

FIDC

Regional Consultation at Chennai:

SUMMARY OF PROCEEDINGS

15 March 2016, Chennai



RIS

Research and Information System
for Developing Countries

विकासशील देशों की अनुसंधान एवं सूचना प्रणाली

FIDC

FORUM FOR
INDIAN DEVELOPMENT
COOPERATION

भारतीय विकास सहयोग मंच

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Preface

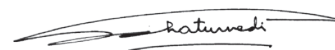
FIDC Southern Consultation

Fourth in the series of Regional Consultations organised by the Forum for Indian Development Cooperation (FIDC) till date, Southern FIDC Consultation was held on 15 March at Chennai, Tamil Nadu. Bay of Bengal Programme-Inter-Governmental Organisation (BoBP-IGO) and Madras Institute of Development Studies (MIDS) were the local partners. The consultation brought together civil society organisations (CSOs), members of the academic community and policymakers from the Southern region of the country to discuss India's Development Cooperation and South-South Cooperation (SSC). The concept note prepared for the consultation is given in Annexure I, while Annexure II provides the list of participants.

As the Agenda document (Annexure III) suggests, the Consultation was composed of four sessions. While the inaugural session set the tone of the consultation, capturing the broad contours of the necessity to organise such a regional dialogue among different stakeholders in SSC, the first Technical Session dealt with India's perspectives on and practice of SSC. The second Technical Session dwelt on the potentials and present status of participation of Indian CSOs in an effort to strengthen the spirit of SSC. The challenges faced by them in their efforts at contributing to SSC were also discussed during the session. Given the extensive coastline and vast riverine plains conducive to agricultural production in the Southern region, the final Technical Session, divided into two parallel sessions, concentrated on Agriculture and Fishery & Aquaculture. The following sections provide a bird's eye view on the discussions held during the sessions. A short section capturing the issues that emerged out of floor discussions has been included next. The final section of this brief note highlights the major takeaways from the Consultation.

I would like to thank Prof. Milindo Chakrabarti and Mr. Pratyush for getting the report together.

9 May 2016



Sachin Chaturvedi
Director General, RIS

Inaugural Session

At the inaugural session, Professor Sachin Chaturvedi, Director General, RIS made the welcome remarks. Mr. A.K. Sahu, Joint Secretary, Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India delivered the inaugural address. Prof. Janakarajan Srinivasan of Madras Institute of Development Studies (MIDS) delivered the keynote address. Prof. Shashanka Bhide, Director, MIDS extended the vote of thanks.



Prof. Chaturvedi in his welcome remarks gave a brief historical review of the four High Level Fora on Aid Effectiveness till date (Rome in 2003, Paris 2005, Accra 2008, and Busan 2011). He explained as to how Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) Development Assistance Committee (DAC) steered the discussion in Rome towards the returns that can be generated against the disbursement of aid to their respective tax payers. A series of specific implementation measures were adopted in Paris and a monitoring system to access progress and measure results of aid was established. The OECD-DAC in the third event in Accra reconciled to the fact that South-South Cooperation (SSC) is different from North-South Cooperation (NSC) and it served as the foundation for SSC commitments. However, at the fourth High Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness (Busan, 2011) OECD-DAC intended to rationalise SSC as a part of NSC by forming Global Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation (GPEDC) comprising of members from developed and developing nations, emerging economies, providers of South-South and triangular cooperation and civil society.

Prof. Chaturvedi also mentioned the theoretical differences between NSC and SSC and how the former is premised on Monetarist school of thought and the latter on the Structuralist school. He later underlined the importance of Development Partnership Administration (DPA) set up within the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA), Government of India in 2012. He mentioned that DPA is a work in progress towards streamlining the development cooperation projects undertaken by India in various Southern countries.



Mr. Arun Kumar Sahu, Joint Secretary, Ministry of External Affairs, in his inaugural address tried to contextualise development by questioning the meaning of development and ways to achieve them. The biggest domestic challenge for India, according to him, was to pull 20 per cent of India's population out of poverty. However, India is also aware of the developmental challenges faced by other developing countries and is willingly sharing responsibility of assisting them through its development cooperation programmes. He was of the opinion that governments have limitations owing to well meaning checks and balances in the system which



on many occasions slow the process of development. Initiating a multi-stakeholder dialogue is the best way of moving forward in this regard where various Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) working in different sectors are on board. He completed his address by emphasising the importance of platforms like FIDC which has been created to facilitate the consultation on SSC and India's development cooperation at track II level.

Prof. Janakarajan Srinivasan of MIDS delivered the keynote address in which he delved into the origins of foreign aid and development cooperation through his discussions on bi-polar world and the paradigm shift that has taken place in the international development cooperation from NSC to SSC. NSC was in existence on unequal terms in the past. However, global events like recession and rise of emerging economies gave strength and confidence to SSC. Demand driven nature of SSC coupled with non-conditionality have made SSC a desirable alternative to NSC. Nevertheless, there is a tendency towards the emergence of regional powers among the non-North countries and it is to be seen how they act and react with the developing countries. Prof. Srinivasan, then enumerated India's contribution to SSC through the examples of Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation's (ITEC) 10,000 annual scholarship slots, over 200 Lines of Credit (LoC) administered by EXIM Bank and DPA and other capacity building initiatives and bilateral grant assistance projects.

