. With World Bank assistance, Mexico has also been involved in improving social conditions in Latin American countries, especially those with large indigenous populations such as Bolivia.

Sharing what they know

Cooperation among nonrich nations does not revolve only around common poverty challenges. In fact, the current list of projects backed by the Bank covers a broad spectrum of issues ranging from early childhood development and pension system reform to health care access and mitigation of the effects of natural disasters. In the global fight against HIV/AIDS, Brazil has also gained international recognition for its work in developing generic antiretroviral drugs. In recent months, it has assisted Mozambique, a country where AIDS is the main cause of death and hospitalization among adults, to develop its own capacity for providing these medications.

While government-to-government exchanges are common, cooperation can also be among nongovernmental organizations or civil society groups. A project designed to improve forest management, for instance, included study tours and virtual workshops that allowed Mexican indigenous representatives to share their practical knowledge with indigenous peoples from Nicaragua.

An important element of knowledge exchange is to bring players with similar problems and missions around the same table with the hope that by joining forces and sharing experiences they can more easily arrive at solutions. One such exchange recently took place between parties from Brazil, Mexico, and South Africa who were all seeking to develop a legal and regulatory framework to provide microinsurance to low-income households and microbusinesses. Their hope was to come up with an innovative delivery mechanism that would reduce operational costs, educate consumers, and facilitate widespread coverage.

The challenges ahead

All these advances don’t necessarily mean that this type of cooperation among equals is easier or less challenging than traditional assistance from rich to poor nations. In fact, there are several stumbling blocks that stand in the way of turning this form of exchange into a more established form of assistance. Exchanges need to be better organized and have an established forum. Many current exchanges are largely incidental, motivated by disaster or similar events, which allows little time for proper sharing and development of ideas.

More significantly, there is insufficient funding for South-South cooperation and what little is available goes mostly to the world’s poorest nations, particularly in Africa. For Latin America and the Caribbean the challenge then is to identify interested donors and sources of finance that have begun to recognize the potential of this form of cooperation.

So far, most of the projects in the region have secured funding from the participating countries themselves, often with the World Bank playing a facilitator role as the convening entity that provides the platform for the exchange to take place. Yet since these projects are not a mainstream form of assistance, governments often fail to plan for these activities as they make budget decisions.

There is no question that South-South cooperation is gaining recognition as a promising form of assistance. The best proof is that today a tremendous amount of demand for it—and interest in supplying it—remains unmet. That too is an indication of the work that remains to be done to tap its full potential.

Pamela Cox is the World Bank’s Vice President for Latin America and the Caribbean.
Making South-South Happen

Ten years of knowledge exchange through the Global Development Learning Network

BY STEFFEN SOULEJMAN JANUS AND MOR SECK

“As businesswomen, we want to find how we can network cost effectively. We have a better future, because when you network, you get markets, you get experience, you get success stories from different places.” These were the comments made by Dina Bina, a small flower shop owner in Dar es Salaam and the Chair of the Tanzania Women’s Chamber of Commerce. Two years prior, Dina and a number of fellow businesswomen in Tanzania had learned from their peers in Kenya and South Africa how to organize a business chamber. Through a videoconference-facilitated South-South knowledge exchange program, the local women connected with their peers from other African countries, providing both knowledge and inspiration. As one participant remarked “I was there… I could see people from different countries. I could talk. I could share my experience.” Today the women’s business chamber of Tanzania is a well established and active organization with more women joining every day.

This is just one of many examples of South-South knowledge exchange where practitioners from different parts of the world were able to share their experiences with peers who may have faced and overcome similar challenges. It is this powerful notion of learning from those who “have been there” that makes the South-South approach so attractive.

But making South-South happen is also hard work. Rarely does everything turn out as planned. On top of this, ensuring that practical learning takes place can be even more difficult.
That is where the Global Development Learning Network (GDLN) plays a key role as an instrument for the design and implementation of South-South exchanges.

Established in 2000 by then-World Bank president James Wolfensohn to help bridge the knowledge divide by linking distance learning centers in selected countries, the network has since matured into an active, independent global player with a secretariat housed at the World Bank Institute (WBI). Today GDLN provides access to thousands of learning venues through a network of 120 affiliates in more than 80 countries. Many GDLN affiliates can also connect to additional in-country networks. In Indonesia for example, the network can link to 350 videoconferencing sites across the country through the national educational INHERENT Network.

Affiliates include the Asian Institute of Management, the Ethiopian Civil Service College, the Islamic Development Bank, and Pontificia Universidad Católica of Peru. Each year, they put together about 1,500 learning and knowledge exchange activities—more than two thirds of which can be characterized as South-South engagements. Every affiliate is capable of providing standard knowledge exchange services such as videoconferencing facilities and multimedia distance learning rooms, but they also possess other capabilities.

The network operates on three levels. First, there is the physical infrastructure (videoconferencing venues, computer, and multimedia facilities and internet access) that provides safe havens for learning and knowledge sharing in capitals and in remote sites. Second, the network offers a broad set of advisory and implementation services: from needs assessments to the design, implementation, and evaluation of learning activities and products. On a third level, GDLN has access to a wealth of know-how and sector expertise through its renowned university and civil service education members. Many national and multilateral development players such as the World Bank, regional Development Banks, the United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR), the United Nations Fund for Women (UNIFEM) and the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) use GDLN’s services and its well-established linkages to policy makers, practitioners, academia, and civil society. Increasingly, entities from the South are also using the network. Innovation Environnement Développement Afrique (IED) in Senegal, the Higher Education Commission in Pakistan, and the Ministry for Family Affairs in Nicaragua use the network for knowledge exchange and capacity development programs linking up with other Southern partners in their regions and around the world.

While GDLN has made enormous advances in connecting people globally, the network still faces considerable challenges. On a global level, these include providing adequate coordination of activities, setting standards and ensuring quality, ensuring good communications between affiliates across regions, and fostering business development. Regionally, the governance structures are heterogeneous and rely on business models that have yet to be proven effective. At the country level, the vastly diverse sizes, missions, capacities and geographic locations of the affiliate institutions can militate against a seamless multi-site delivery. The network’s biggest asset, its diversity, carries with it an inherent management challenge.

There is a need for common standards to facilitate planning and manage expectations. The network is currently addressing these issues by developing a global governance mechanism comprised of a network board, representing each region and important partners, and a global secretariat that will serve as its executive arm.

