Brenting North and South: the Ambivalence of Brazilian International Development Cooperation Partnerships

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Abstract
Brazil was a pioneer in South-South Cooperation and has traditionally incorporated international development cooperation partnerships to its foreign policy. Since the government of President Lula da Silva, it has prioritized partnerships with the Global South, especially Latin America and Sub-Saharan Africa. With successful experiences in its transition to development, Brazil has increased its participation in international development cooperation assuming the role of bridge between North and South countries, strengthening its South-South and Triangular partnerships, avoiding donor and recipient labels and portraying its activities as partnerships instead of aid. This focus of Brazilian Foreign Policy is consistent with a changing international context, were emerging powers contest the orthodoxies of the international development relations. The article aims to offer an overview of Brazil’s international development cooperation in the 21st century analysing Brazilian international development cooperation as a foreign policy tool that the state uses to achieve a prominent position in the international arena as a bridge between North and South. The Brazilian position can be useful for a better comprehension of the opportunities international development cooperation partnerships bring to an emerging power’s foreign policy strategies.

Keywords
International Development Cooperation; Brazil; South-South; North-South
Introduction

The development agenda emerged in the international system after World War II in the context of the Cold War and the weakening of traditional European powers and the colonial exploitation system. In these circumstances, the United States of America (USA) began cooperating with its European partners through initiatives such as the Marshall Plan to promote their recuperation, guarantee trade and investment flows, and promote economic development against instabilities to contain Socialism (RIDELL, 2007). Development cooperation was also promoted by the north-American and European powers towards the Third World, comprised by many of the recently decolonized states, and thus emerged the North-South development cooperation.

The developing countries of the Third World eagerly entered the states-system adapting themselves to the European model of state and began pursuing the goal of development. Not waiting passively to be aided by the developed powers, during the Cold War years they advanced active strategies to establish partnerships with the great powers and among themselves. Taking into account the inequalities predominant in the international system, South-South coalitions emerged as a strategic option seeking more favorable conditions for the developing countries in the international arena, especially on the issue of international trade and promoting development partnerships among them. This generated the Non Aligned Movement, the G77, the UNCTAD and South-South development cooperation.

While North-South development cooperation advanced vertical patterns of cooperation between the developed and the developing world, usually known in these relationships as donors and recipients, SSDC adopted a more horizontal configuration. Being established among developing countries, there was no clear division as to who was the donor and the recipient.

Brazil not only received cooperation since the middle of the 20th century, but was also a pioneer in SSCD, contributed to cooperation initiatives since the 1970s (CERO, 1994). But it was since President Lula da Silva’s administration, beginning in 2003, that the state developed a more proactive posture of activism targeting the strengthening of South-South partnerships. This process can be identified in initiatives such as the creation of the G20 and the IBSA, the revitalization of the MERCOSUR and the approximation of African and Arab countries through the opening of new embassies, the increase in the number of presidential and ministerial visits,
the valorization of the South in official speeches, the targeting of investments and trade and the development of cooperation partnerships (AYLLÓN and LEITE, 2010).

This South-oriented foreign policy was developed by the South-American state in an international context marked by the ascension of (re-)emerging powers such as China, India, Russia and South Africa (which, together with Brazil formed the BRICS forum that has been meeting annually since 2008¹). These actors defy the established orthodoxies if the international system proposing new agendas, innovative ways of dealing with the development issue and rearticulating international cooperation relations (MCEWAN and MAWDSLEY, 2012).

Brazilian development cooperation has a great potential to redesign international relations in a more horizontal manner due to its horizontal and non-conditional characteristics. Nevertheless, the realization of this potential must be critically evaluated through the analysis of Brazil’s relations with the South and the North in its development cooperation. Brazilian development partnerships are also of great relevance to Brazilian foreign policy, being recognized as a means to achieve sustainable development and promote its autonomy and leadership role in international politics. Through its South-South development cooperation, Brazil has been strengthening its relations with South-America and Portuguese speaking African countries (BANCO MUNDIAL and IPEA, 2011; SARAIVA, 2012) and acquiring legitimacy to its aspirations of leadership in the South-American region and in the Global South.

