



Federative Republic of Brazil

High-Level Symposium

**“Trends in development cooperation:
South-South and triangular cooperation and aid effectiveness”
[Cairo, 19-20 January 2008]**

The Brazilian experience

Topics for discussion:

- (a) Scale and Scope of the Brazilian South-South Technical Cooperation;
- (b) Main Cooperation Modalities;
- (c) Results and Lessons learned;
- (d) Challenges ahead for South-South Cooperation;
- (e) Future Scenarios for the Brazilian South-South Cooperation;
- (f) Triangular South-South Cooperation - Challenges and Perspectives.

(a) Scale and Scope of the Brazilian South-South Technical Cooperation:

South-South technical cooperation is one of the mainstays of the Brazilian foreign policy. In the beginning it was restricted to neighboring countries; subsequently it was extended to Africa, with whom Brazil shares a common heritage and, in due course, Brazilian technical cooperation was made available to Central American countries and East Timor, the only Portuguese speaking country in Asia.

The driving force behind it is solidarity to other developing countries. The Brazilian technical cooperation is demand driven, untied from conditionalities and non-profit-oriented.

Its focus is capacity building. It aims at helping our partners to strengthen their institutions and human resources. Essentially what Brazil does is to adapt successful practices developed in Brazil, under quite similar socioeconomic reality, to the prevailing conditions in other developing countries. In practical terms, Brazil sends to developing countries experts in a wide range of areas, offer scholarships and internships at its research institutes or universities, and donates reasonably complex equipment.

The Brazilian Cooperation Agency – ABC – a department of the Brazilian Foreign Ministry has coordinated or carried out so far two hundred and forty six projects, in areas in which Brazil can provide a concrete contribution, namely, agriculture, animal-husbandry, biofuels (ethanol and biodiesel), education, health (mainly the fight against HIV/AIDS), electoral support (e-voting), urban development, information technologies (e-government), trade negotiations and sports.

(b) Main Cooperation Modalities

As far as development cooperation is concerned, Brazil is a substantial contributor to international funds, managed either by the World Bank (IBRD), or the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB). Contributions to the International Development Association (IDA) of the World Bank, to the Special Operations Fund of the IDB (SOF), to the African Development Fund (ADF), to the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD/FAO), to the Andean Development Corporation – (CAF) and to the Fund for the Development of the Rio de La Plata Basin (FONPLATA) are in excess of one billion US dollars.

Over and above this financial effort, in the last five years, Brazil has channeled 55 million dollars exclusively for capacity building in developing countries. This figure does not take into account the value of the training given or of the knowledge transferred and should be therefore multiplied by fifteen, according to international standards. For 2008 alone, 30 million dollars have been earmarked for the implementation of 52 projects in 46 countries.

Special attention is being given to “aid for trade projects”, such as capacity building in areas like trade negotiations, sanitary and phytosanitary measures, postal export of small-sized companies, business support services and banking.

In the particular case of technical cooperation, the Brazilian Cooperation Agency (ABC) encourages other Brazilian institutions to discuss with their counterparts the local circumstances, the cultural environment and the peculiar needs in order to customize their technical assistance.

(c) Results and Lessons learned

As a result of this effort, many lessons were learned. In many developing countries, governments are still building up their core institutions. In several countries, a central body specifically responsible for the coordination of international cooperation simply does not exist. To deal with such constraints, the Brazilian policy consists of stimulating local response, whatever it may be, rather than offer a black box and turn the beneficiaries into mere spectators. In this context, it should be stressed that institutional strengthening of the recipient country is the goal pursued by Brazil, regardless of the thematic area in which assistance is being provided.

One of the first conclusions reached by Brazil is that South-South cooperation should be mainly implemented by way of a project and not as a result of circumstantial activities. Consistency and sustainability can only be ensured within the framework of a project.

Moreover, efforts have been made in order to assess the relevance, impact and effectiveness of the demands made by fellow developing countries, in order to prevent falling into the temptation of providing temporary and unsustainable solutions. Wherever possible, Brazilian cooperation tries to secure the inclusion of the project into the local development program and/or the national budget. It could be mentioned that, in some projects, an undue amount of financial resources was spent in administrative expenses, in detriment if the original goals to be achieved.

It goes without saying that there will be limited perspectives for a successful outcome of a South-South cooperation initiative without ensuring the

continuous involvement of the population in its implementation. There is no real South-South cooperation without clear local ownership and leadership.

