

**Preparatory meeting: South Africa's Road to BAPA +40**  
**NeST-Africa meeting 04 April 2018**

**Marianne Buenaventura** from Oxfam welcomed the participants to the meeting, noting that it was about one year since the last NeST-Africa meeting. Since then there have been a number of exciting developments in the field of south-south cooperation (SSC). Argentina is the Chair of the G20 in 2018 and has emphasised the importance of gathering views from the south as part of their tenure. Recognising that G20 efforts are complementary to south-south cooperation efforts, Argentina will host the Second United Nations (UN) Conference on South-South Cooperation in 2019, otherwise known as BAPA +40. Marianne noted that the document contains a number of recommendations and questioned to what extent are the recommendations still valid in the present-day context and to what extent are they still fit for the African, and South African purpose. She noted that this meeting was a working group meeting to raise awareness on BAPA+40 and to discuss a strategy for a larger NeST meeting to be held in June.

**Alessandra Viggiano**, Consul General, Embassy of Argentina, reflected on what Argentina thinks the main challenges would be in the lead up to BAPA+40. Argentina hosted the first conference in 1978 – a major milestone in SSC. It is one of the few documents in a multilateral scenario with a practical element. Many countries have arranged around themselves around these recommendations – for example Argentina has a Director General within the Ministry of Foreign Affairs that works on SSC. SSC is gaining momentum and is important for Argentina. The country hosts the Headquarters of the Technical Unit of the Ibero-American Programme for the Strengthening of South-South Cooperation (PIFCSS) for the 2018-2020 period and is hosting the Group of 20 (G20) in 2018 with a strong angle on development. It is hoped that the G20 consensus will feed into BAPA. The BAPA document is so comprehensive that it would be difficult to reach many new conclusions but the aim is to make it more modern, related to a multipolar world and with strong commitments to the sustainable development goals (SDGS). This includes SDG 17 that focusses on partnerships and SSC.

Argentina has observed the following challenges:

- 1) It is not always first line ministries that attend meetings, making it difficult to pass messages along government structures
- 2) Institutional arrangements need to be created that span all policy departments
- 3) There is a need to think of institutional development at a regional level
- 4) It is important to examine trilateral cooperation in the context of BAPA. The term trilateral tends to be used to describe this growing area because the term triangular is seen as too rigid
- 5) The need to align local capabilities with global commitments.
- 6) It is important to work alongside NGOS – but this is not so easy in practice.
- 7) Driving SSC means that practical ways of working must be emphasised
- 8) The UN system that is sometimes fragmented and could be better coordinated, but it is important to work with them. Funds now go through the SDGs – but what are the practical implications? How should the UN system work with middle-income countries – as brokers?

- 9) The need to examine ways of qualitatively and quantitatively measuring SSC. Sometimes standardizing loses the richness of SSC and many countries are afraid of compulsory commitments. Despite this, Ibero-America has made efforts to produce an annual report with measurements.
- 10) There is no definition of SSC at an international level. Can this agenda make progress by looking at comparisons?
- 11) Science and technology are not given enough focus in SSC.

The discussion noted that there is some apprehension to engage NGOs because of the perception that they have a political agenda. NGOs can also sometimes lack clear roles. There is also a need to better work with academic institutions. NGOs also differ in various regions. SSC has often focused on government to government exchanges and it is therefore important to ensure a greater role for civil society. One challenge is that international NGOs don't work in middle income countries. Participants agreed that there is no clear idea on how to fund development. It was argued that the north uses SSC as an excuse to reduce the funds that it is channeling towards development. There is now an emphasis on public-private partnerships in order to obtain additional resources. Trilateral cooperation is now substituting triangular cooperation as an innovative way of getting funds. Participants also pointed out that the UN is very involved in BAPA so it is important to engage with them on this. Power relations were pointed out as a continued challenge, especially in trilateral cooperation. It was also stated that even southern countries can replicate these negative practices of unequal power relations. The discussion also focused on the definition of SSC, noting that there are different approaches. Participants also noted the challenges of working with regions on SSC, although the Committee on SEGIB was noted as an example of an organization that is doing things well. In measuring SSC/TrC it was noted that there are challenges in developing mutual indicators. The European Union for example has its own indicators and reports that don't necessarily fit with southern approaches. The Americas reached a consensus on a definition of SSC but it is so narrow that it is not applicable for BAPA+40.