Common challenges of the Southern countries in the areas of poverty, hunger, malnutrition; urban slums; low human development indicators; lack of adequate social security and health care measures; ecological degradation and erosion of natural capital; environmental degradation; climate change threat and associated challenges; and increasing consumerism, rapid rise in waste generation, lack of scientific disposal methods provide an excellent level playing field for SSC to achieve the goals of sustainable development.

He ended his address throwing light on the grey areas associated with SSC and posed questions to the audiences as to what are the objectives of SSC; what is the long term strategy for SSC; and what do the Southern countries stand to gain out of SSC. He also raised a question as to whether all development cooperation projects under SSC are unconditional. (The full address is there in Annexure IV of this report.)



TECHNICAL SESSION: I

South-South Cooperation and India's Development Cooperation Policy: Perspective and Practice

Later in the day panelists discussed NSC and SSC from the perspective of haves and have-nots. The industrialisation and the colonisation of many countries around the world brought about an unequal distribution of wealth and riches. It is not exactly a feeling of guilt or philanthropy that drives the actions of the west or rich nations who reach out to the developing countries though it may be partly responsible for some of this action of the Governments. It has more to do with the higher moral values of civil societies and Governments who would like to ensure stability of Global systems through economic technical and administrative assistance. The system continues to evolve based on the experiences and the environment.

Arguments were also forwarded to the effect that one must accept the positives that were generated due to NSC. In our own country, we are familiar with the ODA and other such developmental assistances that were provided in different sectors. These helped the governments to build on infrastructure, access better technologies and embark on social initiatives that benefited the developing nations. Involvement of the various donor institutions in India, that assisted in establishment of different institutions in India, was flagged by some participants as an evidence of positive implications of NSC for a developing economy. This institute included IITs, AIIMS, etc.



An examination of the extent of cooperation with our neighbours tells us that India is doing a lot for helping the cause of upliftment in Bhutan, Nepal, Sri Lanka and Maldives. It has also reached out to the extended neighbourhood including Africa in the West and East Asian countries to provide the expertise that is required for improving the life of the people. The developmental assistance provided need not always be in monetary terms. The kind of expertise that is available, for example, in space, IT or agriculture or dairy promotion is necessary and could be replicated in other parts of the world. India is helping Vietnam in building a satellite monitoring station along with the necessary infrastructure and is providing training to Vietnam in manning and operating the facilities. Vietnam was also provided with invaluable assistance in the agricultural sector.

It was pointed out in other topical sessions of the consultation that the question of SSC lacking in framework and methodology have been answered by basing SSC against the theoretical monetarist versus structuralist debate and through the concepts of 'Development Compact' and 'Mission Approach'. The guiding principles of SSC were analysed under the normative and operational heads. Normative aspects of SSC include the non-negotiables like non-interference in the domestic affairs of the state. Operational aspects are mutual accountability and transparency, development effectiveness, coordination of evidences, etc. The speaker argued that "South-South" partnership should not reproduce "North-South" partnership, which is governed for the most part by an unequal relationship. The existing (DAC) criteria for evaluation and suggestive criteria for evaluation of SSC – in view of the fact that the guiding principles of SSC do not necessarily tally with the evaluation criteria evolved by DAC – were also raised and discussed during the session.



TECHNICAL SESSION: II

Development Cooperation and Role of CSOs

Technical session II had some pointed discussions on the role of CSOs in the wider debate of India's development cooperation and SSC. The general consensus of the panel was that the development cooperation must be of benefit to the diverse group, especially protection of the livelihood of the bottom 30 per cent of the population including small farmers, landless people and people dependent on fisheries and aquaculture must be benefitted. CSOs play an important role in achieving these developmental aspirations through various innovations as they stand for improving the livelihoods of the people. The good practices compiled by the CSOs must have a reach to the policy makers in order for those practices to be institutionalised. It was further reiterated that forums like FIDC play an important role of providing a bridge between CSOs and policy makers. It was pointed out that different CSOs working in the sectors like education, health and agriculture have provided policy inputs which have paid rich dividends.

The main operational constraint faced by the majority of CSOs is the resource crunch. Over the years there has been growing interest in CSOs' presence in the global development sector. However, the reach has been mainly through government to government and through private sector to private sector; the due recognition to CSOs has not been meted out. CSOs have a major role to play in future when India's Foreign Policy is ready to attach itself with its work on development cooperation and South-South Cooperation.

Various points were discussed as the way forward for Indian CSOs which are involved in SSC. One of the points which came out clearly during the consultation was issue of mutual learning. SSC stands for mutual learning and if innovative prototypes and specimen from India are replicated in other Southern countries, then it is but natural that India's constituency must get benefitted out of good practices taking place in different Southern countries. Various examples for the former case are as follows :

- South-South travelling workshops have been conducted by MS Swaminathan Research Foundation (MSSRF) where researchers visit project sites in each other's country and are introduced to good practices from India which are replicated in the partner country. Such mutual and cross learning is happening between India and Pakistan under the auspices of the travelling workshops. In keeping with the political sensibilities, many a times the meeting between the counterparts takes place virtually through ICTs.
- Establishment of Rice Bio Park in Myanmar by MSSRF is another example where such a model could be replicated in other paddy growing areas.
- MSSRF has also been involved in setting up of genetic gardens for biofortified crops with Afghanistan National Agricultural Science and Technology University (ANASTU) at the Tarnak Farm, Kandahar, Afghanistan.

