RESUMO

The South/South and new dialogues environmental between Brazil and Africa

The South/South cooperation is a mechanism of joint development between developing countries. This paper discusses how this process in Brazil and Africa relations implies, currently, in the adoption by African countries of sustainable development policies that, to some extent, are not consistent with the socio-cultural reality of some local communities. We assume that policies which promoting sustainable development involve the transfer of a particular *modus operandi* of development. We ask: development conditions of African communities are taken into consideration when is deciding to establish a cooperation knowledge transfer? Therefore, we choose as a case study cooperation projects in agriculture.

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**Introduction**

Cooperation consolidates itself in international agenda after the Second World War, within the United Nations’ institutional apparatus. Expressed in *development aid*, it is perceived as an instrument for reducing international inequalities and for socioeconomic modernization, as well as an incentive for peace and systemic stability. In the framework of the Cold War, international cooperation is, also, understood as a resource for conflict reduction and shield against the expansion of the Soviet bloc.

The end of the Cold War, the Soviet collapse and the diversification of international agenda, provided by interdependence among states and among societies, as well as the projection of the so-called emerging countries, changed the international cooperation’s framework. According to some interpretations, international cooperation would be changing from a model guided by the North / South axis to another guided by the South / South relations. This reorientation would represent a new approach to international cooperation, in which more horizontal interactions would predominate than those

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verticalized between _donors_ and _receivers_ that, despite being facing changes in its original sense, continues with outstanding feature of North / South relations.

In the logic of reasoning that South/South cooperation is a joint mechanism of development between emerging countries, this paper aims to discuss how the relations between Brazil and Africa currently involve the adoption, by the second, of sustainable development politics that, in some extent, are not consistent with the sociocultural reality of some African’s local communities. And assuming the assumption that the implementation of policies to promote sustainable development imply the transfer of a certain _modus operandi_ of social development and that one reproduced by Brazil clashes with communal social organization on which some African communities underlies, we ask if the development conditions of African communities are taken into consideration when deciding on establishing cooperation for knowledge transfer? To do so, we choose as a case study the international technical cooperation project “Technological enhancement and diffusion of best practices in cotton agriculture for the Cotton-4 countries and Togo”.

**The South/South Cooperation**

In general, cooperation is a process in which two or more parties with mutual interests exchange resources or goods that can be tangible or intangible, in a specific interaction. Thus, we can characterize the cooperation as a durable relation of exchange that presupposes asymmetry between partners; they will be motivated to develop interaction, if one has a good or a resource that the other lacks. Cooperation is asymmetric, also, because resources can be transformed into assets, which are used by those who hold them, give them the ability to formulate rules governing the exchange for their own benefit. Thus, cooperation is a geometry variable game in which the results for those involved in it are absolute gains, since both parties are rewarded, even if this does not change the asymmetry existing between them.

International cooperation occurs when two or more actors - a state, a multilateral organization, or a non-state actor – exchange a resource or goods in a specific interactive process that goes beyond national borders. The interaction requires that one of the parties, _the donor_, holds a resource - capital, knowledge, goods etc. – that the other part, _the receiver or beneficiary_, lacks and both have mutual interest in making the
exchange. The ownership of the resource by the donor establishes an asymmetry in relation to the receiver or beneficiary, which ends to confer the first the ability to regulate cooperation according to its interests. Thus, even if international cooperation can result in a non-refundable resource transfer, the donor’s ability to build the interaction rules always implies gains for its power position. These gains may come from other relationships that hold receiver or beneficiary as the expansion of trade between them, the political support of its positions in multilateral organizations and forums, the military or ideological alignment etc. Therefore, international cooperation, like cooperation in general, constitutes an asymmetric interaction between two or more partners who exchange resources or goods in order to obtain absolute gains.

It is after the Second World War that cooperation will occupy a privileged place on the international agenda. Firstly, because the creation of the United Nations, an organization of states, sees the conflict negotiation and cooperation important tools for achieving its goal of promoting international peace and stability. Secondly, because it is in the postwar that begin the first systematic studies on cooperation and ways to promote it in international environment. The corollary of all this is expressed in the United Nations’ Charter wherein international technical cooperation is seen as an instrument for peace promotion and economic, social, cultural and humanitarian development. Moreover, cooperation is also seen as encouraging for human rights respect and for ensuring peaceful coexistence among peoples.