(d) Challenges ahead for South-South Cooperation:

Despite the progress and advances achieved so far, there are still some obstacles that hinder the expansion of South-South cooperation.

This is particular true regarding the lack of well defined national policies for economic development, as well as the absence of institutional support structures in some developing countries. There is also limited documented information on South-South cooperation success stories, credible South-South project databases, reliable records of South-South financial flows and a standard methodology to ensure monetary expression to the contributions “in kind” typical of South-South technical cooperation projects.

The carrying out of those projects embraces multiple modalities and this must be borne in mind when discussing the way developing countries understand it.

In some countries the traditional concept of South-South cooperation includes technical cooperation, scholarships and training. Other countries incorporate to that category economic aid, financial flows, joint public investments and humanitarian assistance.

Some developing countries concentrate the management of all modalities of South-South exchanges under a single focal point. On the other hand, some countries have distinct focal points, depending on the kind of assistance received. The diversity of vision on the items that fall within the scope of South-South cooperation is a limiting factor to a more coordinated dialogue among developing countries in search for common strategies.

If we realize that such modalities of international cooperation cover, in many instances, the same topics, the same geographic areas and the same targeted population it would be desirable the harmonization of concepts applying to the whole diversity of South-South cooperation. That would be instrumental for maximizing its impact.

Concerning Brazil, in particular, whose laws dates back to the period when it was a net recipient country, one of the most important challenges ahead is the approval by the Congress of a specific legislation to regulate South-South cooperation in its different modalities.

(e) Future Scenarios for the Brazilian South-South Technical Cooperation:

As shown in the figures quoted previously, the Brazilian South-South cooperation has consistently increased over the years and plays now an important supporting role for the Brazilian foreign policy.

Whenever the Foreign Minister or President Lula visits a developing country new agreements are signed, particularly in the area of information technologies, fight against hunger, agriculture and biofuels.

It seems likely that South-South cooperation will grow and turn itself into one of the main issues of the bilateral diplomatic agenda of developing countries in the 21th century.

In addition, technical cooperation is becoming a building block for a much broader and more encompassing mutual cooperation drive among developing countries and for an underlying development approach based on self-esteem and collective effort.

Bearing this in mind, the Brazilian Government thinks that the United Nations should take steps towards:

- the assessment of the impact and sustainability of the South-South cooperation initiatives;
- the setting up of appropriate mechanism to guide the increasing participation of non-governmental organizations and the private sector in South-South cooperation projects;
- the improvement of the management of South-South cooperation through tailor made quality control mechanisms, as well as the formulation of

international guidelines regarding the dissemination of information on projects and results derived from them;

- the standardization, regulation and monitoring of the information to be exchanged internationally.

(f) Triangular South-South Cooperation - Challenges and Perspectives.

Now a word on triangular cooperation carried out by Brazil. So far, the only developing country we are associated with is Argentina. We share a project in Haiti involving the drilling of water wells and the cultivation of vegetables (“truck farming”), which is an adaptation of their very successful project “*Pro-Huerta*”.

With respect to developed nations and multilateral agencies, Brazil has sought to expand trilateral cooperation in initiatives underway in Portuguese speaking countries in Africa and in East Timor, in Latin America and in Haiti.

In this country, Brazil is associated with Spain, in the area of reforestation, with Canada, in the area of mass vaccination, with the World Bank in the area of school feeding, with UNFPA, in the field of combat to the violence against women, with the International Labor Organization (ILO), in the field of prevention of child labor, with the Interamerican Agriculture Institute (IICA), in the area of agriculture, and with the India-Brazil-South Africa Fund (IBSA), in the area of solid waste collection.

Regarding Africa, Brazil has negotiated a project, to be partially funded by Norway, concerning the training in Brazil of nationals of Angola and Guinea Bissau in the area of public administration.

With the United States of America, a memorandum of understanding has been signed to the effect of eradicating malaria in São Tomé e Príncipe and providing informatization to the National Assembly in Guinea Bissau. Also with the United States of America, a joint effort will be made to increase ethanol production in El Salvador, Jamaica and Dominican Republic.

As we speak, a joint team of Indonesian and Brazilian experts is visiting East Timor in order to discuss with local authorities a project on reforestation.

In spite of the obvious difficulties and the time consuming routines required by triangular cooperation the Brazilian Government believes that there is a great potential in it.

Besides its multiplying effect, the partnership with multilateral organizations and cooperation agencies of developed countries has taught many lessons and updated some traditional practices followed by the Brazilian Cooperation Agency whose staff has had much to gain from discussions with their new counterparts.