Constrained by these challenges, how can a global, independent mechanism such as the GDLN still be an asset for South-South knowledge exchange? What has worked and what remains a challenge? Here are some takeaways after ten years of operation.

1) **Get the audience right.** For knowledge exchange activities to result in useable knowledge transfer and follow-up actions, it is critical to invite the right stakeholders to the table. A case in point is a dialogue between widowed women in Indonesia who shared their experiences on revenue-generating activities and education programs with peers in Vietnam, India, Afghanistan, Cambodia, and, Sri Lanka. For this program, key change agents in the respective countries were identified. They were either women who themselves already had significant experience with similar projects, or organizations that were about to embark on a project to empower widows in their country.

2) **Plan medium to long term instead of one-off.** A good example is the Affiliated Network for Social Accountability—Africa (ANSA). It brings together individuals and civil society organizations, nongovernmental organizations, local academics, and the media for joint knowledge exchange and learning activities both at the country level and in regionwide dialogues. The program has established itself as an effective mechanism to foster demand for good governance from the bottom up. All participating country actors engage with their audiences and hold regular meetings and activities. This powerful combination of mutual trust, active participation, capacity building, and strong personal linkages between people helps achieve lasting development impact.

3) **Design for local ownership.** Local buy-in to programs is critical for long-term success. That is the case for the Africa Local Government Action Forum, in which participants from all levels of society in seven African nations participate in monthly knowledge exchanges by videoconferencing. Since 2000, they have been sharing their personal experiences on participatory budgeting and local economic development. The program has yielded a strong community of practitioners who have, over time, built trust and a sense of community that goes beyond national borders. Critical to its success was a long-term vision to hold regularly scheduled monthly meetings by videoconferencing to help keep down costs. A francophone chapter has been added to the program, now linking 18 countries in the region.

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Asia’s Deepening Regionalism Brings Shared Prosperity

BY RAJAT M. NAG

ASIA’S COMING OF AGE has been the development story of the past 40 years. The reasons for this are varied. But some of the more significant factors have been knowledge exchange, technology transfer, and increased economic integration and cooperation between governments of developing economies. Asia’s success is in part the result of increased dialogue between regional partners, formalized through institutions such as the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), which expanded from its original five-member core¹ in 1967 to encompass all Southeast Asia by mid-1999² and aims to establish an ASEAN Economic Community by 2015. In response to the 1997/98 Asian financial crisis, the People’s Republic of China, Japan, and the Republic of Korea joined the process, creating ASEAN+3. And integration continues to expand through the East Asia Summit process³ and other initiatives.

Asia’s revival began with Japan’s remarkable economic surge in the post-war period and subsequent entry into the Organisation of Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) in 1964. Japan’s success convinced much of developing Asia to shift away from import-substitution toward a more open, export-oriented development model.

Today, the development model is changing yet again. As Asia’s economies have expanded, they have also become more closely integrated through trade, investment, and financial flows. Cooperation among developing Asian economies and their integration with the region’s more mature and larger economies has helped Asia become much stronger.

Vietnamese store in southwest China’s Yunnan Province, which borders on Myanmar, Laos, and Vietnam. As a result of the China-ASEAN free trade area (FTA) and Greater Mekong Subregion (GMS) program, some 100,000 people trade here every day.
In practice, knowledge exchange, technological transfer, and increased economic integration in Asia stemmed naturally from increased private sector integration as economies opened up in the 1990s and globalization became the mantra. The region’s strong production networks of multinational and regional firms have led to greater interdependence. This market-led process led to the creation of Factory Asia and has been backed by unilateral, nondiscriminatory trade liberalization. This process has also demonstrated that regional integration does not necessarily have to be achieved at the cost of global interconnectedness. Asia is now more regionally integrated, while remaining steadfastly globally connected.

Asia’s approach to regionalism has been pragmatic and flexible, as it has largely adopted a bottom-up approach of subregional cooperation across myriad economic subsets, thereby creating a platform for multitrack and multispeed “open” regionalism. This approach acknowledges different levels of development and needs across the region, and arrives at a consensus on what needs to be done, how to finance it, and how to make it work.

There are many examples of this approach across Asia, with the Greater Mekong Subregion (GMS) Program gaining particular prominence. Since 1992, Cambodia, the Lao People’s Democratic Republic (Lao PDR), Myanmar, Thailand, Viet Nam, and Yunnan province in the People’s Republic of China (PRC) have joined together to promote development by taking advantage of natural economic linkages.

Much has been achieved since 1992 in the GMS where some of the poorest riparian countries fought bitter wars against each other only a few decades ago. It has created a sense of common purpose that is essential for enhancing regional cooperation, stability, and peace. Infrastructure valued at nearly $11 billion is either in place or being built, including an East–West Economic Corridor across the region that will eventually extend from the Andaman Sea on the coast of Myanmar to Da Nang in Viet Nam.

And assessments show that investments in regional projects, particularly cross-border infrastructure, can be highly rewarding. For instance, analysis of the impacts of the Second Mekong International Bridge between Mukdahan province in Thailand and Savannakhet province in Lao PDR show that such an investment can reduce poverty by a full percentage point in the long run. Furthermore, the findings contradict the common presumption that the benefits from cross-border infrastructure projects occur only, or overwhelmingly, in the richer region. In this case, Savannakhet enjoys a greater increase in welfare through consumption, and a larger reduction in poverty incidence, both in absolute and in percentage terms.

Another specific example is the “twinning” arrangement between Cambodia’s Phnom Penh Water Supply Authority (PPWSA) and Viet Nam’s Binh Duong Water Supply Sewerage Environment Company Limited (BIWASE), which began in 2007. The goal of this twinning, initiated by the Asian Development Bank (ADB) with the support of the South East Asian Water Utilities Network, is to strengthen Viet Nam’s BIWASE where Cambodia’s PPWSA is stronger. Reducing leakage, improving customer service, upgrading management, creating a training center, and better financial management (to avoid the need for government subsidies), were all part of the knowledge transfer process. The success of this twinning agreement has a spillover effect—BIWASE can now assist other Vietnamese utilities by passing on their newly acquired knowledge and experience. The main lesson of this project is that engineers across cultures and borders still speak the same technological language and share the same aims and goals. ADB has adopted and improved on twinning as a development strategy for its Water Operators’ Partnership Program, which promotes knowledge sharing and builds the capacity of water operators and utilities in the Asia and the Pacific region. It has identified potential twinning of 20 water utilities and operators in the region.