The first part of the article offers an overview of Brazilian development cooperation partnerships since the beginning of the Lula da Silva administration. The second session portrays the role the development cooperation promoted by Brazil plays in the state’s foreign policy forwarding its interests. After that, the third session shows how Brazilian cooperation develops an ambivalent pattern adapting itself to the narratives that permeate both South and North discourses of development. Finally, a research agenda is proposed based on the preliminary results of this research to narrow the study to Triangular development partnerships and to adopt a pluralistic theoretical framework to understand the motivations that inspire Brazilian development partnerships and the strategies the state advances.

Development in Brazilian Foreign Policy

There is a tradition in Brazilian foreign policy, since the beginning of the 20th century, of aspiring to attain international recognition of its natural role as a “big country” (LIMA and HIRST, 2006). This aspiration is advanced by Brazil mainly in terms of soft power and with a multilateral approach. The country doesn’t have a tradition of military power and, located in a reasonably peaceful region in terms of international disputes, where territorial issues were resolved mostly through diplomatic means. The state is also a regional power, having the greatest gross national income in South America. But this is not reflected in its social indicators, which remain behind its neighbors. Like the other BRICS, Brazil’s greatest vulnerabilities are of economic and social nature, which explains its interest in the development issue, much more pronounced in its foreign policy than military issues.²

At the same time, due to its location in the American continent, Brazilian foreign policy has historically been influenced by the United States of America (USA). Brazil hasn’t traditionally been of great importance in international politics, but the regional power has had to take in account the benefits and costs of approximating and diverging from the world power in its strategic calculations. According to Lima and Hirst (2006) there has been a prudent search for coexistence, possible collaboration and collision avoidance and, while the USA seeks to consolidate its role as world power, with its search for development and autonomy, Brazil seeks to consolidate a political platform in South America. We propose here that Brazil also pursues the consolidation of a political platform in the Global South, with which it would have a better dialogue with the North.

During most of the 20th century, Brazilian foreign policy fluctuated between Americanism and Globalism, diversifying its international relations. Authors such as Lima (1994) and Pinheiro (2000) argue that these two positions were superseded in the 1990s due to changes in the domestic political setting and the international arena. Pinheiro also points out that these oscillations occurred due to divergences on how development should be attained, but the search for economic development associated with a desire for autonomy, that is, economic and political national independence, continued guiding the Brazilian foreign policy.

² According to LIMA and HIRST (2006), Brazil, as other emerging powers such as South Africa, Turkey, India and Mexico, traditional issues of what is known as low politics, such as development cooperation, have important role in regional and global power politics.
Brazil has traditionally developed a multilateral approach in its international relations. The state participated in World War One and, afterwards, in the Peace Conference in Paris 1919, strived to influence the collective security system established by the League of Nations and presented itself as mediator between the developed and developing defending the rights of the latter and pursuing the status of the first (GERCIA, 2000 *apud* LIMA and HIRST, 2006). The state also participated actively in the conferences that engendered the multilateral order post-1945, fitting the pattern of action developing countries advanced in search of economic development and autonomy.

Brazil industrialized during the Cold War, advancing the import substitution industrialization strategy (ISI) proposed by dependency theory, a strategy that demanded the involvement of the foreign policy in the country’s development project. In its development strategy, Brazil used opportunities of operating with the Third World demanding preferential treatment in the commercial regime for developing countries in general, seeking to impede the differentiation among them (LIMA and HIRST, 2006).

With the end of the Cold War and the increase in international flows in the context of Globalization, the ISI model deteriorated while liberalism was strengthened, and many believed that the developing countries’ multilateralism ended with the disintegration of the Third World movement due to lack of material interests between its members. Nevertheless, the re-emergence of developing states, guided by China, India, South Africa and Brazil, demonstrate the current relevance of South-South coalitions mobilization.

In the 21st century, the desire for development and autonomy continued to be pursued by Brazil, but facing new international and domestic realities, the country developed new strategies, notable in its efforts to participate in the creation of rules and institutions (PINHEIRO, 2000; LIMA and HIRST, 2006). Brazilian foreign policy has stimulated multilateral action and participation in international institutions and regimes to increase its bargaining power and acquire autonomy through the attainment of a leadership position in the Global South.