The most eloquent expression of this process is the so-called International Cooperation for Development (CID). In general, it is about

Set of performances of international character held by public and private actors, among countries of different income levels to promote economic and social progress of the Developing Countries (PVD), and achieve a more fair and balanced progress in the world, with a more secure and peaceful world building goal. These actions are within the international relations framework, which constitute a specific context and pursue common goals based on principles of solidarity, equality, effectiveness, mutual benefit, sustainability and co-responsibility. The primary purpose of development cooperation should be the eradication of poverty and social exclusion and the permanent increase in the levels of political, social, economic and cultural development in countries of the South (AYLLÓN, 2005, p. 7)

This characteristic of the development cooperation - the eradication of poverty and social exclusion and permanent increase in various forms of development - is the product of the cooperation concept transformation along its historical trajectory. For a long time cooperation was restricted to the reconstruction of European countries after
the Second World War. But the decolonization process, and increase the number of members of the United Nations, brought new demands. Among them, claims to support the development of the newly independent states, as many of its problems stemmed from the colonial process conducted by the Western powers. There were to repair the wounds caused by colonization redirecting the resources distribution to new states structuration. Moreover, the underdeveloped and poor countries, many of them allies of the Western countries in the fight against Nazi fascism, also felt entitled to receive funds for modernization - the way of what was happening with Germany, the former enemy. (SANTOS FILHO, 2005). So,

(...) International cooperation for development (CID) now plays a key role as an instrument of developed countries foreign policy, both for its governance practices internationalization, as to its respective models of capitalism projection. Such was the case of the U.S., but also, a posteriori, of the Western Europe and Japan. Despite the solidarity discourse prevails, since the beginning the North-South Cooperation (CNS) has been shaped by the strategic and geopolitical interests, the need to spread the Western ideal of modernity, but also by the relevance of different management policies originating in Western Europe and North America exportation (MILANI, 2008). In this scenario, the underdevelopment of Latin American, Asian and African peripheral countries was considered a delay to be overcome, through mechanisms offered by the CNS, in order to promote the long-awaited "development, seen as an ideal to be achieved. (MILANI and CARVALHO, 2013, p. 12)

The result of this process was the restructuring of organizations like the World Bank and the installation of mechanisms to financial and technical resources transfer to promote poor and underdeveloped countries’ development in the so-called North/South cooperation. Aid for Development - as some Americans’ analysts classify it - became in the years after the Second World War an important mechanism for the core countries to transfer resources and technical expertise to developing countries, while defending its strategic and economic interests. However, changes stemming from globalization and interdependence changed this picture.

Globalization reduces the capacities of the nation-state government, questioning key elements of it, such as national sovereignty, limiting the possibilities and scope of external state policy. At the same time, emerging new private actors or some existing ones appear with a power, mobility and ability to give away (sic) much greater public regulation. In direct relation to these phenomena, it arise new demands of global governance and cooperation that can only satisfy the traditional mechanisms for intergovernmental cooperation and classic international organizations, given their limited jurisdiction and its subsidiary nature with respect to the States that compose them.
These shortcomings also affect the aid, which is usually conceived and designed as an instrument of foreign policy, and as such is subject to the national interests of the donor country. As revealed by state practice, use the self-interest as a guiding tab of foreign action, including development aid, may be counterproductive in a world characterized by higher levels of interdependence and global problems that are very difficult, or impossible, to face without collective action guided by cooperative criteria. This is especially true when the bodies responsible for the State’s external action adopt an unilateral, restrictive and, in short, short-term national interest definition. Also occurs so when it need to provide “global public goods”without which it is difficult to imagine an orderly and long-term development process to the North and to the South, such as financial stability, the preservation of maritime or air spaces, the common heritage of mankind, the environment or the peace and international security. (AYLLÓN, 2005, p. 12, 13)

So, the bipolarity world, focused on safety and on the East and West conflict, raised States as privileged actors in development cooperation conduction, as this was seen as a way to conduct a foreign policy consistent with its interests. But insofar as the Cold War declines, global interdependence is emphasized and new themes emerge on the international agenda, cooperation processes are diversified and new arrangements are added to those traditionally performed by States or multilateral organizations.