Since the 1997/98 Asian financial crisis, broader dialogue and initiatives have also brought greater regional strength. The creation of ASEAN+3 represented a degree of cooperation difficult to imagine before the onset of the crisis. The 1997/98 currency and banking crises gave authorities in the region an impetus to look beyond existing multilateral remedies for help.

ASEAN+3 spurred a host of monetary and financial cooperation initiatives—the Chiang Mai Initiative, which is a web of bilateral swap arrangements to supply liquidity during a crisis; the Asian Bond Markets Initiative (ABMI) and Asian Bond Funds (ABF) to develop local currency bond markets; a system for strengthening macroeconomic surveillance; and an Economic Review and Policy Dialogue (ERPD). A web of bilateral and plurilateral free-trade agreements (FTAs)—sometimes referred to as the “Asian noodle bowl”—has also emerged. The region has now put in place a multilateralized foreign exchange reserve pool agreement—the Chiang Mai Initiative Multilateralization (CMIM)—and also agreed to establish an ASEAN+3 Macroeconomic Surveillance Office. While ASEAN+3 has made progress on regional financial cooperation and integration, it is also expanding into other economic and social sectors.

The process of regional integration, though largely centered around East Asia in its initial stages, has been pushed forward through a broader regionwide arrangement. The East Asia Summit process was established in 2005 as a regional leaders’ forum for strategic dialogue on key challenges facing the region, including financial cooperation, trade, climate change, and natural disaster management. However, it still remains a leaders-led institutional arrangement responding to emerging regional and global challenges.

Given emerging Asia’s diverse and complex social and economic landscape, economic cooperation and integration in past decades have been uneven across sectors and regions. For example, a detailed analysis of Asia’s trade interdependence suggests that it is largely based on trade in parts and components. Whereas 56.3 percent of East Asia’s trade in parts and components was within the subregion in 2008, intra-subregional trade in parts and components was a mere 1.2 percent for Central Asia and 1.3 percent for South Asia.

While trade between India and the PRC is growing, not all parts of South Asia and not all sectors are participating in this process. The intra-subregional trade share among members
of the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) is less than 6 percent. Apart from policy impediments and political hurdles to regional cooperation, South Asia is also hamstrung by the fact that the overall trade-to-GDP ratio for the subregion is 41.5 percent, compared with 63.2 percent for the whole of Asia. However, SAARC has launched a series of iconic projects and initiatives, such as the South Asian University, that have a broad impact on civil society and can also raise popular appeal for regional cooperation.

The central Asian region has also taken some impressive strides in regional cooperation. The Central Asia Regional Economic Cooperation (CAREC) program, which brings together eight central Asian countries, is advancing regional cooperation through transport and trade connectivity. CAREC partners are set to mark a decade of successful operations in 2011, with close to $15 billion in investments that contribute to sustainable economic growth and improved living standards in the subregion.

However, indicators suggest that regionalism has advanced unevenly. It has been mainly focused on production integration in East Asia, with other subregions and sectors much less integrated. Asia has to move forward and look beyond integrated trade and production networks. In doing so, it cannot solely rely on market forces. Building the right institutional framework for Asian integration is crucial to cement the existing gains, and support the next steps for regional cooperation and integration.

Asia does not lack institutions for regionalism. It possesses a dense web of institutions, yet the institutional structure is “lite” as most organizations lack a strong secretariat, agenda-setting powers, and a stronger mandate from national governments.

Consolidation and strengthening of existing subregional and regional institutions is perhaps the first step toward creating more effective institutions to support Asian regionalism. The next logical step will be to link subregional institutions to tap existing synergies as well as explore other potential areas of cooperation.

Developing institutions to exploit compelling functional opportunities and creating new pan-Asian forums and institutions are some of the key requirements for comprehensive Asian integration.

Our long-term vision is that of a strong, prosperous, outward-looking Asian Economic Community that might eventually evolve into a single regional market connected seamlessly by world-class infrastructure, where goods and services move freely across borders, and capital can similarly be transferred to efficiently allocate resources for investment.

Asia’s model of open regionalism combines national, regional, and global responsibilities. It has yielded dividends to individual countries, the region as a whole, and the rest of the world. Asia’s economic influence has increased significantly as the region continues to help pull the global economy out of the recent crisis with its strong domestic investment, effective macroeconomic stimulus, and robust intraregional trade.

Despite all the accolades about emerging Asia’s achievements, the future presents huge challenges and requires thinking globally, coordinating regionally, and—most importantly—acting nationally for the common good.

Rajat M. Nag is the Managing Director General of the Asian Development Bank.

Endnotes
1 Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines, Singapore, and Thailand.
3 ASEAN+3 plus Australia, India, and New Zealand.

Making South-South Happen continued from page 44

4) Mix and blend delivery methods to respond to existing constraints. Although face-to-face activities still make up most of the knowledge exchanges and learning interventions, other methods such as online delivery or videoconferencing are also being used. Program designers mix and match delivery modalities to suit time, budget, participants’ geographic dispersion, political stability, and safety needs. A recently developed knowledge exchange program on Public–Private Partnerships (PPP), for example, allows practitioners worldwide to discuss experiences and emerging trends in various sectors using traditional conference-type events, videoconference-enabled knowledge exchange workshops, e-discussions, blogs, and chats on a dedicated online platform.

5) Ensure adequate planning and follow-up. Carefully planning and design is critical to the success of any learning activity. Agendas or curricula need to support the achievement of desired outcomes. Roles and responsibilities need to be clearly defined and activities properly structured, providing a good balance between content delivery, interactive dialogue, and reflection. Similarly, follow-up activities to monitor agreed milestones are a critical factor in the quest for results.

While this is by no means a comprehensive list, it can serve as a starting point for thinking about the “how to” of planning, design, and implementation of South-South Knowledge exchange. Global mechanisms such as the GDLN will continue to learn by doing as they respond to the changing requirements of a multipolar world.