The Lula da Silva administration innovated promoting South-South cooperation and a regional strategy in Latin America rekindling the agenda of promoting Brazil as a mediator between North and South betting on the participation of global governance forums assertively in coordination with other emerging powers such as China, India and South Africa, among others. A new kind of *ad hoc* multilateralism would be generated, involving strategic partnerships between traditional powers and emerging countries, suggesting a tendency of the first coopting the latter (HIRST, LIMA and PINHEIRO, 2010).
This doesn’t denote ruptures with the goals pursued by the previous administration, being aligned with the country’s traditional goals, but it implied reversing the defensive and reactive attitude attributed to the Cardoso administration and adopting more assertive and proactive profile to attain Brazil’s interests shared with its neighbors and other emerging powers expanding its influence towards the South and in multilateral institutions (COSTA VAZ, 2004). This assertiveness is visible in initiatives such as the IBSA forum, which combines South-South cooperation, fight against poverty and development promotion, the pursuit for a permanent seat at the UN’s Security Council, demanding reforms in the name of representativeness and legitimacy in the post-Cold War world, and the search of the role of mediator between North and South.

Brazil participates in international coalitions and forges alliances with the South aiming at developing and achieving more balanced relations with the great powers. Portraying itself as a leader in South America, Brazil strengthens its autonomy in the global arena and, at the same time, promoting the Global South, it achieves greater convergence with its South-American neighbors and has greater power in the international arena to face the North (COSTA VAZ, 2004).

The South-American state aims at conciliating the changes it proposes in the international arena towards a more egalitarian international order with the use of institutional and multilateral means, achieving legitimacy in the role it seeks as a global player with both revisionist and status quo actors. Nevertheless, it is important to point out the pragmatic characteristic of the institutionalism that the country develops. That is, it prioritizes multilateral and institutional action to increase its legitimacy but, because institutionalization can reduce autonomy, to preserve its interests Brazil avoids too much institutionalization, resisting assuming the role of sub-regional hegemon, for example, which would imply in costs, most important of all, the loss of its autonomy (PINHEIRO, 2000).

In the Lula da Silva administration, Brazilian foreign policy acquired a new importance. Not only was it important for guaranteeing the international credibility and macroeconomic stability of the country, it also conformed the government’s strategy, together with the search for macroeconomic stability, the renewed centrality of the state as coordinator of a development agenda and the social inclusion of the masses forming a mass market (HIRST, LIMA and PINHEIRO, 2010). Thus the Brazilian government connected the foreign policy to economic and social development as a tool of the country’s sovereignty and interests abroad focusing on
foreign trade, forging regional and global partnerships and promotion of a multilateral and more equitable order (COSTA VAZ, 2004).

This agenda shows the search for development as the goal that unifies foreign and domestic policies. Social policies adopted domestically against poverty and inequality are aligned with the Brazilian foreign policy, which points to North-South relations and the development agenda assertively. The inclusion of the social agenda as a central issue of Brazilian foreign policy complements the discourse against global injustices that Brazil supports.

Never before have foreign and domestic policies been so interconnected (LIMA and HIRST, 2006), and international development cooperation is central to this. The Brazilian domestic development model is exported internationally through South-South and Triangular cooperation partnerships and, achieving success in promoting development, these partnerships strengthen Brazilian international relations as well as the government’s domestic policies.

**International Development Cooperation as a Brazilian Foreign Policy Instrument**

As Lopes (2008) points out, Brazil has a double personality in the international development cooperation system, being simultaneously a receiver and a donor of international development cooperation. Since the 1960s, development cooperation was pursued by the country to contribute to changing its development profile with the aid from developed countries. Technical cooperation was “incorporated into the country’s foreign policy as one of its permanent variables” (CERVO, 1994:37) and was important in the state’s pursuance of development and autonomy.

Brazil managed to benefit from the cooperation received and capacitate its international cooperation agency (Agência Brasileira de Cooperação – ABC) to promote cooperation to other developing countries (LOPES, 2008). The state can be situated in an intermediary position in the international development cooperation geographies, because it still is a receiver of cooperation but is increasingly promoting development partnerships with other members of the South, which it already executes in all continents, through South-South and Triangular cooperation.

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3 For more information see the history of the Brazilian Cooperation Agency – AC at <http://www.abc.gov.br/SobreABC/Historico> access in January 20th 2015.
The country has been developing South-South cooperation projects since the 1970s and Triangular partnerships since the 1980s, but it was in the Lula da Silva administration that it prioritized the approximation of the South and the development of South-South partnerships connected to its search for autonomy and development. This process can be identified in the emphasis of the South in presidential speeches and illustrated by initiatives such as the creation of blocks such as the G-20, the IBAS, the approximation of African and Arab countries through the opening of new embassies, the development of presidential visits, the flow of investments and trade and the increase in technical cooperation activities (AYLLÓN and LEITE, 2010).

