

SOUTH-SOUTH AND TRIANGULAR COOPERATION- A KEY TO DEVELOPMENT**HISTORICAL BACKGROUND**

South- South Cooperation has been in existence as far as 1955 when developing countries signed the Declaration on Promotion of World Peace and Cooperation in Bandung, Indonesia in 1955. The representatives of developing countries adopted “ united by common aspirations and identity with the economic interests and determined to pursue their joint efforts towards economic, social development, peace and prosperity..” (Group 77, 1967). Ever since, SSC has evolved and developed as an independent and important modality form of co-operation. On 12 September 1978, in Buenos Aires, Argentina about 138 countries adopted a consensus, a Plan of Action for Promoting and Implementing Technical Cooperation among Developing Countries(TCDC) and urged all governments and Organs of the United Nations system to implement its recommendations. The Plan established the means through which SSC could become fully effective as it set out a list of recommendations for the national, sub regional, regional interregional and global actors. That same year and based on the Plan of Action, the UNDP established a Special Unit for SSC with a view to help promote the cooperation initiative amongst the developing countries. The main goal of SSC is to promote economic and social development.

Despite all these actions in place, SSC experienced a bit of a relapse in the 1970s and 1980s . The SSC regained its impetus in 2000 when the MDGs were declared and adopted at the United Nations Summit where all nations committed to the eight goals ranging from poverty eradication, environment sustainability and reduction of maternal and child mortality by 2015. As a follow up to the Declaration, SSC initiated a number of high level conferences, declarations/agreements and programmes of action that call for effective implementation of the SSC framework. Of particular importance, in 2003, a framework of implementation of SSC was established at the G-77 Marrakech Declaration on South- South Cooperation.

While development within the South has not been equitable across nations the emergence of new global powers particularly those from the South has changed the rules of the international development architecture and this has enhanced SSC implementation. The growing powers of countries like the BRICS, China, Brazil, South Africa Russia has allowed them to exercise increasing influence within multilateral organizations, thus displaying a shift in the order between the north and south. Many southern countries have become important providers of development assistance mainly through knowledge sharing schemes although the BRICS have been long standing providers of foreign aid , with China commencing its aid programmes in 1950, Russia in 1955 , Brazil in 1960 and South Africa in the late 1960s. They have increased both in volume and quality of their cooperation which has challenged the preconceived notion of traditional cooperation schemes and this has contributed to a paradigm shift in the landscape of development cooperation.

The 4th High Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness (Busan Partnership Agreement, 2011) brought in for the first time a variety of state and non-state actors, private sector and emerging economies to the same table and a new development cooperation architecture was established. The Southern providers joined new Global partnership under the principle of shared but differentiated responsibilities. The new partnership acknowledged the two separate development cooperation but both committed to collectively work towards achieving economic and social progress, that is Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) by 2015.

What is South-South and Triangular Cooperation

South-South Cooperation (SSC) is a process whereby two or more developing countries in the global South exchange and share development solutions of knowledge, information, investment opportunities best practices, skills, resources and technical expertise to enhance development as alluded by UN High level Committee (New York 2012). The collaboration among countries of the South in all spheres can take place on a bilateral, regional, sub-regional or intra-regional basis. Recent developments in South-South cooperation have shown increased volume of South-South trade, FDI, technology transfers, sharing of solution and experts and other forms of exchange. The developing countries' capacities have been strengthened by the spectacular growth of national foreign currency reserves and sovereign wealth funds. From 2008, the reserves of developing countries rose from US\$4.2 trillion to US\$7 trillion in 2011.¹