The result is that development cooperation becomes the model par excellence of international cooperation. Despite its changes over time it ended up constituting what we may call International Cooperation for Development System (SICD). It is a 

Network of public and civil society institutions that promote international cooperation for development actions. The SICD is made up of many different nature organizations, guidelines and functions, among which are international organizations, governments and public institutions from donors and receivers countries, non-governmental organizations, companies and other civil society entities. These organizations comprise a network that more or less articulated configures SICD. (AYLLÓN, 2005, p. 7)

However, in an opposite road established by the International Cooperation System Development captained by the North, the South countries, dealing with alignment and nonalignment East/West in the Cold War, organized themselves in an attempt to create different modalities of international cooperation and even to promote their development. This process emerges within the national liberation movements of the 1950s, having as a landmark of the Bandung Conference in 1955. This new arrangement was motivated by the belief that shared identities - former colonies, economic status, historical experiences, etc. - (MILANI & CARVALHO, 2013) favored the horizontal relations
among Southern States creating, thus, better conditions for solving their internal problems. According to those States, their shared identities would benefit a collaborative process guided by interdependence and reciprocity logic, rather than the dependency that prevailed in North/South relations. Thus, the so-called South/South Cooperation (SSC) comprises two dimensions:

A political dimension that includes a cooperative mode between countries seeking to strengthen its bilateral relations and to be connected multilaterally to gain negotiating power in global affairs. Another technical dimension that, according to the UNDP Special Unit CSS, considers it as ‘a process by which two or more developing countries acquire individual or collective capabilities through cooperative exchanges in knowledge, resources and technological knowhow’. (AYLLÓN, 2011, p. 112, our translation)³

Interestingly, in both dimensions the subsidiary principle South/South dialogue is a joint action, solidarity, in development promotion. I.e., something like we can exchange what we have and we will grow together. And from the beginning, the term "south-south cooperation" is presented denotatively comprehensive and may nominate practices of various natures, since the principle of solidarity was observed. Maybe because it had not initially within the SICD ability to create its own system of cooperation and, in reason oh this, failing to become institutionalized within the international system, as it happened to the traditional North/South cooperation.

So, what we have is that in these early years of articulation between Southern countries, their cooperation was marked by at least three limitations: the small number of participants; the themes’ limitation on Cold War context and the problems of decolonization, and, especially, the low complementarity of their economies (LEITE, 2012). Even so, from Bandung to today a series of initiatives marked relations between Southern countries building, on the international agenda, a wide range of forms of cooperation, from the multilateral trading negotiating spaces (for example, G-77 or G-20 financial), the formation of political coalitions (IBSA, BRICS, for example), through the promotion of South-South trade (ALADI, SADC). This process did not neglect the construction of regional integration spaces (Mercosul, UNA-SUL), as well as funding for infrastructure projects via subsidized loans, until technology transfer arrangements,

³ In original: “Una dimensión política que la contempla como una modalidad cooperativa entre países que buscan reforzar sus relaciones bilaterales y coaligarse multilateralmente para ganar poder negociador en temas globales. Otra dimensión técnica que, según la Unidad Especial de CSS del PNUD, la considera como “un proceso por el cual dos o más países en desarrollo adquieran capacidades individuales o colectivas a través de intercambios cooperativos en conocimiento, recursos y knowhow tecnológico”.

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experiences exchange in the field of public policy and technical cooperation by ministries, agencies, sub-national units, universities and non-governmental organizations. (MILANI & CARVALHO, 2013)

The Brazilian cooperation for development in Africa

According to the study of the Institute for Applied Economic Research - IPEA - and the World Bank Brazil operates in different areas in the CSS, being Agriculture, Industry and Health sectors, those who concentrate more resources in that order. A percentage of projects are distributed in Public Safety, Environment, Public Administration, Energy and Technical Cooperation sectors. Despite the coordination process be operated by the Brazilian Cooperation Agency (ABC), attached to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, several other organs of Public Administration and sub national entities such as states and municipalities also carry out their own initiatives for cooperation. This gives the Brazilian cooperation a decentralized feature that involves agencies of the direct and indirect administration, universities, research institutes, public enterprises etc.

Figure 1: Brazilian main areas in South/South agreements, 2009

Obs. Plots represent percentages of the total portfolio of projects.
The guiding principles of Brazilian cooperation are the Solidarity Diplomacy in which prevails the constitutional precept (art. 4, IX) of "cooperation among peoples for the progress of humanity". From this postulate, the Brazilian performance prioritizes the demands of developing countries searching for national independence, self-determination and equality among States. In this sense, it is necessary to impose direct conditionalities to receivers of aid, avoiding direct transfer of funds, privileging the exchange of knowledge and technologies. The financial resources transfer, when needed, is done through multilateral organizations or the United Nations system. (IPEA & BANCO MUNDIAL, 2010) But even though Brazilian law prohibits funds transfer directly to other states, the amount invested by Brazil in cooperation projects is considerable.