With practical experience acquired on its transition to development, Brazil has promoted international partnerships to contribute to the international development. The emerging power has been taking its successful development experiences to developing countries through South-South and Triangular development cooperation in the form of technical cooperation, study grants, humanitarian assistance and contributing to international organizations (IPEA and ABC, 2010).

**Image 1: Number of Technical Cooperation projects developed by Brazil annually between 2003-2009.**

Brazilian international development cooperation initiatives increased in parallel with the country’s foreign policy activism towards promoting a more democratic and egalitarian international order and a domestic context of improvements in the country’s economic and social conditions. This allowed it to become an important actor in the international development

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4 For the first time in Brazilian history, in 2005 Brazilian exports for South America, Africa and Asia exceeded exported to the USA and the EU (AYLLÓN, LEITE, 2009).
cooperation architecture and achieve what Cabral and Weinstock (2010:1) call “a real presence in the international landscape”.

The access to data on Brazilian international development cooperation was facilitated by the production of reports by the think tank IPEA (Instituto de Pesquisas Econômicas Aplicadas) in partnership with the Brazilian Cooperation Agency (ABC) in the years of 2010 and 2013 on the international development cooperation realized by the country in the years between 2005 and 2010. The 2010 report on the years between 2005 and 2009 point out the Brazilian budget for international development cooperation was distributed on the following manner:

Table 1: Brazilian budget for international development cooperation between 2005 and 2009:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Value spent in US Dollars (average US Dollar value in 2009)</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Humanitarian assistance</td>
<td>81.042.825,42</td>
<td>5.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Study grants for foreigners</td>
<td>160.093.340,18</td>
<td>9.95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technical cooperation</td>
<td>136.770.694,52</td>
<td>8.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contributions for International Organizations</td>
<td>1.230.488.257,73</td>
<td>76.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>1.608.395.117,85</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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The relevance of contributions to international organizations in the budget is clear and it is in line with the emphasis of Brazilian foreign policy on acting multilaterally through institutions. Working under multilateral mandates and partnering with multilateral organizations confers Brazilian international development cooperation, as in Brazilian foreign policy in general, more legitimacy (CABRAL and WEINSTOCK, 2010).

Taking into account the different modalities with which Brazil collaborates towards international development, the country defines its international development cooperation as:

“the total amount of resources invested by the Brazilian federal government, unreturnable, in the government of other countries, in nationals of other countries in Brazilian territory, or in international organizations with the purpose of contributing to international development, understood as the strengthening of capacities of international organizations and groups and populations of other countries to improve their socio-economic conditions”5 (IPEA and ABC, 2010).

Therefore, being unreturnable, Brazilian international development cooperation excludes investments and debt forgiveness from its budget differently from other emerging powers such as China and India. Brazil also declares its technical cooperation has no commercial interests,

5 Author’s translation.
being developed through the transfer of technical knowledge and experience and based on feelings of solidarity and responsibility among peoples (ABC, [n.d.]a; ABC, [n.d.]b).⁶

Brazil portrays its South-South and Triangular development cooperation as partnerships and not aid, adopting the concept of development partnership to indicate that the cooperation relations involve mutual efforts and benefits and is a strategic partnership that promotes positive impacts on populations elevating their life quality through the promotion of sustainable social development (ABC, [n.d.]b).

This would be achieved through the structural changes that Brazilian cooperation can promote in its partners’ production systems helping them to overcome restrictions that impede their growth. The identification of these restrictions would be developed by the partner country, because Brazil’s technical cooperation aims at sharing the best practices Brazil has on issues its partners have demand for (ABC, [n.d.]a; ABC, [n.d.]b). The country focuses on the institutional strengthening of its partners to guarantee the transference and absorption of the knowledge transferred. This is done through the transfer of knowledge and experiences tested in Brazil that can be applicable in countries that lack resources and know-how (ABC, [n.d.]b).

We have, thus, on the official discourse of Brazilian international development cooperation that ABC promotes, the rejection of financial and commercial interests, as well as vertical relations and the depiction of Brazilian international development cooperation as horizontal and without lucrative or commercial pretensions (ABC, [n.d.]b). This seems adequate, since the country doesn’t demand conditionalities, but it is important to stress that this doesn’t mean that Brazil is altruistic. Brazilian international development cooperation partnerships allow the state to develop many of its priorities, strengthening its international position politically and economically without compromising its autonomy thus forwarding its foreign policy agenda (ABDENUR, 2007; AYLLÓN and LEITE, 2009).