Steffen Soulejman Janus is Head of the Global Development Learning Network (GDLN) Secretariat.
Mor Seck is Director of the Senegal Distance Learning Center and President of the African Association of Distance Learning Centers (AADLC).
ON A WARM EVENING IN LATE MARCH OF THIS YEAR, more than 500 enthusiastic delegates from around the world poured out of the Chamber of Commerce building in Bogotá, with a shared vision that South-South cooperation would reshape today’s development cooperation landscape. Despite the Colombian capital’s dizzying altitude of 2,800 meters, their zeal for effective South-South knowledge exchange and mutual learning left the participants of the Bogotá High Level Event on South-South cooperation and Capacity Development clear headed and with a long list of ideas, projects and plans, for their countries and regions, and for their multilateral, parliamentary, civil society, and research organizations. A groundbreaking format, including “talk show” sessions, video broadcasting and case story presentations, promoted lively discussions on South-South and triangular cooperation and resulted in the Bogotá Statement, a forward-looking manifesto for
inclusive and effective policy making within the shifting development cooperation architecture.

An evolving process

The roots of the Bogotá process lie 8,200 kilometers westward, in Accra. Here, in Ghana’s buzzing capital, a High Level Forum (HLF) of some 1,800 representatives gathered in September 2008 to endorse the Accra Agenda for Action (AAA) which reinforces the promise of better quality aid expressed three years earlier in the Paris Declaration. The journey from Paris’s Ile-de-France, the host location of the previous HLF, to the former Gold Coast, and in Africa’s first country to gain independence from colonial rule, was not a mere symbolic concession to the increasing voice of developing countries in global development policy making. With Southern leaders from dozens of low- and middle-income countries coordinating their priorities, this turned out to be a real opportunity for horizontal policy making. As a result, the AAA reflects sensitive policy commitments in areas such as the increased use of national budgets for channeling aid, the reduction of conditionalities, and a groundbreaking approach to South-South cooperation as part of the aid effectiveness agenda.

Not surprisingly, it was a member of the Accra developing countries’ caucus who took up the mandate to explore South-South cooperation for aid effectiveness, enshrined in article 19 of the AAA. From late 2008, an international debate started to look into South-South cooperation as a way of fostering horizontal partnerships and drawing on the full potential of developing countries, in particular middle-income countries, as both recipients and providers of development cooperation. With the strong backing of countries and organizations represented in the Working Party on Aid Effectiveness hosted at the OECD-DAC, Colombia proposed in March 2009 the creation of a specialized task team which was launched with amazing energy during a two-day, globally connected event in September 2009 in Washington DC. From that moment, the Task Team on South-South cooperation (TT-SSC), with strong leadership in countries such as Ecuador, Egypt, Indonesia, Mexico, Peru, South Africa, and Thailand, was to ensure that South-South cooperation and the aid effectiveness agenda would enrich and complement each other. This would be a natural process emerging from the more proactive and innovative role in global policy making being played by the developing world.

Analysis based on experience

After assessing the long history of South-South cooperation and the complex evolution of the aid effectiveness agenda, the founding members of the TT-SSC quickly identified the recipe for success: Explore and analyze the practices and experiences of South-South cooperation and in particular South-South knowledge exchange. Focusing on a clear-cut niche, South-South technical cooperation and capacity development, they would draw on real-life practice to help inform and ensure relevant and consistent policy recommendations. Two milestones were already visible: The Bogotá High-Level Event on the very near horizon (in March 2010), would be a mid-term conference on the way to the High Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness in Korea in late 2011.

Energized by the immediacy the Bogotá HLE, in late November 2009 the TT-SSC put out a call for case stories about South-South technical cooperation in the context of aid effectiveness. These stories could cover three themes: Adapting the aid effectiveness principles to South-South technical cooperation, enriching the aid effectiveness agenda with the practice of South-South knowledge exchange, and identifying complementarities between South-South and North-South cooperation. Partner countries in particular, but also donors and nongovernmental actors were invited to share their experiences. The TT-SSC members were explicit in their desire to explore what works and what doesn’t, and to classify and systematize the results.

The TT-SSC engaged with regional organizations including the New Partnership for Africa’s Development (NEPAD), the Asian Development Bank, the Inter-American Development Bank, and others. The process was informed by the experiences of several countries and organizations, including Barefoot College in India, the Inter-American Development Bank, and the Organization of American States. The TT-SSC members worked closely with these organizations to ensure that their experiences were captured and included in the final report.

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Bank, and the Organization of American States. At the global level, the World Bank Institute helped connect practitioners, and a global core team of communication and policy advisors guided the process. This approach enabled practitioners around the world to access just-in-time support, engage in peer networks, formulate regional perspectives, and build an enabling environment to make best use of the limited time that many leaders and champions in developing countries could commit to new initiatives.

Stories of challenge and success

The response from the countries and organizations surpassed expectations: 110 case stories were presented in only nine weeks. The showcased experiences involve 133 countries from around the world, as well as 10 multilateral organizations, 4 civil society organizations, and 3 parliamentary bodies. Case story drafts were discussed at meetings in Addis Ababa, Bogotá, Brussels, Mexico City, Pretoria, Seoul, and Washington, DC. Indeed, the Bogotá process is likely to be the broadest universe of country-led experiences ever collected.

The case story process also shows the immense potential of engaging Southern practitioners and policy makers in global and regional decision making. Experience-sharing is a priority for many developing countries, and learning is a powerful, yet underexplored tool for adapting the global development architecture to the shifting poles of wealth and development. With its highly energized plenary sessions and roundtables discussions of the case stories, the Bogotá HLE was an inspiring example of how results can be achieved under tight deadlines by drawing on the commitment of a diverse group of champions from developing countries and multilateral institutions.

In addition to the practices illustrated in the previous section of this issue, the following pages present a selection of six case stories. They provide a snapshot of the impressive diversity of experiences and lessons learned through South-South knowledge exchange. Take for instance Indonesia’s collaboration with countries such as Uganda to establish sustainable sharia-based microfinance systems. Or Ecuador’s support to Bolivia’s capacity to fight a dramatic dengue outbreak, saving lives and contributing to the development of Bolivia’s health sector capacities. Conventional donors are increasingly engaging through triangular cooperation, as shown in Ireland’s horizontal partnership with Liberia and East Timor to promote women’s rights, peace and security, or Japan’s engagement in third country training programs with ASEAN members.