**Paulo Esteves from the BRICS Policy Center in Brazil** outlined some of the transformations occurring within the international system. The first transformation was what he called the BRICS effect – the redistribution of power within the international system. There was a widely held belief that the emerging powers would be socialised into the existing order, but in fact it was the other way around; their emergence is changing the existing order. Its impact is felt in different ways in the international development system. There used to be donors and recipients; the former maintained international order and provided public goods; the latter were recipients and were assigned specific tasks. The principle of CBDR reflects this difference. The growth in the footprint of SSC challenges the established principle of international development cooperation. The phase between 2004 and 2012 was the accommodation phase, while the period after that is the competition phase.

During the first period the traditional donors tried to accommodate the new partners into the existing order. This was seen in the Paris (2005), Accra (2008) and Nairobi (2009) meetings, which culminated in Busan in 2011. Busan attempted to bring both parties into one framework. Yet, developing a common set of norms failed as key actors such as China, India and Brazil did not join the Global Partnership. At Busan there was an enormous debate

about responsibility, and a divide between the countries that accept a rhetoric of burden-sharing and countries that still work with CBRD (those that are outside the GPEDC). This was the start of the phase of competition. There is now a situation where China and India are in fact socialising traditional donors. Traditional donors are in fact acting in ways that are similar to the big emerging countries in development cooperation.

This is seen in the following changes: both the SDGs and the Paris Agreement were based on the bottom up approach – a new way of negotiating. The second sign was of change was in moves to change the way in which contributions to international development were counted – the creation of TOSSD, which in effect included in development cooperation ‘Other Official Flows’ (the Chinese approach). TOSSD also brought back the idea of mutual benefit, a new principle for traditional donors. Both of these developments are changing the very concept of aid. The third change was the inclusion of assistance to refugees as aid and using aid to mobilise private funds. These changes allow traditional donors to compete with India and China.

We are also seeing a transformation in institutions such as the World Bank. There is a refocus towards infrastructure and extractive industries, but equally a process of changing social and environment norms to attract foreign investment, thus a race to the bottom.

There is a divide in SSC between the emerging economies and developing countries (new clients and new providers), with the traditional donors increasingly aligned with the new providers.

The discussion focused on the changing nature of aid, and whether we are seeing the end of aid from the West. It was noted that the idea of aid has been stretched – in a normative sense aid was a flow from the north to the south. The discussion also focused on the definition of SSC and loans. China does not count loans from the China Africa Development Fund as foreign aid while India’s export lines of credit are recorded as subsidized loans. Is this the end of aid from the West?

The space for middle-income countries was also discussed and it was noted that the private sector only looks to middle-income countries rather than least developed countries to invest. The OECD has done a mapping on this.

**Philani Mthembu** from the Institute for Global Dialogue presented on Trilateral cooperation within the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. He talked of research that will be coming out shortly in a book volume on TrC. His particular research looks at South Africa’s trilateral engagements with institutions such as the EU and France and also looked at a recipient perspective. There were six key points that came out. The first is that there is no global definition of TrC but even the north does not have definitions within the OECD. He noted that Germany, Spain, and Japan are the only countries to have definitions. In the absence of a common definition, he noted that Germany has the most rigid approach, which refers to jointly conceptualised, jointly implemented projects that come from an OECD country, an emerging economy and developing country. This means that TrC gets excluded if a project needs to be sustained by the developing country. It also misses many projects that the EU has carried out. It also excludes TrC by UNDP and a northern donor, or south-south-south cooperation. Philani noted that the UN has done a lot of work on different forms of TrC to allow researchers to categorise countries based on their typologies.

The second finding from the research involved the size of the projects on TrC. Philani noted that projects were small compared to bilateral cooperation. This meant that a lot of countries could not be bothered to put in the effort. He argued that the longevity of projects might be enhanced if projects can be scaled up. Philani then discussed the challenges of monitoring and evaluation (M&E) as a third finding. Do trilateral vs bilateral projects actually add value? This is very hard to prove empirically. It is important to also ask what countries gain as a donor and as a partner. He stated that one of the ways for OECD countries to maintain a relationship is through TrC. He stressed that it is important to remember that recipients are not the only actors who should be evaluated.

A fourth finding that emerged from the research was the impact of TrC on identity. South Africa was criticised for using OECD frameworks for evaluation when using OECD money. Donors such as the EU are mandated to follow their own M&E frameworks but southern powers must also find their own identities. Does this mean that it is necessary to come up with M&E frameworks for trilateral projects? A fifth finding from the research related to the impact of trilateral cooperation on its recipients. This needs to be considered when scaling up TrC. Finally, on the way forward, Philani noted that global partnerships are clearly a way to scale up support South Africa has big ambitions and few resources and so need to find ways of supplementing the few resources that we have.