At the same time, ABC also describes its technical cooperation as knowledge exchanges that benefit all parts involved (ABC, [n.d.]a). The benefit Brazil receives isn’t in the form of technical cooperation, since Brazil doesn’t receive technical cooperation from its Southern partners. The latest data published by the ABC, relative to the year 2011, point as donors that benefit Brazil multilateral organizations and Japan, Germany, Spain and France (ABC, [n.d.]c).

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⁶ Although Brazil doesn’t have an official IDC policy, the Brazilian Cooperation Agency (ABC), who deals with the country’s technical cooperation, both received and provided by Brazil, points out the guidelines that orient Brazilian cooperation initiatives that are useful to understand the role the state gives to its IDC.
Brazil benefits from its international development cooperation because its actions “constitute an important foreign policy instrument that it has used to assure its positive and growing presence in countries and regions of primordial interest” (ABC, [n.d.]b), aiming at strengthening its international relations. ABC declares the mission of the General Coordination of Technical Cooperation among Developing Countries, since 2004, is to “contribute to the consolidation of Brazil's relations with developing countries” (ABC, [n.d.]b) and, among the guidelines of Brazilian international development cooperation is the orientation to “prioritize (…) programs that favor the intensification of relations between Brazil and its development partners, particularly with the countries of priority interest to the Brazilian foreign policy” (ABC, [n.d.]b).⁷

Brazilian international relations with the Global South benefit from its international development cooperation rendering the country political influence as a partner committed to the search for development and autonomy for the South. This goal is also furthered by the Brazilian discourse of horizontality refusing the labels of donor and recipient as well as the use of conditionalities and focusing on the strengthening of its partners through the development of projects according to their demands and national priorities. Furthering this narrative in its international development cooperation strategy Brazil differentiates itself from traditional OECD donors.

Brazil also is distinguished from the donors from the North because its partnerships transfer knowledge which was tested in its national reality, under the expectation that, being tested in a fellow developing country, they will be more adequate to the needs of other developing countries. Nevertheless, it is important to be careful with these generalizations on the Global South (MCEWAN and MAWDSLEY, 2012), since it is composed, as was the Third World, of extremely different countries, with different interests, development levels, societies, histories, geographies and social demands.

This focus on the national demands and priorities, to which Brazil also adds the guideline of prioritizing projects that include contributions from their counterparts’ national institutions (ABC, [n.d.]d), is also positive because it strengthens the chances of developing projects that are more adequate and relevant for Brazil’s partners and develop their ownership over it, therefore generating more positive effects. However, Brazil does not develop evaluation of its

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⁷ These priority interests are also described by the ABC, as commitments assumed by the President and the Chancellor during their visits: South America, Haiti, Africa, East Timor, the rest of Latin America and the Caribbean, the Community of Portuguese Speaking Countries as well as increasing triangular initiatives with developed countries and international organizations, in this order (ABC, [n.d.]c).
cooperation practices, so it is impossible to confirm if the expectations identified in its guidelines are translated in to practice and if the projects have the expected impacts on receiving communities and are adequate to their national priorities.

Even with some reservations as to the effectiveness with which Brazilian international development cooperation advances international development, Brazil manages to create an image that differentiates its IDC from that of other countries, both from the North – who offer aid, and not cooperation, under conditional circumstances and many times have the stain of colonialism on their past – and from the South, such as India and China, who assume economic and political interests as motivators if their South-South partnerships.

Avoiding the assistentialist and interventionist profile of traditional donors, as well as the self-help profile that characterizes other emerging powers, with its solidarity narrative Brazil achieves an image that is both interesting to its partners from the South and from the North. This enables Brazil to further its foreign policy interests, guaranteeing it prestige and support for its initiatives in the international arena, such as the search of a permanent seat at the UN’s Security Council, the development of strategic partnerships and opening partners’ markets for its products, services and investments.

**Bridging North and South**

Brazil’s international development cooperation contributes to three central aspects of the country’s foreign policy. Firstly it adds to the country’s pursuance of development and autonomy; secondly, to the development of a multilateral agency legitimating Brazilian foreign policy and thirdly; to position the state as a mediator between North and South.