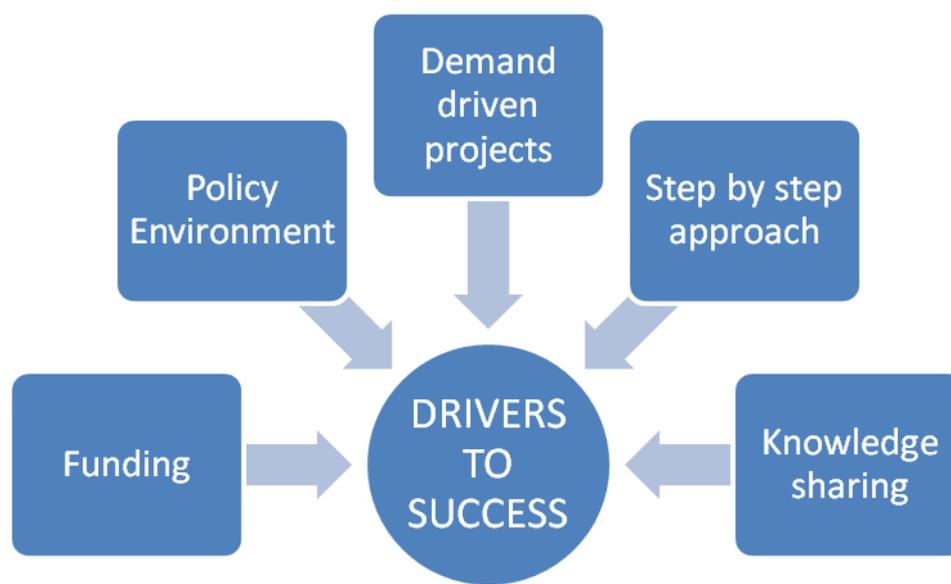
According to the OECD report of 2010, China became the leading trading partner of Brazil, India and South Africa in 2009. China has increased the China Africa Development Fund by over \$1 billion bringing it to US\$5 billion and has cancelled debt owed by highly indebted countries with which China has diplomatic relations. In 2010 SSC's value is estimated at US\$15 billion dollars, coming mainly from the BRICS countries. Southern contributors accounted for 37% of global trade, in 2010 with S-S flows making up about half of this total. By 2015, the SSC will represent 20% of Official Development Assistance.² India and Brazil have set up Aid Development Agencies, an equivalent to the USAID and DFID.

Similarly, triangular cooperation is one way of strengthening S-S Cooperation, its an innovative tool of collaboration among traditional donors, emerging markets and developing countries in order to address challenges bedeviling developing nations that is poverty, economic constraints among others. One of the main characteristics of Triangular cooperation involves partners playing three types of roles- facilitation provides financial /technical support to the collaboration, pivotal partner- has the experience and share its knowledge and expertise through triangular cooperation and the beneficiary who is the target for development results to be achieved by the cooperation.

¹ High Level Committee on south-south cooperation, Review of progress made in implementing the Buenos Aires Plan of Action, the new directions strategy for south-south cooperation and the Nairobi outcome document of the High Level United nations Conference on south-south cooperation, SSC/17/1, April, 2, 2012

² South-South and Triangular Cooperation in the Development Effectiveness Agenda, Concept Note, Nairobi, 2013