- Millennium Villages programme, conceptualised by MSSRF, was picked up by the Earth Institute at Columbia University and served as the model for achieving Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).
- “Kudimaramath” in Tamil Nadu was the traditional system of community maintenance and ownership of water bodies. This system has now been revived by DHAN Foundation where in the community invests 25 per cent fund for the upkeep and maintenance of water tank for irrigation purposes. This system of community ownership for water bodies has been replicated in Sri Lanka and has the potential of getting replicated in other water scarce developing countries.
- Joint Forest Management in Maharashtra and Gujarat has led to conversion of arid land to the agricultural land. CSOs can help in replication of such practices in other Southern countries.

Three specific examples were quoted to substantiate the latter claim of how India may be benefitted through cross-learning from other Southern countries

- In Senegal because of community land ownership, there has been a proliferation of small agro-based enterprises, largely controlled by women that have enhanced the communities. This has also meant that land grabbing is arrested to a greater extent than in India, where such community based land ownership is non-existent except in the North-Eastern states of India.
- A second case is in Chiang Mai (Thailand), where there has been a lot of forest conservation that has led to sustainable livelihoods for indigenous populations. This is a learning that could help India with its current redistribution of forestlands to forest dwelling communities.
- A third case and this is more to do with political learning. In Colombia, the underground movement of FARC (Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia) which has been in civil war with the Colombian state for the past 35 years has now declared that it will take up nonviolence as a strategy to press its claims. Is there any way that this learning can be disseminated to Naxal movements and communities in the North-East and Kashmir?



CSOs must also take up the issue of knowledge dissemination through which the profession of agriculture is made a sought after sector and the middle class people need to understand the usefulness of agriculture as after all 51 per cent of people are contributing only 14 per cent to India's GDP. The government has to come up with policy initiatives but, involvement of CSOs can be never be over emphasised in this regard. However, it was also stated that agriculture sector contributes towards disguised unemployment. This fact also needs to be discussed at the grass root level.

CSOs involvement in advocacy and constructive criticism of the government over policy and implementation delays are few of the important tasks undertaken by them. This point was raised in the consultation with regard to similar advocacy related issues which may be undertaken by Indian CSOs in other developing countries. It was also pointed out that such an exercise would result in true demand driven nature of the SSC projects as these demands would be generated by the people and not by the government which in many cases are of authoritarian nature. However, such a step must be taken cautiously as it may entail the tendency of compromising one of the basic structure of SSC of 'non-interference' in the policy space of the partner government. Also a need was felt for CSOs to have a window in the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) which can facilitate various projects which at the moment are going a begging. A contact point in the government is necessary which CSOs can tap to reduce the missed catches.



TECHNICAL SESSION: III (A)

Parallel Session on Agriculture

Contribution of Western countries in establishment of agricultural academic institutions was flagged by citing example of United States. It was also stated that there should not be any apprehensions in learning from the Western institutions and models. In search of appropriate models for small landholding, one must analyse the replicability of the German model in India wherein sub-division of the farm holding is limited.

It was also stated that academic institutions contribute to the society by producing subject experts and the institutions also join hands with CSOs. The Institute for Social and Economic Change has worked closely with CSOs like PRADAN and has undertaken training modules for CSO members like MYRADA and LANESA. Example of Krishi Vigyan Kendras was also cited which are seen as science centres training farmers.

However, gaps between institutions and CSOs still exist and there is an urgent need to fill the gap. Lack of interest in academics to engage with CSOs was cited as the biggest hurdle in filling the gap. Source of education in the agriculture sector also needs to be taken care of. Study materials of foreign practioners are of little significance as they approach the agricultural issues from a very different perspective. Technical support required by the farmers must be given by the institutions. Synergy between institutions and CSOs must be strengthened as CSOs act as a link between farmers and institutions.



TECHNICAL SESSION: III (B)

Parallel Session on Fisheries and Aquaculture

The second parallel session was chaired by Dr. Y.S. Yadava, Director, BOBP-IGO, where following issues were discussed: (i) what are the best practices of community engagement? (ii) what are the prime drivers of success? (iii) what are the policy enablers/hindrances for scaling up and replication? and (iv) what is the possible institutional framework for achieving them?

In terms of best practices, the group identified several interventions for replication elsewhere. One of the identified interventions was community-driven project on use of solar energy in fishing vessels. The power from solar energy is used for running auxiliary functions such as lighting, running and charging of electronic equipment on-board fishing vessels, etc. The intervention carried out in Thoothoor, Kanyakumari district of Tamil Nadu recorded significant saving of fuel. Conventionally, power for running the auxiliary services is generated from running the main engine. The other possible uses of solar energy include refrigeration, solar lamps, etc. The other possible interventions were sea-weed farming; mussel farming, ornamental fishing, sharing experience of women SHGs, etc. On policy front, experience of India in stabilising coastal aquaculture through formation of Coastal Aquaculture Authority was found worth sharing. The group was of the view that India can also learn from South-east Asian Countries and other parts of the world about co-management in fisheries.