As an emerging power, Brazil is in an intermediary position between donors and recipients, still receiving aid from the North and increasingly acting in South-South development partnerships legitimating its role as a regional and Southern leader. To use international development cooperation to further its interests isn’t wrong or illegitimate. It is political. Although there are institutional frailties in the Brazilian international development cooperation system and a lack of research to confirm if its international development cooperation projects are effectively generating the expected benefits, they are certainly being pursued by its partners, both from the
South and the North. The state is seen as a legitimate partner by both developing and developed countries.

This is because Brazil develops in its foreign policy narratives that promote the interests of the South and the North, thus allowing it to be position itself as a leader for the first and not to be seen as a threat to the latter. Thus Brazil is legitimately accepted both by North and South and can bridge both spheres in international politics.

We propose here that foreign policy has a fundamental co-constitution relation with a state’s identity, admitting that the identity representations of a state are not objective, they emerge (constantly) from its discursive articulation (MIRANDA, 2014). Politics require identities, which don’t exist objectively, but as subjects and objects continuously represented, negotiated and reformulated, identities and politics are mutually constituted through a process of narrative adjustment (HANSEN, 2006 apud MIRANDA, 2014).

Discourses are not restricted to ideas, they are translated into action and practices that make their contents real and structure the reality they transmit, making it known (DUNN, 2001), they build world views and political narratives made of images, ideas, values and norms (ALDEN and ANSEEUW, 2009). In its international development cooperation, Brazil develops narratives that forge its identity in an ambivalent manner, both as a member of the South and as an ally to the North, bridging North and South.

The state achieves this by presenting its South-South development cooperation motivated primarily by solidarity and the pursuit of development, which is equated with economic growth and social justice in the least developed countries, but is also the means to promote justice in the international arena. These aspects recruit the support from developing countries to promote Brazil as a leader of the Global South. Brazil suggests the reform of multilateral institutions as a way to mitigate the unequal distribution of power and the distortions it promotes in the representation of states and undertakes the role of mediator between North and South, the strong and the weak (LIMA and HIRST, 2006).

At the same time, it is also important to stress that Brazilian foreign policy as well as its development cooperation are developed multilaterally\(^8\) and according to democratic principles. Brazil also promotes the western modern civilization model as the development model and plays by the rules of the North to continue receiving Official Development Aid. Also, in its South-

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\(^8\) IPEA and ABC’s COBRADI reports, developed by the IPEA and ABC point out that the majority of flows dedicated to development cooperation by Brazil are targeted towards multilateral institutions.
South development cooperation Brazil’s narrative of solidarity echoes the moral justifications common among aid donors legitimating the international consensus built in the 1970s around the idea that the rich had the moral obligation to contribute to the international development (LEITE, 2010) and generates prestige for Brazil among traditional donors, that don’t feel threatened by it rise as an emerging power.

Brazil intends to reform the international order building coalitions from the South according to rules institutionalized in the international society and acting multilaterally in line with hegemonic western principles of democracy and the western model of development. It is not revolutionary. It seeks to improve its conditions as a member of the South playing by the rules and attain the status of a strong state and benefit from the rules of the establishment. As such, through its international development cooperation Brazil has not only strengthened its ties to its direct partners, such as Latin American, Caribbean and Portuguese speaking African countries as it contributes to the overcoming of their past of subordination, but also has strengthened its position in the international arena, legitimating its aspirations to regional leadership and representative of the South boosting initiatives such as the G20 and the IBSA forum.

**Triangular Cooperation and the Danger of Reaffirming Vertical Relations**

The tendency present in Brazilian foreign policy to invest in multilateral and institutional agency avoiding too much institutionalization to refrain from assuming the institutionalization costs and remain autonomous can be observed in Brazilian international development cooperation, which is developed following guidelines and principles pointed out in official documents an speeches but has no institutionalized policy regime. This lack of institutionalization through the development of a legal framework to guide its international development partnerships makes weakens Brazilian cooperation's effectiveness and makes it dependent on international organizations to advance its initiatives.

The country has been developing, since the 1980s, not only South-South but also Triangular development cooperation. Triangular or Trilateral development cooperation is a relatively new type of international development cooperation, which unites traditional donors, as developed states and international organizations, and middle income states cooperating in favor of other developing states. This type of cooperation has advantages because it uses the different capabilities of each partner, developed and developing, to promote more plural
partnerships. The Northern members of this partnership can offer resources and solid experiences in international development cooperation and middle income countries can offer their experience in transitioning towards development (FORDELONE, 2009).