WHAT ARE THE DRIVERS TO SSC SUCCESS



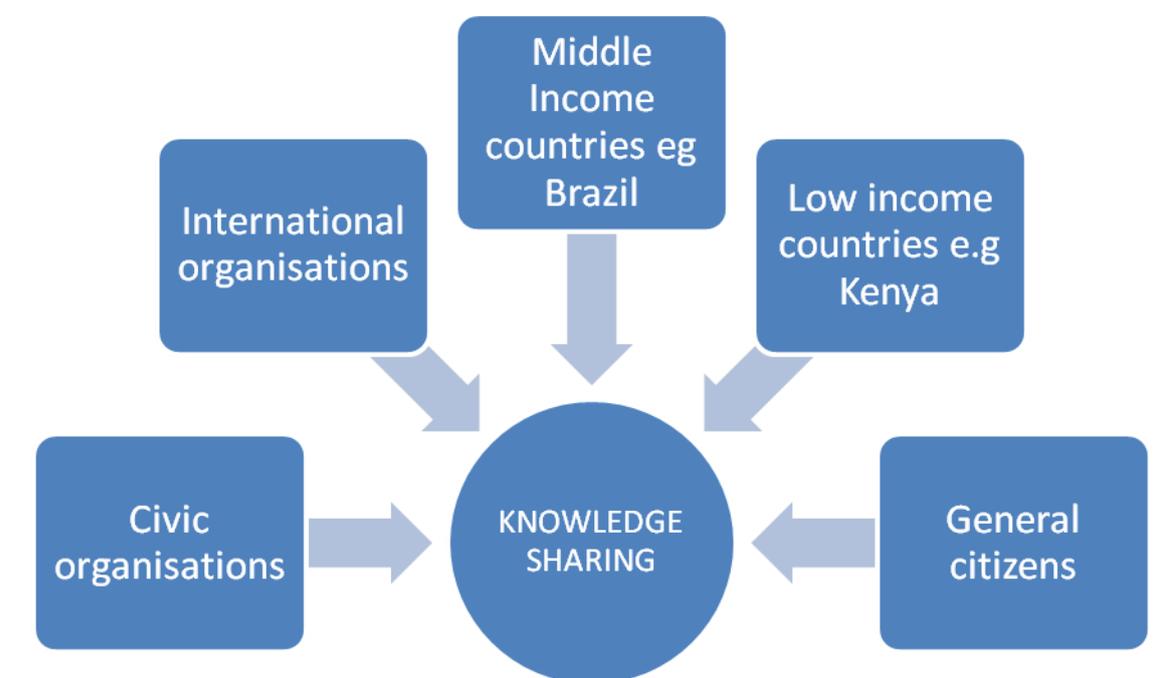
South-South Cooperation has been recognized and reaffirmed as having significant potential for promoting development among the developing countries. International Organizations and UN agencies have played an important role in aiding the SSC implementation framework and the developing countries have been very active in the implementation of SSC projects and programmes. The above factors are some of the key drivers to the success of SSC.

Step by step approach is important factor that contributes to the successful outputs of projects and programmes. There is need for the formulation of strategic framework that leads to the formulation of action in core areas of cooperation to ensure application of the framework.

The presence of enabling policy environment and commitment by participating countries at all levels is a driving factor towards success of projects. The economic and political frameworks of recipient countries need to be designed in such a way that they gives room for the initiation of aiding projects. The Kenyan government shifted and changed its industrial policies in the late 1980s and reoriented them towards projects with accelerated employment potential and generally the quest for economical growth.

Experience has shown that SSC and Triangular cooperation backed by adequate funding are key tools for tackling development challenges affecting developing countries. Capital and technology are need and exists in the South. Official Development Assistance flows are on the rise. The growing presence of alternative and emerging development financiers such as China, India , the Arab States, South Africa and Brazil has enhanced the SSC .With the announcement by the BRICS to launch a development bank that will focus on infrastructure and development will contribute immensely, if realized , to the financing gap experienced by most developing countries.

The role of knowledge-sharing in SSC



Knowledge sharing refers to the dissemination of information in order to help identify and share feasible solutions that are sustainable and cost-effective to problems bedeviling low and middle income countries. It is a central modality of SSC through which developing countries can share positive experiences. This includes the sharing of inventions, discoveries and innovations. The circle of actors in SSC has been expanded to include private sector, civil society and considerable expertise, invaluable experiences and resources are being utilized to the fullest for the benefit of developing countries. The SSC has considerable advantage as a tool to foster development through knowledge sharing among southern parties as a lot of similarities lies between them. The emerging markets like China, Brazil have themselves gone through a similar development process to the one that low-income and least developed countries are now undergoing. They have however been exposed to similar challenges being experienced now by developing countries in the global trade and financial system. They have also faced the same economic challenges in developing their infrastructure and human resources, and in achieving the structural transformation that is now needed in other countries. As a result, the emerging economies have the invaluable experience, techniques and empathy that they can share with their counterpart. Because of their similarities, solutions that emerge can often be adapted to the needs and circumstances of the other developing nations. Hence, South-south cooperation provides the practical means of development.