The Brazilian Cooperation for International Development in 2005-2009 reaches a figure next to R $ 2.9 billion at current values. (…) more than 76%, on average, of the data collected, correspond to contributions to international organizations and regional banks, leaving it to other modalities (humanitarian assistance, scholarships and technical cooperation) almost 24% of the total. Cooperation nearly doubles between 2005 and 2009, from R $ 384.2 million to more than U.S. $ 724 million, respectively. (IPEA 2010, p. 20)

Although the resources allocation favors multilateral organizations, according to IPEA, Humanitarian Assistance and Technical Cooperation recorded significant increases, from R$ 28.9 million in 2005 to R$ 184.8 million in 2009. Regarding Technical Cooperation for the amount of money, in the last two years of the survey prepared by IPEA, obtained a significant increase, surpassing the figure of U.S. $ 252.6 million (Graph1).

Source: Levantamento da Cooperação Brasileira para o Desenvolvimento Internacional 2010.

Considering the African continent, Brazil has developed, under the coordination of ABC, 539 technical cooperation projects from 1999 to 2013, and 438 of them have been completed and 101 are still running. Initially shy the cooperation process is accentuated from 2005 continuing on an upward trend until the year of 2012 (Graph 2).

Graph 2: Total of completed and running projects in Africa, by initiation year

Fonte: Levantamento realizando junto a Agência Brasileira de Cooperação em Maio de 2013.
From this, and going a little further, we also observe that what is developed at the beginning of the alignment of the Southern countries in Bandung in 1955 as a mutual support cooperation and claiming for the establishment of a New World Economic Order (NIEO), as established in the Declaration of 1974, became in the level of scope and value, assuming the traditional logic of North-South cooperation drawings. But that, however, neither this new arrangement is still likely to be framed in the definitions established by the OECD Development Assistance Committee (DAC), nor the actors cooperation countries want it, arguing that the way they act still fits landmarks in the CSS definition proposed by the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, i.e., *the processes, institutions and arrangements designed to promote political, economic and technical cooperation among developing countries in pursuit of common development goals* (UNCTAD 2010, p. 7). And it is in this corollary that the Southern countries base their actions, reaffirming the commitment to the CSS would consolidate on horizontality and proximity in existing economic, cultural and historical terms between the countries involved.

The point is that today we noticed that two movements occurred and that, in some measure, committed this “horizontal solidarity” between the Southern countries, thus reflecting on the original format of CSS generalized exchange: the first concerns to the fact that some countries in this axis have been advanced their economic, politics and technology bases, enabling them to act on SICD not only as cooperation’s receivers, but also as donors; the second refers to the relevance acquired by CSS in these countries’ foreign policies of the role that they came to play in the political and economic international agenda. In the present paper we will prioritize the interpretation of how CSS format has been drawing where Brazil and Africa are protagonists, discussing the issue that even the Western society developmental narrative of modern was not able to equate the third world countries development, Brazil, when "exporting" a project aimed to promote development based on sustainability principles, just plays that old logic. So, our question is when a project like the Cotton-4 is implemented the specific conditions of developing communities in Africa are taken into consideration?

We are guided by this question, because we believe there is a contradiction. Discursively we see the Southern countries framing the ideal of "horizontal solidarity", sustaining different concepts from those proposed by the OECD/DAC, but operationally we see the same countries reproducing the North/South cooperation logic of action.
First it is important to say that announced discourse of solidarity is real, it is based on historical, cultural and regional contexts, but is not unrelated to the interests of the nations involved, from the side of the state that offers and that receives cooperation (MILANI, CARVALHO, p. 22, 2013), even if it cannot be applied across all South/South cooperation currently practiced. The solidarity principle gives a sense of interdependence between countries and signals economic disinterest, pointing to a win-win situation, even if the conditions of the actors are not symmetrical. Unlike the North/South cooperation, qualified by some as top-down, colonizing.

