

Summary note:

Side event: Scaling up Triangular Cooperation for implementation of the SDGs

1 December 2016, 13h-14h, Robin room

Speakers/Panelists:

- Dr. Lou Yiping, Director for Center for China-Africa Agriculture and Forestry Research (CAFOR), Zhejiang A&F University, China, and former Director for Environmental Sustainability Programme, International Network for Bamboo and Rattan (INBAR)
- Ms. Ryna Garay, Director General of Development Co-operation, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of El Salvador
- Mr. Shohei Hara, Head of Office for Global Issues and Development Partnership, Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA)
- Mr. Thomas Yanga, Director of the World Food Programme Liaison Office to the African Union
- Mr. Mario Pezzini, Director, Development Centre, Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) (moderator)

Key messages and actions arising:

- Triangular co-operation (TrC) exists in many forms and is by no means a marginal activity, but it is under-utilized. It can be a very helpful tool to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), as what matters is not only growth, but well-being. This requires a multi-dimensional, multi-stakeholder approach which can be achieved by scaling-up TrC.
- TrC is carried out by a diversity of stakeholders and is an important tool for tackling development challenges through the sharing of practical solutions that take advantage of the similarities in national contexts.
- A new Global Partnership Initiative on Triangular Cooperation has been launched with the support of Mexico, Canada, El Salvador, Japan, Bangladesh, the OECD, and INBAR among others. A working group will use existing data, guidelines, principles and initiatives as inspiration towards a concrete product to make TrC more effective.

Summary

The panelists discussed (a) TrC as a means to implement the SDGs, (b) Scaling-up TrC, and (c) success factors, challenges and guidelines of TrC from the different points of views of an inter-government organization, a middle-income country with a dual role, a traditional provider, and international organizations.

The International Network for Bamboo and Rattan managed Dutch-Sino-East Africa bamboo project is an example of a multi-sectorial partnership which brings together know-how and resources from different parts of the global value chain. It links users and consumers of bamboo, and involves the private sector in its TrC. INBAR pointed out that its success factors were: (a) identification of an appropriate entry point for collaboration based on mutual benefits and by making use of the comparative advantages for all partners, (b) using a multilateral network platform to bring different partners together, (c) engagement of the private sector in building export capacity, (d) a demand-driven approach that is intrinsically linked to the SDGs.

In the case of El Salvador, we can observe the impact of institutionalizing processes. As both a provider and recipient of development co-operation, El Salvador has created a management model for Triangular and South-South co-operation based on five pillars:

- 1) Political: El Salvador participates in regional and international fora and contributes to shaping the development agenda;
- 2) Institutional: Combination of institutional structures within the Vice-Ministry of Development Cooperation, line ministries and sector agencies providing technical expertise;
- 3) Operational: strengthening inter-institutional coordination mechanisms in SSC/TrC
- 4) Financial: management and administration of resources; mobilization of resources that aim to strengthen use of these co-operation modalities; the creation of a fund to support them
- 5) Programmatic: in the form of a multi-annual implementation framework.

JICA, on the other hand, offered insights into its approaches on the key factors for scaling up TrC, namely long-term commitment for capacity development, establishment of Centres of Excellence that foster knowledge sharing, and JICA's role as an "honest" facilitator that provides a platform for exchange. Examples of this are the "Better Hospital Service Programme", which benefits Africa via Sri Lanka and Tanzania as Centres of Excellence, as well as the "Mathematics and Science Education in Africa" programme, which relies on Kenya as a pivotal centre. JICA also mentioned that TrC can work well in fragile contexts through the involvement of neighboring countries with knowledge and experiences of reconstruction of fragile states that JICA cannot offer directly.

Finally, WFP explained how TrC is an effective way to scale up a country's national efforts and capacities to advance progress towards zero hunger (SDG 2) by: mobilizing additional expertise, technology, knowledge and innovations that have proven effective on the ground; incentivizing the use of South-South co-operation (SSC) to complement North-South co-operation; removing the traditional geo-political divide and enriching existing co-operation models. Formulated a corporate Policy for SSC and TrC since 2015, WFP has promoted TrC through different mechanisms which include; (a) supporting countries to utilize additional technical assistance in the fight against hunger and malnutrition through WFP's network of Centres of Excellence; (b) promoting regional peer learning networks; (c) incentivizing the use of SSC and TrC modalities. Additionally, a few key principles to facilitate TrC include better alignment with country-led mechanisms, coordination and joining forces with the UN agencies and partners, and promotion of innovative financial mechanisms for SSC/TrC.

Participants agreed that the inclusion of multiple stakeholders was a key element of TrC that should be promoted and expanded. To achieve the SDGs, knowledge sharing about the lessons learned in TrC and continuing the discussion among all stakeholders are important. The OECD has launched an online project repository of TrC projects that can support in enhancing the knowledge base as well as an online library of reports and other related documents. TrC is especially useful for co-operation that relies heavily on country contexts.

Finally, there was general approval to launch a Global Partnership Initiative on Triangular Cooperation. The next steps include setting up a working group to define which concrete measures are needed and using the Ibero-American and other national and regional initiatives to promote the modality of TrC at the political level and make it more effective operationally. This will involve collecting data on TrC, building on the work already done e.g. by the OECD, the UN system and regional organizations, and preparing a work plan as well as a calendar for meetings of the working group.