On drivers, it was pointed out that community demand-driven interventions were most successful. The group was also of the view that there is a need to provide relevant background documents in local languages so that the intimate stakeholders/communities can understand them and form their opinion. The group highlighted that similarity of institutions, especially of political system is a condition for success. Digressing on the issue of effective institutional framework, the group emphasised on building long-term partnership and the role of the local level institutions such as Panchayati Raj System in India as a driving factor for success.

On policy enablers/hindrances, the group found that the procedural mechanism for working in other countries such as fund transfer, administrative permission, etc. are often lengthy and fuzzy. These problems also exist in other countries and bilateral/multi-lateral should be sought to smooth flow of fund, people and knowledge amongst the countries once an activity is approved by the concerned Governments to help and learn from each other. The Group also emphasised on increasing people-to-people interaction through encouraging study visits and experience sharing forums.

From the Floor

The following general issues were flagged by the participants in different sessions as important factors for strengthening India's contribution to SSC through track II initiatives.

- Need for academia and CSOs to act together not only at discussion tables but also for operationalising SSC; instead of each of them pushing the other to act better.
- Better participation of private sector is required.
- We must acknowledge the work done by OECD-DAC is important.
- Institutional support to innovation is very much required.
- State governments must be involved in these regional consultations.
- Membership issue for FIDC is required to be institutionalised.
- Importance of cross-learning in SSC is must.
- Effective state-CSO-academia partnership is required for furthering the cause of SSC.

Towards the end of the sessions it was highlighted that organisation like the Bay of Bengal Programme Inter-Governmental Organisation (BOBP-IGO) play an important role at the inter-governmental level in promoting SSC. BOBP-IGO is a regional fisheries advisory body for the Bay of Bengal. Its members are Bangladesh, India, Maldives and Sri Lanka. The focus of the organisation is to promote South-South Cooperation at the regional level in the sphere of policy, technology, human resources and trade.



Key Takeaways

The following are the takeaways from the one-day Regional Consultation as possible action points.

- Urgent need of creating and institutionalising a network of domestic think-tanks and CSOs that would facilitate regular interactions and sharing of ideas in a continuous manner to ensure cross learning across regions in best practices that enhance livelihood options among those marginalised.
- Creating avenues/mechanisms for easy access by Indian NGOs to funds earmarked by Indian Government for development activity in foreign countries, e.g. India Africa Development Fund.
- Linking domestic networks with like-minded think-tanks and CSOs across the global South will help ensure cross learning and promote peace and prosperity in the world. Establishment of Network Southern Think-tanks (NeST) is a step in the right direction.
- Planned efforts at opening up effective channels of communication between Indian Missions abroad and successful organisations with proven capabilities in livelihood intervention will strengthen India's contribution to the spirit of SSC.
- Given the vast stretch of international border shared by many Indian provinces, efforts to engage the provincial governments in actualising SSC in neighbouring countries will also contribute significantly to India's efforts in development cooperation.
- Effective role of the local level institutions such as Panchayati Raj System in India can be a driving factor in replicating successful models in sustainable livelihood generation .
- Institutional arrangements are required to leverage the experiences from agriculture and fisheries sectors as generated by BoBP, MSSRF and Hand-in-Hand and many other such successful experiments by Southern CSOs within India and beyond, so that they may be scaled up and/replicated as required.
- Facilitating Indian NGOs in case they need any support, while implementing projects in foreign countries. Access to designated persons in Indian embassies and missions abroad. Linking up with foreign Governments and supporting while conducting scoping visits, surveys etc.
- A mechanism for accreditation of responsible Indian NGOs, based upon fixed parameters, including track record, transparency, intellectual capital and so on.
- Some of India's SSC interventions are required to be evaluated from the perspective of mutual benefits accruing to the partners, transparency and non-interference to ascertain that they have not breached the non-negotiable guide-posts of SSC.

CONCEPT NOTE

BACKGROUND

The Forum for Indian Development Cooperation (FIDC) was launched at a seminar held on 15 January 2013. The idea was to have a forum for exploring various facets of Indian development cooperation. The forum brings together academics, civil society, business leaders and policy makers. The FIDC aims to encourage detailed analysis of broad trends in South-South cooperation and contextualise Indian policies by facilitating discussions across various subject streams and stakeholders based on theoretical and empirical analysis, field work, perception surveys and capacity building needs.

The FIDC works towards raising the awareness about various dimensions of development cooperation policies through seminars, discussion meetings and publications including policy briefs. A directory with profile of Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) has also been published by the FIDC. It focuses on sectoral engagement of CSOs in the areas of agriculture, rural development, health, education, human resource development, infrastructure projects, environment, science and technology and other social areas including gender and humanitarian assistance. The recently concluded India-Africa Forum Summit underscored the role played by FIDC in creating modern social networks to build communities of mutual interest through building sustained linkages among academia, journalists and civil society.

However, as most of the FIDC seminars and conferences have been organised in New Delhi, there have been suggestions that FIDC as a platform should be expanded and the outreach of FIDC as a forum should be spread out to other cities as well. Taking this idea forward, we conducted so far, three regional consultations in Pune, Kolkata and Jaipur. A regional consultation in Chennai to facilitate interaction among CSOs and academia from the Southern part of the country is being organised during 15th March 2016. Bay of Bengal Programme Inter-Governmental Organisation (BOBP-IGO) and Madras Institute for Development Studies are our partners in hosting this consultation.