**Marianne Buenaventura** then gave an overview of Civil BRICS and NDB initiatives that Oxfam had been involved with. She first gave a timeline of civil society (CS) engagement in BRICS. This included:

- 2018 Civil BRICS under SA
- 2018 BRICS CSO Engagements, New Development Bank including SA Civil BRICS (Johannesburg, end May 2018)
- 2016-2017 CSO Engagements with the NDB
- Oct 2017 BRICS CSO Meeting with the NDB Board, Shanghai
- Oct 2017 BRICS Feminist Watch with NDB officials, Shanghai
- Oct 2017 NDB Meeting with NDB ARC
- 2017: China hosted a “3in1” BRICS Meeting (BRICS Political Parties, Think-Tanks and CSOs Forum in Fuzhou).
- 2016: 2nd Civil BRICS. India hosted 2nd Civil BRICS, coordinated by the FIDC.
- 2015: 1st Civil BRICS. Hosted by Russia.
- 2014: Oxfam and partners met with the Brazilian Sherpa in Brasilia, which tabled the first BRICS Summit meeting with CS, whereby CSOs introduced formally the idea of a BRICS CS mechanism/ Track 3.
- 2013: Oxfam hosted a BRICS Policy Dialogue on BRICS/FFD for Africa (Deputy Minister Fransman; NEPAD; BRICS/African CSOs)
- 2013 (June/July): Oxfam and CSO partners submitted first concept note on Civil BRICS to DIRCO

Marianne noted that BRICS 2018 under SA will be a litmus test in determining the value of CS future engagement in BRICS. She also stated that DIRCO has begun a process of engaging CSOs and that it is hoped that CS will have a genuine influence on the outcome of the BRICS

Summit under SA, such as coordinating a communique and influencing priorities and commitments.

Marianne also noted that BRICS CSOs have been engaging with the NDB to shape the institution from its beginnings to be more transparent, accountable, and socially and environmentally sustainable. She gave a timeline of NDB engagement as follows:

- Jul 2016: 1<sup>st</sup> NDB Annual Meeting, Shanghai: Start of engagement of BRICS CSOs during 1st Annual NDB Meeting, Shanghai in July
- 2016 Civil BRICS & Goa BRICS Summit, India: CSOs organised 2 meetings with NDB VPs, Paulo Nogueira Batista Jr. (Brazil) and Vladimir Kazbekov (Russia) on the sidelines of Goa BRICS Summit. Helped facilitate channel of communications between CSOs and NDB management.
- Apr 2017, NDB Annual Meeting, Delhi: Meetings held with NDB VPs Paulo Nogueira Batista Jr; (Brazil), Leslie Maasdorp (SA); Vladimir Kazbekov (Russia). Important for info exchange and for research dissemination.
- Oct 2017, BRICS CSO Meeting with the NDB Board, Shanghai

Marianne drew attention to the BRICS Feminist Watch, an informal alliance, which engages in public policies to promote gender equality and women's economic empowerment in the BRICS and the South at large. This alliance had met with NDB officials in Shanghai in 2017. She stated that most DFIs have gender policies/guidelines which aim to minimize negative impacts on women and instead have their projects directly benefit them. She noted that the NDB has no separate Gender policy.

Other issues that have been raised with NDB officials include transparency; environmental and social Management; CS interaction and building infrastructure for 21st century sustainable development. She noted that the Bank's 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Meeting will take place in May 2018 in Shanghai and that CSO demands should be taken into account before this meeting. She also noted that African Monitor and Oxfam are co-chairing the NDB working group under Civil BRICS and are using the opportunity to draft CSO recommendations on the role of the ARC, following the meeting held in Johannesburg on 8 March.

In general, Marianne stated that CS has become more organised to engage in SSC processes. She noted that uptake by governments has been slow, especially in countries where CS space is restricted.

During the discussion it was pointed out that South Africa's chairship of BRICS was a good opportunity for Oxfam's focus on gender as it is one of SA's four priorities for the summit. Another opportunity could come from South Africa's peacekeeping platform. Participants also debated the notion of civil society in different BRICS countries, noting challenges in China and Russia. There are ways to work around this – by mobilizing during times when CS is not given space.

The debate also centered on the notion of triangular cooperation as more state-to-state; while trilateral cooperation is broader and involves the private sector and UN agencies. It was argued that as the Global south we need to get more critical of how projects unfold. We should be looking at power references and exploitation to see if this has changed and if

there are real win-win situations. It is important to ask hard questions, for example by following money flows.

**Orria Goni** from the UN Development Programme (UNDP) at the Regional Service Center in Addis presented on recent UNDP developments relating to the BAPA +40 roadmap. UNDP had just held a meeting relating to BAPA +40 with a number of national African governments that are interested in SSC. There are currently 15 countries that have expressed interest to join this initiative.

