

FOCUS SESSION 21:

Title of the Session

South-South Cooperation and the Post-2015 Agenda for Global Development: Innovative Modalities and Institutional Evolution

Wednesday, 16 April, 8:00-9:15 am, DIEZMO 4

Speakers/Panelists:

- Li Xiaoyun, China International Development Research Network, Research Center for International Development at China Agricultural University
- Debapriya Bhattacharya, Centre for Policy Dialogue (CPD) / Bangladesh
- Neissan Besharati, South African Institute of International Affairs (SAIIA)
- Sachin Chaturvedi, Research and Information System for Developing Countries (RIS) / India
- Jorge Pérez Pineda, Instituto Mora / Mexico
- André de Mello e Souza, Instituto de Pesquisa Econômica Aplicada (IPEA) / Brazil
- Concluding remarks: Thomas Fues, German Development Institute (DIE)
- Chair: Stephan Klingebiel, German Development Institute (DIE)

Conclusions and key messages:

Panelists and speakers from the floor converged in their assessment that South-South cooperation (SSC) will play an increasingly important role for international development. Due to different historical trajectories and diverging conceptual frameworks, SSC has a distinct identity and cannot be subsumed under the narrative of traditional aid offered by industrialized countries.

SSC is expected to provide substantive contributions to the implementation of the presently negotiated United Nations post-2015 agenda for global development. However, at this stage, it remains unclear how exactly it will fit into the larger picture and what shape possible commitments from Southern providers could take. Voices from beneficiary countries called for a new quality of accountability and transparency in SSC in order to enhance country ownership and facilitate the matching of domestic requirements with specific profiles of individual providers, taking into account that SSC is based on the principles of mutual benefit and

equality among partners. The bar for ultimate effectiveness of SSC was raised high: Low-income countries are ultimately looking for external support which will promote their structural transformation towards broad-based sustainable prosperity.

So far, inadequate knowledge on SSC from the South and little systematic empirical evidence exist on the modalities and outcomes of SSC. Participants at the session agreed that knowledge gaps need to be urgently addressed. Many saw the need for new methodologies on evaluation and impact assessment which reflect the specificities of SSC. However, such metrics must come from the South in order to gain broad acceptance.

In this context, participants welcomed the efforts at the sidelines of the HLM to explore the possibility of setting up a Network of Southern Think Tanks (NeST). The proposed network would work on appropriate methods for measuring the effects of SSC. For this to be successful, more clarity on definitions and concepts for SSC as a unifying framework is needed, without negating variances in national conditions among providers as well as beneficiaries. The network would aim to be open for dialogue and knowledge sharing with think tanks from the North. Eventually, NeST could complement and enhance ongoing efforts by Southern providers to create a practitioners' platform for mutual learning, the so-called Delhi process initiated in April 2013.

Providers of SSC are quickly adapting their institutional frameworks in order to handle the quantitative expansion and growing complexity of interactions with fellow developing countries. Some countries have introduced new legislation, adopted long-term strategies and created specialized agencies, but still need to make them fully operational. Others are in the process of strengthening existing entities and streamlining coordination mechanisms. Effective ways of evaluation and impact assessment are high on the agenda of all Southern providers. In this regard, policy makers expect to benefit from the intellectual groundwork of think tanks from the South. Participants concurred that effective institutional evolution is a necessary condition for the optimal contribution of SSC to the post-2105 agenda.