OBJECTIVES

The regional consultations are being planned with the objective of evolving a dialogue among various stakeholders on issues associated with Indian development cooperation policy. With the setting up of DPA, there are new expectations across civil society and academics. This seminar series would provide an opportunity to discuss scope, objectives and modalities in the realm of development partnerships. Efforts would be made to collectively explore nuances of various narratives on South-South cooperation (SSC) and in that context deliberate on Indian policy framework and various bilateral and multilateral programmes being administered by the Ministry of External Affairs, EXIM Bank and other line Ministries.

In this context, the role of civil society organisations (CSOs) assumes great significance. Several of them have successfully established remarkable linkages across different developing countries. Simultaneously, FIDC also endeavours to reach out to the academia, media persons and private entrepreneurs in developing a broad based platform for development cooperation in the spirit of SSC.

The dynamics of development cooperation has significantly changed over the last few years. The role of civil society has also evolved in the discourse. Engagement of CSOs is now viewed as a voluntary partnership which is now maturing over the years. CSOs are now being considered as effective channels of providing support at the grassroots levels. It is now evident that vibrant civil society organisations are increasing their footprint in the development cooperation landscape. CSOs have utilised their high quality expertise in diverse sectors ranging from health, water and sanitation, microfinance to capacity building.

In the past, two of the FIDC seminars were solely focused on the role and experiences of CSOs in development cooperation. The Department for International Development (DFID), UK, and International Development Research Centre (IDRC), Canada, shared their experiences working with the CSOs. At another event, Action for Food Production and Centre for Science and Environment (CSE) shared their experiences in working outside India.

FIDC is exploring ways of evolving mechanisms for strengthening communication across various actors. The key objectives may be summarised as follows:

- To hold consultations in different parts of India other than Delhi for enhancing awareness about SSC. In Southern part of India we intend to carry out consultation in collaboration with BOBP, Chennai and MIDS, Chennai.
- There are several actors that play an important role in the policy formulation. They include CSOs, academia, Chambers of Commerce and Industry, media among many others. The endeavour would be to engage them in the work of FIDC.
- This would also strengthen the FIDC publication, *Profile of Indian Voluntary Organisations* that was prepared in 2013 which majorly focussed on CSOs based in New Delhi. This would increase the outreach of the publication by including Southern CSOs working in Global South.

AGENDA

Effort shall be made at the Southern regional consultations to identify key partners so as to enhance the sense of partnership at local level. The spirit of India's approach to development cooperation involves providing demand driven inputs to partner countries. CSOs and private businesses can potentially play an effective role in such an endeavour given the tremendous knowledge base that they have created in terms of the interventions in various sectors. However, generally observed phenomenon regarding the activities of Indian CSOs and business are that they have been suffering from either capacity constraints and/or policy constraints to extend their activities beyond India. Thus, the suggested points of discussion during the consultations would be on:-

- The capacities of CSOs in working for SSC,
- Various capacity and policy constraints and
- Documentation of some of best practices of CSOs and Business enterprises and sharing of the ideas.

The long coastline that characterises the Southern states of India and the experiences in development interventions therein calls for special attention to explore the potential role of CSOs and academia vis-à-vis SSC around the "blue economy" – more importantly, fisheries and aquatic biodiversity – that manifests itself in the Indian Ocean region. Cooperation in capacity building is a hallmark of India's support to Southern countries. The role – both existing and potential – of institutions of higher learning located in Southern Indian region may also be included for special attention during the consultations.

We endeavour the consultations to last for one full day. Agenda will capture broad policy directions and roles being played by the line ministries like Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Ministry of Agriculture, Ministry of Rural Development, Ministry of Women and Child Development, Ministry of Human Resource Development, Ministry for Social Justice and Empowerment and etc. A presentation on India's flagship programme, viz. ITEC would also be organised. Successful case studies from CSOs along with the impediments that they face would also be taken up in a session. Experiences from the private sector partners and media in the context of development cooperation will also be highlighted. Academic inputs to strengthen Indian approach to SSC will be focussed on as well.

Intended Outcomes

- The consultation intends to initiate a dialogue with Non-State stakeholders on a regional level.
- Publication of an updated version of the *Profile of Indian Voluntary Organisations* that was prepared in 2013.
- An enhanced understanding on development cooperation and its operational components.
- Compilation of CSO success stories.

About FIDC

The Forum for Indian Development Cooperation (FIDC), launched on 15 January 2013 in New Delhi, has been engaged in exploring nuances of India's development cooperation programme, keeping in view the wider perspective of SSC in the backdrop of international development cooperation scenario. It is a tripartite initiative of the Development Partnership Administration (DPA) of the Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India, academia and civil society organisations.

The FIDC aims to encourage detailed analysis of broad trends in SSC and contextualise Indian policies by facilitating discussions across various subject streams and stakeholders based on theoretical and empirical analysis, field work, perception surveys and capacity building needs. At the domestic level, the FIDC would work towards raising awareness about various dimensions of development cooperation policies through seminars, discussion meetings, publications and would focus on sectoral analysis in the areas of agriculture, health, education, HR development, infrastructure projects, environment and other social areas including gender and humanitarian assistance. With a focus on SSC, the FIDC would also establish linkages and dialogue with international agencies and subject experts as well. Special focus would be extended to countries in the sub-region where India has major development assistance projects.