Sharing best practices have a positive impact on the implementation of the SSC. Knowledge sharing has enhanced South-South Cooperation through encouragement of governance since development is now inclusive of civil organizations, NGO'S, government institutions and the general citizenry. This is a bid to enhance participatory approach in development which is a necessary ingredient for sustainability. Recognizing its importance to development, the Global Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation Steering Committee acknowledged

Knowledge Sharing as a major modality of SS cooperation but also as an important feature of North- South and North- North exchanges. SSC has benefitted a wide spectrum of areas ranging from emergency relief, recovery after natural disasters, capacity development on education, environment health and democratic processes.

A case study is Brazil, who suffered adverse economic constraints during the late 1960's as asserted by UN HABITAT (2005) and is now sharing its experiences through partnering with low income countries. Notably, Brazil has been engaging cooperation in Portuguese-speaking countries in Africa and Haiti, sharing its experience and technical knowledge on approaches to protect child rights with the help of International Labor Organization (ILO).

Challenges affecting SSC

Notwithstanding the number of success registered under SSC, SSC still faces several challenges that include, among others, securing financial resources for the implementation of programmes. There is lack of financial and human resources to facilitate successful implementation of the proposed projects. It is important to note that while SSC has specific advantages over developing countries, SSC is not substitute for traditional North South Cooperation. Even if northern donors are to fulfill their long standing commitments on the level of aid, more resources will be required in Africa. According to African Development Bank, Africa requires over US\$90 billion as additional resources for its infrastructure development. Therefore innovative financing mechanisms will be among the biggest challenge for developing countries in the post 2015.

Meaningful cooperation requires exchange of statistical information to make some forecasts, assessment and predictions on future developments. There have been difficulties in establishing specific trends of developments to ensure evaluation, accountability and transparency. This involves coordination and massive data collection by all member states and stakeholders for effective analysis and assessment of the proposed projects. Contrary, it has been a challenge for developing countries to provide such authentic data due to their internal problems such as institutional incapacity. We find that, most Statistics Boards in developing countries are operating below capacity. This lack of comprehensive set of information has made the implementation and coordination of SSC difficult.

Practitioners of South-South and triangular cooperation are not exposed enough to the information and experience of other partners in the world and consequently miss opportunities to enhance their programmes through mutual learning. There is need of a global platform and other mechanism in place to discuss ways to improve the nature of SSTC.

Good practices in South-South and triangular cooperation are not sufficiently publicized in the international community since the majority of people are ignorant of this emerging concept. This has resulted in a lower degree of understanding of the nature and participation in the SSC projects. However, bilateral sponsors, global financial boards and international organizations such as United Nations are increasing efforts to enhance South-South cooperation as an integral part of their programmes. However, their efforts are also limited due to insufficient funding and coordination challenges.

Development within the South-South Cooperation states has been very uneven where some countries have advanced (the BRICs) further than the others while others have fallen behind and this does not give a good reflection of mutual benefits expected in the cooperation.

CONCLUSION

South-South Cooperation is a force to reckon currently in world economic development landscape. It's paradoxical that Brazil, China and India used to be low income countries also depending on foreign aid, contrary they are now transformed and extending donations to developing nations in the south-south Cooperation. Former U.N. Secretary-General Kofi Annan argued that over 40% of developing country exports are directed towards other developing nations. This development indicates productivity by SSC and step towards economic independence by developing nation.

SSC is a forum under which best practices can be discussed within the framework of international cooperation. The United Nations Assembly Resolution noted the significant increase and expanded use of south- south cooperation by developing countries as an important and effective instrument of international cooperation, and in this connection urges developing countries in a position to do so to intensify technical and economic cooperation initiatives at the regional and interregional levels in areas such as health, education, training agriculture, science and new technologies and in particular information and communication technologies.

Since the nations of the South are developing under different terms and conditions and that the development achieved by Brazil, India, China and South Africa outweighs the rest, it is imperative that the countries relook at the cooperation and ensure that the developmental gap is minimized.

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