She first classified the recommendations of BAPA to give an idea of how to cover a number of different topics. Orria is also conducting an informal survey where people can give opinions on what would be strategic at various levels.

The four main classification areas are as follows:

- 1) National mechanisms and programming for SSC: The establishment of coordination units; the strengthening of national information systems and training of human resources; the capitalization of good practices using regional and global information systems; a reflection of country needs in NDPs as potential suppliers of solutions and bilateral arrangements and long-term SSC programs and projects.
- 2) Enabling environment for SSC: Administrative and legal arrangements on entry, employment, obligation, privileges of experts and consultants; use of contractors and other specialist services, fiscal and currency regimes favourable to technical cooperation among developing countries; financial arrangements aimed at an equitable sharing of costs; facilitate the sending of technical personnel abroad
- 3) Modalities for SSC: Bilateral agreements between countries for technical exchanges (co-operative agreements, joint commissions, regular exchange of information); granting of fellowships and apprenticeships; cooperation among professional organizations, national research and training centers with multinational scope
- 4) Regional and Inter-regional Institutions: Development and implementation of initiatives for SSC (creation of new links for technical co-operation); the improvement of regional information for technical co-operation among developing countries; support to national research and training centres with multinational scope; the joint identification of interregional development problem

She also noted that the Development Cooperation Forum that was held in Argentina on 6-8 September 2017 outlined five areas for further work in the preparations for BAPA+40 and stated that there was a need to raise awareness of what the recommendations were:

- i) adjusting to the new context and global sustainable development frameworks;
- (ii) knowledge management and knowledge sharing;
- (iii) institutionalization;
- (iv) systematization of data and information; and
- (v) capacity development.

She stated that the first African SSC report was being produced. The suggested content of the regional report was as follows: Chapter 1: Foreword: Head of SSC Unit statement (priorities BAPA+40); Chapter 2: National policy and institutional setting for SSC; Chapter 3: Data SSC Activities (based on template) – analysis at regional level of trends and examples of challenges and opportunities; Chapter 4: Future Directions - Resource Centers

(suggestion of methodology, Ecosystem for SSC at National Level, Moving towards effective Problem Solutions.

Orria also stated that a template has been developed to facilitate this report. From now until September/mid-October, countries will be holding their own national consultation processes. On October/November there will be a regional aggregation of data and engagement with Regional Economic Communities. It is hoped the report will be endorsed by the AU in 2019.

The discussion focused on the political will of countries to engage on this report. It was noted that some countries have expressed reservations, especially on measuring development cooperation. The chair of AUC has been asked to send letter to ministries and get confirmation on their participation. One challenge has been to identify the coordinating units. It was also noted that a six-month time frame to complete the report could be challenging.

The discussion then moved to focus on the NeST-Africa meeting to be held in June. Orria noted that she will provide in information from national level processes. The point was raised that NeST is a technical body which is very useful for the continent. The Economic Commission for Africa is taking over politically on SSC because they have the convening power of the secretariat. The UN Office of SSC (UNOSSC) coordinates different activities from SSC stakeholders. These stakeholders should be engaged. In moving forward, it was noted that the BAPA+40 process is suffering from a gap between the theoretical and practical level. There is a need to look at what is implementable. It was also suggested that SSC should be narrowed down. It was suggested that the June meeting focus on the definition of SSC and the five areas that arose from the DCF Argentina. Clusters could also include: agriculture, health, legal regimes, private sector dimension. It was also suggested that the meeting discuss multi-stakeholder partnerships and the SDGs including trilateral cooperation. Another thematic area is quantification and qualification. It was argued that NeST needs to address new narratives in the context of BAPA+40. Other suggestions included the regional African experiences, national approaches and bringing in civil society and private sector engagement. It was noted that to be relevant, NeST work must be demand driven. There was also a need to have a better understanding of the SA position within this research, and continental process. It could be an option to touch on north-south politics, as well as SA's needs and areas in which countries might benefit.

The following action points were assigned:

- Philani will follow up on SA government next week during the second reference group meeting
- Elizabeth will meet with NEPAD on the angle to take in June
- Amanda will email powerpoints and outcomes of the meeting
- Alessandra will send practical information on the BAPA+40 process and meetings that Argentina has planned. She also offered to send information on an April workshop on trilateral cooperation.

## Attendance register

<b>Surname</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Organisation</b>
Mthembu	Philani	IGD
Sidiropoulos	Elizabeth	SAIIA
Buenaventura	Marianne	Oxfam
Lucey	Amanda	Oxfam
Viggiano	Alessandra	Embassy of Argentina
Goni	Orria	UNDP
Ekoko	Francois	UNOSSC
Moilwa	Tshidi	IGD
Muresan	Arina	IGD