About RIS

Research and Information System for Developing Countries (RIS), a New Delhi based autonomous think-tank under the Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India, is an organisation that specialises in policy research on international economic issues and development cooperation. RIS is envisioned as a forum for fostering effective policy dialogue and capacity-building among developing countries on international economic issues. The focus of the work programme of RIS is to promote South-South Cooperation and assist developing countries in multilateral negotiations in various forums. RIS is engaged in the Track II process of several regional initiatives. RIS is providing analytical support to the Government of India in the negotiations for concluding comprehensive economic cooperation agreements with partner countries. Through its intensive network of policy think tanks, RIS seeks to strengthen policy coherence on international economic issues.

About the Bay of Bengal Programme Inter-Governmental Organisation

The Bay of Bengal Programme Inter-Governmental Organisation (BOBP-IGO) is a regional fisheries advisory body for the Bay of Bengal. Its members are Bangladesh, India, Maldives and Sri Lanka. The focus of the Organisation is on promoting South-South cooperation at the regional level in the sphere of policy, technology, human resources and trade. The Organisation was established in 2003 from a former field project of the Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations. The objective was to create a common platform to build regional cooperation for addressing national and transnational issues in fisheries, biodiversity and related subjects. During recent years, the Organisation is also engaged in activities with other Southeast Asia countries including Thailand, Indonesia, Vietnam and Philippines in the areas of community-based fisheries management. The major achievements of the Organisation include bringing its members together on the issue of management and conservation of shark and hilsa fisheries; paving the way for launching of a group insurance scheme for fishermen in Bangladesh; and successful technology transfer (India to other members) in the domain of personal safety devices for the fishermen and construction of FRP boats. The Organisation works closely with national, regional and international environment and development agencies including the World Bank Trust Fund (WBTF); Global Environment Facility (GEF); United Nations Development Programme (UNDP); Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO); International Maritime Organisation (IMO); International Labour Organisation (ILO); International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN); World Meteorological Organisation (WMO); International Cooperative Alliance; Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida); and National Institute of Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH), USA. Presently, besides its core activities, the Organisation is implementing the GEF/WBTF funded Ocean Partnership Project in Bay of Bengal for sustainable fisheries in areas beyond national jurisdiction.

About The Madras Institute of Development Studies (MIDS)

The Madras Institute of Development Studies (MIDS) is a social science research institution well known for its work in development studies. It was founded by late Prof. Malcolm S. Adiseshiah and Mrs. Elizabeth Adiseshiah, in January 1971 the Institute was reconstituted as a National Institute in March 1977 under the joint sponsorship of the Government of India through the ICSSR and the Government of Tamil Nadu.

The main objectives of the Institute are: (a) to undertake studies and research pertaining to development problems, with special reference to the agro-rural aspects of Tamil Nadu and the problems of the economically and socially backward sections of the population throughout the country; (b) to conduct seminars and conferences on development problems and programmes of the state; (c) to foster inter-university cooperation among the social scientists of the universities of the four southern states; and (d) to promote interdisciplinary research, and bring out publications relating to the above three functions.

The following are the broad faculty specialisation in the Institute: Economic Theory; Development and Planning; Centre-State Relations; Poverty, Inequality, and Social Sector Development; Agrarian Issues and Institutions; Irrigation and Irrigation Institutions; Labour; Industry and Infrastructure; Demography, Migration, and Urbanisation; Natural Resources and Environment; Education; Social Movements and Social Transformation; Caste, Constitution, Communalism, and Electoral Politics; Social Exclusion; Ideology; Gender; and State and Social Policies.

The Institute has a full time Ph D programme for students and as well as teaching faculty and this programme is affiliated with University of Madras. The Institute has hosted visiting faculty, doctoral and post-doctoral affiliates for short periods of six months to a year.

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AGENDA

9.00- 9.30 am	: Registration
9.30-10.15 am	: Inaugural Session Welcome Address: : Prof. Sachin Chaturvedi, DG, RIS Inaugural Address: Mr. A.K. Sahu, Joint Secretary DPA, Ministry of External Affairs, Govt. of India : Keynote Address: Prof. Janakarajan Srinivasan, MIDS : <i>Vote of Thanks:</i> Prof. Shashanka Bhide, Director, MIDS
10.15-11.00 am	: Tea Break/ Group Photograph
11.00-12.00 noon	: Technical Session I – India’s Development Cooperation: Perspective and Practice Chair: Prof. Sachin Chaturvedi, DG, RIS Panelists: • Comm. R.S. Vasan, Director, Centre for China Studies • Prof. Milindo Chakrabarti, Visiting Fellow, RIS. Open Session
12.00 noon-1.15 pm	: Technical Session II: Development Cooperation and Civil Society Organisation Chair: Prof. T. C. James, RIS Panelists: • Dr. Bhavani R V, Programme Manager, M S Swaminathan Research Foundation • Dr. Kaustuv Bandyopadhyay, Director, PRIA • Mr. Sandip Mookerjee, Vice President, Hand-in-Hand India Open Session