And yet, peers and partner have only started to extend the Bogotá spirit and much can be expected in the coming months. At the launch of its second phase work plan, the TT-SSC members, a growing community of more than 90 countries and organizations (as of July 2010), have agreed to extend the analysis by preparing additional case studies. So, as you read through this issue of Development Outreach, the practitioners and policy makers in dozens of countries and organizations are conducting in-depth reviews of their experiences on South-South knowledge exchange, hand-in-hand with local and regional academic institutions. All this will provide more good practices and policy guidance for the Korea HLF and beyond, including the emerging G20 development agenda and the policy discussions at the United Nations Development Cooperation Forum (UNDCF). Indeed, the time has come for an ambitious and innovative developing world to guide global policy makers toward a more effective system for governing development in a multipolar world. Enjoy the read!

More information:

Even more cases at http://www.southsouthcases.info
Follow the TT-SSC at http://www.southsouth.info
Be in touch at southsouthcases@gmail.com

Nils-Sjard Schulz is Policy Adviser to the Task Team on South-South cooperation (TT-SSC).
The Colombian Cooperation Initiative with the Caribbean Basin is a response to the needs expressed by the Caribbean Basin Countries (CBC) for knowledge exchange and capacity development on several themes that contribute to improving regional economic development. It includes five priority areas in which the countries of the region have expressed particular interest: bilingualism, disaster prevention and risk management, academic mobility, food security, and nutrition and technical education.

**CHALLENGE**

Make available to the CBC the best of Colombian institutions, including their models of operation, best practices, and lessons learned. The initiative promotes social and economic development by strengthening capacities, exchanging experiences, and building communities of practitioners.

**APPROACH**

This demand-driven program was designed using the following steps:

- Formulation of a needs assessment within the region
- Organization of workshops and exercises to match the CBC’s demand with what Colombian institutions could supply in the priority areas
- Implementation of knowledge transfer
- Scaling up of the knowledge acquired and lessons learned during the first phase of the program to a wider audience through Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs)

A team, led by Colombia’s Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MoFA), designed and coordinated the implementation of the work plan, with the participation of several institutions from academia and the Colombian Government.

**THE KNOWLEDGE TRANSFER ACTIVITIES INCLUDED:**

- Seminars and field visits to gather knowledge on methodologies and practices in each priority area
- Workshops on technical assistance held in Colombia and selected CBC countries
- Scholarships for graduate degree programs in Colombian universities
- Virtual courses on technical education and languages (Spanish, English, French)

**ORGANIZATION(S):** Lead organization: Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Colombia. Other organizations: State Entities from the twenty-five countries of the Caribbean basin; Presidential Agency for Social Action and International Cooperation; Pan-American Development Foundation; Heart Trust NTA; Association of Caribbean States; Organization of American States; Public Colombian institutions: Ministry of Education; SENA; ICETEX; ICBF; Universidad Nacional de Colombia; and RESA.

**COUNTRIES:** Antigua and Barbuda, Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Costa Rica, Cuba, Dominica, Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Grenada, Guatemala, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, Jamaica, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Surinam, Trinidad and Tobago, and Venezuela.

**LENGTH:** First phase: January-December 2009.

**PRIMARY CONTACT PERSON(S):** Andrey Molina, Acting Director of International Cooperation, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Colombia, Bogota (Colombia). Phone: +57.1.3814000 Ext. 1745. E-mail: andrey.molina@cancilleria.gov.co

**RESULTS**

The workshops yielded the following results:

- Nearly 400 Caribbean citizens, from 25 countries, have participated in on-site courses since January 2009, and 1200 have registered in virtual courses.
- Recommendations generated during food security workshops were adopted by the OAS Inter-American Commission for Social Development, including the need to strengthen the linkage between food security policies and income generation programs.
- The workshops on disaster prevention and risk management highlighted the work of the Caribbean Disaster Emergency Management Agency, which had been unknown to some participating countries, and the need to consolidate regional networks where information and lessons learned can be shared.
- In the workshops on technical education, regional needs were identified: expanding the use of ICTs in professional development; and creating models and curricula around core competencies and learning programs.
- Methodologies to teach second languages were strengthened among high school and university professors. The Caribbean Initiative has develop the Alliance Fair, a space for Colombian and Caribbean basin universities to build working networks and exchange experiences as ways of increasing academic mobility among them.
- Germany and Israel supported the program through triangular cooperation, making their technologies and know-how available in technical education courses on agriculture and welding.

To ensure the sustainability of this initiative, it is crucial that knowledge transfer and capacity building happen at the institutional and individual levels. During the second phase, workshops and seminars were delivered in beneficiary countries to scale up the program to a wider community, adapt the knowledge transfer to the specific needs of the practitioners involved, and strengthen relations among countries. A web platform has also been created to facilitate further exchange among participants in on-site activities and to disseminate courses and workshops more widely.
In 2009, an outbreak of dengue hemorrhagic fever occurred in Bolivia’s tropical areas, affecting some 7,000 people. The Bolivian government declared a public health emergency and appealed for international support. Its neighbor, Ecuador, had faced similar health crises in the past and had developed the technical capacity to control the disease. The Ecuadorian government responded to Bolivia’s request by sending ten experts to help control the epidemic. Thanks to their history of cooperation, as well as the similarities in their public health and sanitation needs, both health ministries were able to quickly develop a program to address the health emergency.

**Overview**

Dengue infection is a leading cause of illness and death in the tropics and subtropics. As many as 100 million people are infected every year, and dengue has become one of the main health threats in the Americas.

**Challenge**

The approach, which was coordinated by the ministries of health in Ecuador and Bolivia, was funded by the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF) and the United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS) at a very low cost.

It included:

- Ten experts being dispatched to the field,
- Donations in the form of medical equipment, and
- A knowledge exchange component for capacity building in the affected regions (Santa Cruz de la Sierra, Cochabamba, Pando y Beni). It focused on: epidemiologic surveillance, outbreak control, community participation and inter-institutional coordination, and appropriate clinical management of dengue and dengue hemorrhagic fever.

**Approach**

The initiative helped strengthen relations between Ecuador and Bolivia and has opened new possibilities for cooperation in other thematic areas.

The principal achievements are:

- Bolivia was able to control the state of emergency and developed the capacity to deal with future outbreaks, and is now developing policies to deal with dengue.
- Ecuador proposed a continental strategy for controlling dengue outbreaks and reducing mortality related to the disease. This strategy was approved by the Union of South American Nations in 2009.
- The member countries of the Union of South American Nations adopted the program as a continent-wide initiative and have requested that it be further developed for implementation.

The results indicate that this initiative can easily be replicated in countries that run the risk of dengue outbreaks brought on by climatic changes in the region. It will be important to include a comprehensive monitoring and evaluation component in the program.