The Triangular development cooperation initiatives have been growing in face of the changes in the geographies of power with the rise of the middle-income countries favoring more horizontal partnerships (FORDELONE, 2009; MCEWAN and MAWDSLEY, 2012). These is an expectation that, with recent experiences in transitioning towards development and a similar colonial past, emerging powers can offer more suitable development cooperation for its Southern partners, as is the case of Brazil.

Triangular cooperation strengthens the argument of this article positioning Brazil as bridge between North and South. The country has been favoring this kind of partnership, which allows it to join forces with a partner, developed, developing, or even an International Organization, and develop partnerships without having to bear all the costs of the initiative.\(^9\) The country develops triangulation partnerships with Japan in favor of Latin American and African Countries, as well as East Timor and with countries such as Canada, Spain and Argentina in favor of Haiti.

However, Triangular development partnerships present challenges of organizational nature, being difficult coordinate programs and projects and achieve effective results with aligning three different actors with different procedures. Therefore, this type of international development cooperation can increase the time needed to negotiate as well as implementation costs and involve lack of clarity about the roles and responsibilities of the ones involved (FORDELONE, 2009). Another challenge is the risk that Triangular partnerships reify the North-South hierarchies, prioritizing goals of traditional donors to the detriment of its Southern partners and thereby reproducing the vertical relations between donors and recipients of North-South cooperation rather than partnerships.\(^{10}\)

These challenges require critical analysis of international development cooperation, in its many geometries, paying attention to the interests of the developing countries and avoiding identifying their identities as the same. It is important to recognize the differences between the

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\(^9\) As Pinheiro (2000) points out, this doesn’t mean that Brazil acts as a free rider, benefiting from multilateral or international cooperation arrangements without contributing to them, just that the country actively rejects the role of hegemon, even though it has the capacity to establish and implement rules, it chooses not to so it doesn’t pay the costs of institutionalization and lose its autonomy.

\(^{10}\) It is important to note that nor only Triangular development cooperation is at risk of reifying vertical relations, South-South partnerships may suffer from the same problem. For example, a middle income country develops a vertical relationship with a least developed country.
states of the South and their interests and, most importantly, identify their interests because they are not all interested in promoting more equitable relations between themselves. This is especially important when analyzing the relations when one of the partners is an emerging power (MCEWAN and MAWDSLEY, 2012).

**Conclusion**

International development cooperation is central for the foreign policy developed by Brazil in the 21st century since the 1st Lula da Silva administration. It is developed in line with the priorities of Brazilian foreign policy of focusing achieving development and autonomy through multilateral action. Brazilian foreign policy has been prioritizing international development cooperation initiatives understanding them not only as a mean in itself, contributing to the international development, but also as a strategy to assure its positive and growing presence in countries and regions that it prioritizes.

The relations Brazil develops through its international development cooperation are complex and based on multiple considerations, such as advancing its interests, promoting a solidary agenda towards the South and participating in an autonomous manner in the multilateral international order. The guidelines and priorities around which the state structures its development partnerships guarantee it ample political and economic dividends.

Brazilian international development cooperation is important to developing countries because it offers knowledge and expertise tested in a developing environment and, as both donor and receiver of international cooperation, it has experience in adapting knowledge and expertise. Therefore, Brazilian cooperation may be more adequately transferred to the partners’ realities than that which comes from the North. It also forwards the South’s agenda being demand based and not tied to conditionalities and developed under a solidarity agenda.

Brazil proposes a mixed narrative, as a member of the South it promotes horizontal partnerships due to the solidarity it has with its southern partners. At the same time, it promotes a moral narrative justifying its development partnerships, as the North does. Consolidating its identity in the international arena based on these narratives, which are convenient for the interests of both developing and developed countries, Brazilian foreign policy is strengthened.
As such, both receiving international development cooperation and giving it through South-South and Triangular partnerships, Brazil develops a narrative that is harmonious with the legitimation narratives both from the North and the South and achieves its goal of becoming a bridge between them.

However, Brazil lacks a legal framework undertake its international development cooperation, which makes it difficult for the state to develop basic functions. Another issue is the absence of evaluation of the effectiveness of its projects and programs. This is important to assess if Brazilian cooperation partnerships are being developed in line with the country’s counterparts demands and priorities and are generating positive impacts. Only through future research counting on these assessments will we be able to conclude it Brazilian international development cooperation is producing the expected results and generating development.

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