1.15-2.15 pm	:	<i>Lunch</i>
2.15-3:30 pm	:	Technical Session III: Parallel Sessions on Agriculture and Fisheries & Aquaculture
<u>Parallel Session I (Agriculture)</u>		<u>Parallel Session II (Fisheries & Aquaculture)</u>
<i>Chair/Moderator:</i> Dr. P. G. Chengappa National Professor of ICAR, Institute for Social and Economic Change		<i>Chair/Moderator:</i> Dr. Y. S. Yadava Director, BoBP
<i>Floor Participation</i>		<i>Floor Participation</i>
3.30-3.45 pm	:	Tea Break
3.45 – 4.15 pm	:	Wrapping -up

SOUTH-SOUTH DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION - ISSUES AND AREAS FOR COOPERATION

Prof. Janakarajan Srinivasan



Before the end of the bi-polar world, there existed what was called Soviet and US block of countries among which there existed a stiff competition as well as conflicts. The imbedded complexity then was the politics of “foreign aid” coupled with arm twisting strategies to stabilise geo-political relations in favour of aid-giving nations. Often, the Northern aid giver would try to influence the macroeconomic policies and governance conditions of developing countries. It fostered and nurtured the conditions of dependency mainly because of unequal trading relationship/ unequal bargaining power between super powers and developing countries. Foreign aid was used as a tool to consolidate and establish the regional strength and to

establish monopoly and exercise hegemony with a view to gaining control over regional economy as well as politics. Indeed, the deep rooted persistence of political problems between India and Pakistan and the rivalry in building defense capabilities in rather competitive manner is to a great extent attributed to this historical reality. This is just an example.

Besides the bi-polar politics, the North-South cooperation was very much in existence but again on unequal terms. The basis of North-South cooperation (for technology transfer, foreign aid to promote economic development, food aid etc.) was invariably dependent upon the foreign policy of recipient countries. Therefore, the North-South cooperation is also fostering and imposing dependency status.

Nevertheless, national economies world over have been undergoing rapid changes both in political and economic fronts. In the post globalisation era several regional powers have emerged/ or are emerging in the south. The countries such as China, India, Brazil and South Africa have been experiencing rapid economic changes. In particular, China’s economic performance has been stunning. And so also India’s, Brazil’s, South Africa’s. The BRIC nations alone account for 25 per cent of global GDP. This is a changing scenario – when the countries of North were shaken due to global recession, the countries of South stood like a rock and not only absorbed the shock but also established a sustained growth. This is precisely the objective condition that gave strength and confidence to South-South development cooperation. Several big countries of South have turned out to be a big aid-giving nations and also extending credit at a lower rate of interest. These countries have also started building basic infrastructure in the poorer south countries such as road, bridges, railways, power projects etc.

After all, South-South partnership was envisaged with a view to evolving new strategies of cooperation between all “non-north” countries, essentially after the end of bi-polar world. South-South cooperation was supposed to help in restricting the domination and arm-twisting strategies of

North. But, remember the effectiveness of South-South cooperation again very much depends upon the existing geo-political conditions and the prevailing regional political compulsions and economic conditions and stresses. Therefore, evolving a new global partnership – South-South cooperation for sustainable development - is also seemingly not all that straight forward. Nevertheless, the UN Sec-Gen, Ban Ki Moon expressed the south-south cooperation will “*ensure shared prosperity, sustainable development and a life of dignity for all*”. This is the expression of normative concern which needs to be respected and upheld. There is an urgent need for cooperation among *non-North* countries for mutual benefit and to combat common challenges and looming climate threats. Technical cooperation, exchange of knowledge and experiences, evolving common development strategies and most importantly to work towards sustainable development which signifies ecological and environmental security. Most importantly, in the SSC “**aid giver and receiver**” are seen as partners. Furthermore, the aim of the SSC is to strive hard to connect with several important stakeholders such as private sector agencies, civil society organisations, academia besides state agencies. This makes a significant difference from conventional approaches of international cooperation.

Nevertheless, there is a tendency towards the emergence of regional powers even among the *non-North* countries; best examples are China and South Africa. The regional geopolitical conditions and compulsions still determine the aid and cooperation between countries within south. But it does make a qualitative change: However, the SSC politics is less problematic and goes much beyond the traditional areas of cooperation (such as building defense capability, export of capital goods, limited technology transfer food aid etc). The SSC cooperation now extends to infrastructure building, climate change, energy, FDI in key areas of industrial development besides technology transfer.

UNDP and FAO have assumed a huge responsibility as facilitators and to build the required capacities to confront common development strategies and challenges. As a way to make North-South aid more effective, donor countries also support developing nations through triangular cooperation (TRC).

International experience of SSC

- IDRC and in particular, Canada-UNDP initiative has brought together countries such as Cambodia, Haiti, Mali, Niger, Sudan, etc. for joint learning and exchange of ideas and experiences in the areas of climate risks, early warnings, disaster risk reduction, evolving and sharing adaptation experiences in key sectors of agriculture and water management.
- UNDP in partnership with Denmark working with China, Ghana, and Zambia on renewable energy technology transfer, in which the key player being China
- South-South cooperation has also attracted support and commitment from North: China’s recent announcement on climate change commitment fund of US\$ 3.13 billion has attracted increased commitments from the US and France. In fact, China has agreed to contribute an additional US\$2 billion to support South-South Cooperation in general.¹

India’s contribution to SSC

Amazingly, India’s contribution to SSC has been extremely impressive. India is turning out to be a significant player in contributing to SSC:

- Through SSC, India has gone much beyond the conventional aid-receivers of South Asian neighbours of Bhutan, Nepal, Sri Lanka, Afghanistan and Sri Lanka.
- It has been estimated that India provides assistance worth US\$ 1.5-2 billion every year. Major areas of cooperation include: Lines of Credit (LoC), capacity-building training programmes and bilateral grant assistance projects.
- Till March 2015, the EXIM Bank had signed 194 Lines of Credit agreements with 63 countries with credit commitments of about US\$ 11.7 billion. More than 60 per cent of this credit was for African countries
- Under the Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation programme, about 10,000 (8,500 civilian and 1,500 defense) personnel from over 160 countries are trained in India every year.