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Building on the success of the microfinance training programs they had held in Jakarta, South Africa and Bangladesh, the governments of Indonesia and Japan teamed up to develop a training series for countries in Africa. Since 2004, the program has been delivered by the Non-Aligned Movement Centre for South-South Cooperation (NAM CSSTC), first covering the operational aspects of microfinance, and then the establishment and management of microfinance institutions (MFIs).

Compared with Asia, microfinance programs in Africa have had a mixed record. The success of microfinance projects depends heavily on timely and accurate information, and on adequate knowledge policies, procedures, and controls. Because of its expertise, NAM CSSTC was chosen to help develop and implement microcredit programs in its member countries and in Africa.

The objective of the program was to provide African participants with an opportunity to improve their knowledge and skills in microfinance, and to create a forum where they could exchange ideas, information, and experiences and learn from each other at a practical operational level.

After gaining knowledge and skills in economics, banking, and the principles of microfinance each participant produced a Back Home Plan (BHP) reflecting what they had learned and how they would apply it.

Upon returning to their home country in 2008, two Ugandan participants recommended in their BHP that a Sharia-based noninterest system of lending be introduced in their country. Using funds from their own government and from the governments of Indonesia and Japan, including from NAM-CSSTC, they invited the Indonesian team to help them implement the program in Uganda. The first training series began in July 2009 and in February 2010, the governments of Indonesia and Japan sent a follow-up survey mission to evaluate results and make plans for the remaining 2 years of the training program.

The BHP has now been institutionalized and, to date, 78 Ugandan participants have been trained in microfinance, many of them attracted by the nonconventional, interest free, Sharia-based banking system developed in Indonesia.

- A follow-up evaluation showed that the Ugandans had acquired a strong grasp of microfinance policies and procedures and that they were implementing it correctly.
- The program succeeded because participants came from strategic organizations dealing with microfinance. The Ugandans took ownership of the agenda and built an equal partnership with the resource country. Graduates created an association of alumni to share their experiences.
- The plan now is to disseminate the experiences from Uganda through training institutions and training of trainers.

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A bank in Jinja, Uganda.

Japan’s Prime Minister Yasuo Fukuda shakes hands with Uganda’s President Yoweri Museveni during a meeting held on the sideline of the 4th Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD) in 2008.

Note
1 Established in 1995 during the Summit of Non-Aligned Movement (NAM), the mission of the Non-Aligned Movement Centre for South-South Cooperation (NAM CSSTC) is to enhance the collective self-reliance of its member countries in attaining sustained people-centered economic and social development and allow developing nations to become equal partners in international relations. Aside from being a forum for dialogue, NAM CSSTC also mobilizes resources from government agencies to achieve the development objectives of both its member and non-member countries.
To share knowledge among people who have been directly affected by conflict, the Irish Department of Foreign Affairs is connecting women and men from Ireland, Northern Ireland, Liberia, and Timor-Leste in a cross-learning initiative on how to promote and protect women’s leadership and interests in conflict resolution and peace building. The process is informed by the United Nations Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 1325 on Women, Peace, and Security.

The unanimous adoption of Resolution 1325 in October 2000, which calls for all UN member states to take action, was a watershed in the history of women’s rights and peace and security. This initiative also highlights the disparate effects that war has on men and women; and recognizes that women should be active participants in rebuilding their communities and nations after conflict.

The cross-learning process was an innovative initiative because it included people who had directly experienced the dangers and inequities of conflict, allowing them to share their experiences and successful coping mechanisms.

The initiative will:
- Inform Ireland’s National Action Plan on 1325,
- Encourage further South-South/North-South cooperation among the three countries,
- Strengthen international efforts to implement UNSCR 1325, and
- Provide input to policy discussions at the UN, the European Union, the African Union, and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe.

Between June 2009 and April 2010, a series of events was organized in the three countries for experts from government, civil society, and academia. Each event focused on one of the “3 Ps” of Resolution 1325: Increasing Women’s Participation, encouraging the Protection of Women from Gender-Based Violence, and encouraging a Gender Perspective in peacemaking, peacekeeping, and peace building.

Each one-week event featured a high-level discussion on Resolution 1325 and group sessions on model-sharing, culminating in a set of recommendations.

The outcomes are expected to feed into the overall cross-learning report which will be presented to the UN before the tenth anniversary of UNSCR 1325 in October 2010.

The process has already had a number of beneficial outcomes. It has contributed to forging closer linkages between government and civil society and to fostering practical cooperation among the three countries. The women and men at the conferences were able to share their experiences in a safe and confidential setting, often broaching culturally sensitive issues. While recognizing that each of their countries was different, they realized that they had significant lessons to share. Participants said that they no longer felt alone in their work—the conference “brought the world home.”

Furthermore, the cross-training was beneficial at several levels:
- At the individual level, participants said they had gained a great deal from sharing experiences with counterparts from other countries, and with people they would not otherwise have interacted with in their daily lives.
- At the organizational level, participants learned about how other organizations are responding creatively to needs on the ground, often with limited resources.
- At a systemic level, the government, through its support and implementation of the initiative, became a stakeholder in the process, thereby demonstrating its commitment to the key messages.

While some gaps were identified, participants adopted recommendations to the international community and civil society designed to tackle these obstacles in the future. It is important that these recommendations be implemented to ensure that the objectives of this cross-learning initiative are achieved.

LEAD ORGANIZATION(S): Department of Foreign Affairs (Conflict Resolution Unit)
COUNTRY(IES): Ireland, Northern Ireland, Timor-Leste, and Liberia
PROJECT DURATION: January 2009 to completion in December 2010
CONTACT(S): Liz Higgins, Principal Development Specialist, Policy Planning and Effectiveness Unit, Irish Aid, Dublin (Ireland)
The Asia-Pacific Development Center on Disability (APCD) provides training and information for persons with disabilities (PWDs). APCD uses its wide regional network to mobilize resources at the individual, organizational, and societal levels. It works with more than thirty focal point organizations (government ministries and agencies in charge of disability) and some 200 associate organizations, including self-help groups and organizations of PWDs, and grassroots nongovernmental organizations.

APCD was chosen to put together a program to empower PWDs by creating groups or organizations that would tackle complex issues of disability and development. As a regional center on disability, APCD facilitates networking and collaboration among organizations of PWDs and others. Using its training and knowledge management programs as a knowledge sharing platform, it facilitates innovative exchanges between the government and nongovernmental organizations.