**Cotton-4 Project – “Support to the Development of the Cotton sector in the C-4 countries” and final considerations**

The technical cooperation project between African countries entitled “Support to the Development of the Cotton sector in the C-4 countries” or simply Cotton-4 (C-4), is result of an agreement between Brazil and the African Union to promote technical cooperation of cotton’s sustainable development (ABC, 2010), and, at the same time, to help involved African nations to overcome the damage caused by the subsidies applied by developed countries on cotton production (SANTOS, 2011).

Due to Brazilian experience in technologies’ use for cotton production and pest control, the country was able to cooperate with the Cotton-4 countries, for its producing regions share the same climate conditions and for this activity be the agriculture’s locomotive these countries. I.e., cotton has vital importance in the economies of these countries, where its production is 5 to 10% of Gross Domestic Product (GDP), while accounting for approximately 30% of total export earnings and over 60% of gains of the agricultural products export. This has a reflection that it is estimated that over 10 million people depend directly on cotton production and many more are indirectly benefited by the sector.

The central objective of the project was to promote increased productivity and quality of cotton in the involved countries, guided by sustainability criteria, i.e., implementation of actions that articulate in the same time economic, environmental and food security

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4 The Cotton-4 benefits Benin, Burkina Faso, Chad and Mali. However, two other African countries develop structuring projects: Senegal and Mozambique.

variables. Otherwise, i.e., if the project would have focused only on the technology question of production and harvesting of cotton the proposal would not have the desired impact. The food security issue is the protagonist for having been approached by C-4 countries members in their case in the WTO in 2003.

The implementation of the project was completed in June 2013, having been executed an amount of $ 5,219,451.00, being that the Brazilian part on the total was divided between EMBRAPA (U.S. $ 899,900.00) and ABC (U $ 4,110,351.00), which together account for over 90% of the total costs of the Cotton-4 (ABC, 2009), it is recorded that there was no private sector participation. In ABC (2011) reports are observed implementation problems, because, of the total estimated cost, only 58% of the spending were realized in December 2010.

Some difficulties were also highlighted in monitoring and evaluation studies carried out, such as: a) physical distance in the administrative management of the project, reflecting delays in implementation and in management action; b) asymmetry of technical-scientific knowledge among professionals of the C-4 countries participating in training activities, becoming difficult that they reach the expected initial results; c) low generation of multipliers due to the limited availability of C-4 specialists. The difficulties indicated by the letters "b" and "c" are related, since the training process is directly related to the multiplication of knowledge. If there is a problem in the knowledge transfer process, hence it will impact on the multiplication of the same process.

This leads us to a question that is: if the principle of technical cooperation is the knowledge transference so that it is multiplied and this reverses, in the near future, in social change processes, generating development. If there is an absence of initial conditions for this process to take place, this would not be a symptom of some other process is going on? It is diagnosed for this framework the existence of an asymmetry of knowledge on the part of the receiving countries of cooperation, but we raise a questioning that might be the case of a previous scenario, that is referred to a different possible courses of development to a social reality.

6 Testimony of the technical officer responsible for monitoring/articulating the C-4 at Embrapa’s International Relations Secretariat during the project’s execution until 2012.
However, we pointed out that, if it is not done the first principle of technical cooperation that is the knowledge transference, Brazil’s offer to countries becomes a "technology upgrade" without internalizing into social structure, through research and training institutes the local labor, the knowledge for future development of genetic improvements in cotton production and/or pest control.

This allows us to point out that in many cases of technical cooperation projects implemented in Africa by Brazil, sharing the fragility of the "broad solidarity", the first principle of CSS, reflecting the original format of generalized exchange. Advances in economic, political and technological bases did not happen the same way and at the same speed, causing social realities fulfill distinct paths. Therefore, this mismatch of the initial scenario where the offer takes place finishes verticalizing cooperation, even if that is not the original intention.

Also, another point to which we wish to draw attention is the fact that the discussion established that the CSS is dissociated from the interests of the nations involved, both on the state that offers cooperation, as one who receives, is not so well founded. It is argued by some authors that the implementation of a technical cooperation project in the dimensions of the C-4 is part of Brazilian aspirations projection and influence on the world stage, including bringing international recognition of the project within the WTO, giving credence to the position of Brazil in opposing the subsidies paid by the U.S. to its cotton farmers government policy.

What we have here are many questions and few answers to a current situation that takes place as the south / south cooperation and the role played by its actors, and the principles that guide their actions. We are in time to discuss and reflect the new terms of these bases and the objectives achieved and their impact on other dimensions.
REFERENCES