The APCD's activities are based on three main principles that help participants acquire the knowledge and experience to become agents of change. At the individual level, they are trained on disability-related issues. At the organizational level, they learn about concepts, approaches, and practical guidelines to strengthen their own groups from the community perspective. At the societal level, they use their acquired knowledge to develop additional initiatives with other stakeholders in disability-inclusive ways. They then document and share the lessons learned using a knowledge management approach.

APCD disseminates the lessons to neighboring countries through its network of government ministries responsible for disability; and through its network of resource persons—a group of former trainees who have disabilities or who play a leading role in disability and development.

APCD has introduced disability-related issues in all its activities with key stakeholders including: United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP), the International Labor Organization (ILO), the World Health Organization (WHO), the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the International Telecommunication Union (ITU), the World Bank (WB), and regional bodies such as the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN).

The main challenge to APCD’s programs are the unforeseen changes in government staff responsible for disability.

Note 1 The Asia-Pacific Development Center on Disability (APCD) was established in 2002 in collaboration between the Governments of Thailand and Japan, following the legacy of the Asia Pacific Decade of Disabled Persons (1993-2002). It has been endorsed by the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP) as a regional cooperative. Using the concept of trilateral cooperation, APCD has produced several reports endorsed by over 30 governmental focal point ministries/agencies in charge of disability as well as some 200 associate organizations.

The Asia-Pacific Development Center on Disability (APCD) was chosen to put together a program to empower PWDs by creating groups or organizations that would tackle complex issues of disability and development. As a regional center on disability, APCD facilitates networking and collaboration among organizations of PWDs and others. Using its training and knowledge management programs as a knowledge sharing platform, it facilitates innovative exchanges between the government and nongovernmental organizations.

The APCD’s activities are based on three main principles that help participants acquire the knowledge and experience to become agents of change. At the individual level, they are trained on disability-related issues. At the organizational level, they learn about concepts, approaches, and practical guidelines to strengthen their own groups from the community perspective. At the societal level, they use their acquired knowledge to develop additional initiatives with other stakeholders in disability-inclusive ways. They then document and share the lessons learned using a knowledge management approach.

APCD disseminates the lessons to neighboring countries through its network of government ministries responsible for disability; and through its network of resource persons—a group of former trainees who have disabilities or who play a leading role in disability and development.

APCD has introduced disability-related issues in all its activities with key stakeholders including: United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP), the International Labor Organization (ILO), the World Health Organization (WHO), the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the International Telecommunication Union (ITU), the World Bank (WB), and regional bodies such as the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN).

The main challenge to APCD’s programs are the unforeseen changes in government staff responsible for disability.
The JICA-ASEAN Regional Cooperation Meeting (JARCOM) was an innovative mechanism to formulate high-quality needs-oriented South-South cooperation (SSC) projects. Its inclusive, participatory, and transparent approach enhanced ownership by all stakeholders—both recipients and providers, and promoted regional cooperation in South-East Asia. The JARCOM mechanism carried out annual consultations among member countries, project identification, needs-to-resource matching, and project implementation, review, and follow-up. The Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) facilitated the process and provided technical and financial support. Beginning in 2010, the JARCOM mechanism became the J-SEAM mechanism (JICA-Southeast Asia Meeting on South-South Cooperation).

The overall goal of JARCOM was to address common challenges in ASEAN, to narrow the socioeconomic disparities among ASEAN countries, and to help speed up regional integration. To this end, it mobilized resources and helped formulate good SSC projects, taking into account member countries’ development needs and priorities on the one hand, and cooperation policies and resources on the other.

JARCOM’s participatory and transparent approach facilitated mutual learning and capacity development among all participants. It allowed recipient countries to strengthen their capacity to prioritize their development needs and negotiate with donors. It also allowed middle-income countries (MICs)—emerging providers of South-South cooperation—to improve their delivery of aid programs, making them more relevant and aligned with the needs of recipient countries; and helped make the MICs more prominent among other ASEAN countries. Finally, it helped JICA, as a Northern donor and long-time supporter of SSC, to improve SSC programs and maintain good relations with its neighbors; for regional organizations, it served as a vehicle for addressing regional priorities.

JARCOM created a win-win-win approach to triangular cooperation. To avoid duplication and to harmonize regional priorities, it aligned its program with regional and subregional initiatives.

JAPAN—INNOVATIVE TRIANGULAR COOPERATION WITH ASEAN COUNTRIES (JARCOM)

JARCOM USED A 10-STEP APPROACH TO RESPOND TO AND PRIORITIZE DEMANDS

1. **In-country preconsultation:** a series of consultations with domestic stakeholder in beneficiary countries at the project preparation stage helped ensure wide participation.
2. **Preannouncement of providers’ aid policies:** to help beneficiary countries determine what resources were available and from which agencies.
3. **Needs-to-resource matching:** a needs-resource matching process was carried out by email, fact-finding missions and teleconferences, before the annual meetings.
4. **Annual plenary meetings:** were organized only after prescreened projects had been submitted for negotiation.
5. **Participatory monitoring:** the status of projects was monitored by all actors and disseminated on a quarterly basis, to ensure an impartial and transparent negotiation process as well as timely follow-up actions.
6. **Joint formulation and incentives:** once an informal agreement had been reached among stakeholders on a project, JICA would make additional resources available, on a first-come first-served basis, thereby creating an incentive for members to produce good quality reports.
7. **Support to local staff network:** an informal network consisting of locally recruited staff was created to facilitate multilateral negotiations among geographically dispersed stakeholders.
8. **Information management system:** a web-based information management system (http://www.jarcom.net) was set up so members could access project proposals and updates on regional programs, thereby serving as a database for regional SSC.
9. **Partnership agreement and cost sharing:** most of the financial and coordination costs of managing JARCOM’s network and organizing the annual meetings were covered by JICA. However, during the implementation phase, the countries shared the cost of training and staffing.
10. **Regional approach to project identification:** in addition to the national priority-based approach, JARCOM later introduced a regional approach to help speed up discussions on regional integration.
Between 2004 and 2009 JARCOM’s participatory and transparent process led to shared learning and capacity development, and produced a number of other positive results:

- Out of 196 proposals, 119 projects were selected through JARCOM.
- The “matching” rates increased from 28 percent to 61 percent due to the improved efficiency of member countries in planning and negotiating.
- Consequently, the quality of the projects improved and competition among ASEAN member countries contributed to improved design.
- The attendance rate by high-ranking government officials at the annual meetings showed their strong commitment to the program.
- JARCOM’s networking activities with other regional stakeholders led to a partnership with the UNDP Regional South-South Unit.

In addition to these results, some unexpected trends emerged:

- Recipient countries began offering training workshops to share their own experiences. These new providers were now mobilizing their own resources, which led to the need to diversify regional aid resources.
- The introduction of a regional approach to SSC led to regional programs such as the one on Avian Influenza and the standardization of Risk Management in Customs to be formulated through JARCOM.
THE SOUTH-SOUTH OPPORTUNITY
A community of professionals dedicated to South–South Cooperation, Knowledge Exchange, and Learning for development. Site content is group generated and offers a space to come together and exchange knowledge and ideas.
www.southsouth.info

THE HIGH-LEVEL EVENT ON SOUTH-SOUTH COOPERATION AND CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT
Outcomes from the Bogota High Level Event on South–South Cooperation and Capacity Development, March 2010, including roundtable summaries and videocasts.
www.bogotahie.info

NEPAD
The Planning and Coordinating Agency for New Partnership for African Development (NEPAD) focuses part of its efforts on South-South capacity development among African nations.
www.nepad.org

CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT FOR DEVELOPMENT EFFECTIVENESS FACILITY
The Capacity Development for Development Effectiveness Facility (facilitated by ADB and UNDP) brings Asian-Pacific countries together for peer learning and South-South exchanges around aid effectiveness issues.
www.aideffectiveness.org/cdde

COOPERACION SUR SUR
Iberoamerican Program on Strengthening South–South cooperation, launched in 2008, with 16 participating countries from LAC, includes the following workstreams: training, exchanges, information management and reporting.
www.cooperacionsursur.org

SPECIAL UNIT FOR SOUTH-SOUTH COOPERATION
The Special Unit for South–South Cooperation (SU/SSC) was established by the United Nations General Assembly in 1978. Hosted by UNDP, their primary mandate is to promote, coordinate, and support South–South and triangular cooperation on a Global and United Nations system-wide basis.
http://ssc.undp.org

SOUTH-SOUTH EXPERIENCE EXCHANGE TRUST FUND
The South-South Experience Exchange Trust Fund (SEETF) — which provides accessible, just-in-time funding for developing countries to share their knowledge and expertise — aims to further the World Bank’s knowledge sharing agenda by drawing directly upon the accumulated expertise of the Bank’s partner countries.
http://go.worldbank.org/IXY2U54190

HIGH LEVEL UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCE ON SOUTH-SOUTH COOPERATION
United Nations Conference on South–South Cooperation with the overarching theme of Promotion of South–South Cooperation for Development. The General Assembly has described South–South cooperation as “an important element of international cooperation for development, which offers viable opportunities for developing countries in their individual and collective pursuits of sustained economic growth and sustainable development.”
http://southsouthconference.org

EXPERIENCE SHARING PROGRAM ON DEVELOPMENT BETWEEN CHINA AND AFRICA
A multiyear program of South–South exchanges for development between China and Africa, particularly on trade and investment flows.
BOGOTA STATEMENT: Towards Effective and Inclusive Development Partnerships, by The Steering Committee members of the Bogota High-Level Event, 2010.

The Bogota Statement was endorsed at the Bogota High Level Event on South-South cooperation and Capacity Development on 24–25 March 2010. This global policy document offers clear-cut recommendations for improving the effectiveness of South-South knowledge exchange.

TASK TEAM ON SOUTH-SOUTH COOPERATION (TT-SSC): Boosting South-South Cooperation in the Context of Aid Effectiveness—Telling the Story of Partners Involved in more than 110 Cases of South-South and Triangular Cooperation, by Nils-Sjard Schulz, World Bank, 2010.

Summarizing 110 case stories on South–South cooperation in the context of aid effectiveness, this report reflects on the potential to use aid effectiveness principles for South-South technical cooperation and enrich the global development policies with South-South practices.


A milestone in the analysis and assessment of South–South and triangular cooperation, this report offers an overview on scale, modalities, and allocation patterns. The document constitutes the basis of the ongoing discussions at the Development Cooperation Forum at UN-ECOSOC.

SOUTH-SOUTH AND TRIANGULAR COOPERATION IN ASIA-PACIFIC: Toward a New Paradigm in Development Cooperation, by Nagesh Kumar, New Delhi, 2008.

Summarizing the regional consultations of the UN Development Cooperation Forum and drawing on detailed information, the document explores the relevance and emerging patterns of South–South and triangular cooperation in Asia-Pacific, offering clear-cut recommendations of how to improve the scope and impact in the future.

REPORT ON SOUTH-SOUTH COOPERATION IN IBERO-AMERICA, by Cristina Xalma, SEGIB, Madrid, 2009.

For the first time published in English, this third annual report shows the country-led effort of Ibero-American states to generate and register data and analysis on South-South cooperation in Latin America and the Caribbean. It facilitates deep insights on both the numbers and content of South-South cooperation in the region.


Reviewing DAC donor practices and experiences in triangular cooperation, the study gives deep insights in challenges, opportunities, and lessons learned. Perspectives of how to include aid effectiveness principles are also explored in detail.


Drafted under the Spanish EU presidency, this concept note explores the synergies between triangular cooperation and aid effectiveness. It is the first systematic effort within the EU context to conceptualize triangular cooperation as a tool for a new generation of horizontal development partnerships.

SOUTHERN PERSPECTIVE ON TECHNICAL COOPERATION, by Scott, Zoe. GSDRC, Birmingham, 2009.

This document provides an analytical review of Southern-led literature on technical cooperation, highlighting the existing criticisms of tied aid, poor TC design and lack of alignment, while highlighting the potential value of using national or regional expertise.
The 2008–09 global financial crisis shook the ground under the common wisdom that had been held as true for decades. From what the role of governments should be in markets to which countries will be the engines of the world’s economy, from what people need to leave poverty to what businesses need to stay competitive, it is all up for reexamination. The disconcerting but exciting search for a new intellectual compact has just begun. While some regions will do better than others, and some technical areas will be clearer than others, there is no question that the horizon of economic policy for developing countries is promising—risky, yes, but promising. The rebalancing of global growth toward, at the very least, a multiplicity of engines, will give the developing world a new relevance.


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