Changes in trade among SSC

- Trade among South-South countries went up from US\$ 577 million in 1997 to over US\$2,000 billion in 2006.
- The total trade of African goods with non-African developing countries went from US\$ 34 billion in 1995 to US\$ 97 billion in 2004 and US\$ 283 billion in 2008.
- Chinese-African trade was estimated at over US\$ 200 billion in 2012.
- India's trade with Africa rose from US\$ 9 billion to US\$ 31 billion during the period 2004-2008.

Are SSC is completely unconditional?

The answer is no but not coercive as it is in the case of North-South relationship. What is the difference? As I indicated earlier, the North-South dealings always carried coercive tags, influencing macro-economic policies in particular pushing for privatising all key sectors and so forth. But the SSC is also not free from conditionality. But one may say that it is less coercive. For example, China for all its infrastructure building projects would want the aid receiving countries to extend 70 per cent of contracts be given to Chinese approved companies. This would deprive the local companies. In fact, many projects in Africa were carried out by bringing workers from China. This may severely affect the local economy and the intended results may be negative.²

The grey areas of SSC

What are the objectives of SSC? Is there any long-term strategy for SSC? What do the southern countries stand to gain? Are all aid contracts that take place among Southern countries are unconditional? If conditional, what are they? Does SSC completely uphold the principle of “no hegemony, no dependency, no exploitation and only collective self-reliance”?

More specifically, when a vast majority are in poverty in most donor countries of South and when over 60 per cent of population do not have adequate access to drinking water supply and sanitation, why billions of dollars are given away as aid to other Southern countries? Can we rule out completely the conflicting interests that exist among Southern countries?

Therefore, it is important to acknowledge the main challenges/issues/concerns that may inhibit larger South-South Cooperation. The poor socio-economic conditions that are prevalent in southern countries (including that of Emerging nations such as China, India, Brazil, South Africa etc. who are considered major players in SSC) are seemingly very important inhibiting factors that may inhibit full-scale SSC.

“According to the UN Multidimensional Poverty Index, 2.2 billion people still live in abject poverty. About 1.4 billion people, the majority in the South, still have no reliable electricity, 900 million lack access to clean water and 2.6 billion do not have adequate sanitation”

Nonetheless, the commonality of poor socio-economic conditions themselves may provide some kind of solidarity and strength for collective self-reliance and may help to keep away the conventional exploitative strategy of North-South trading relationship at least to some extent. What are those commonalities?

- Poverty, hunger, malnutrition
- Urban slums
- Low human development indicators
- Lack of adequate social security and health care measures
- Ecological degradation and erosion of natural capital
- Environmental degradation
- Climate change threat and associated challenges
- Increasing consumerism, rapid rise in waste generation, lack of scientific disposal methods

These commonalities themselves may provide an excellent level playing ground for cooperation among SSC to achieve the goal of sustainable development.

Possible areas of cooperation and areas for joint learning:

1. During the last couple of decades, most of the developing countries, more so the emerging nations have been experiencing a very high degree of urbanisation. Urban population in several of these countries and carrying capacities of major cities have become unmanageable. Some of the urban problems pose a huge threat and remain unresolved. These emerging problems could be jointly addressed by Southern countries: What are they?
 - Slum management
 - Streamlining urban and peri-urban expansion
 - Urban poverty
 - Waste disposal (solid waste, bio-medical waste, liquid waste and e-waste)
 - Waste water treatment and recycling
 - Urban transport - the concern of declining road space
 - Urban floods
 - Urban fundamentals
2. In the agricultural sector also there are issues which warrant immediate attention which could be addressed jointly by SSC: They are:
 - Low agricultural productivity despite the use of high levels of chemical inputs and declining soil health;

- Need for promotion of organic farming;
 - Low water use efficiency and the need for increasing productivity per unit of land and water;
 - Lack of scientific storage facility (particularly for fruits and vegetables);
 - Scientific irrigation water delivery system through modernising canal network;
 - Modernising agricultural techniques and implements;
 - In the context of groundwater emerging as the most predominant source of irrigation it is important to work towards balancing this precious resource. How to match the GW extraction and recharge – scientific rainwater harvesting strategies?;
 - Sustainable agriculture;
 - Dry land farming, promotion of small millets and promotion of risk aversion practices;
 - Large scale conversion of prime agricultural land for non-agricultural purposes – Its impact is going to be adverse and raise serious food security concerns as well as issues of raising rural unemployment. As a consequence, in the absence of alternate livelihood options there is a danger of rise in rural poverty;
 - The urgent need for agricultural/crop insurance – particularly because of increasing climate risks; and
 - Need to promote an intensive dialogue among southern countries on how to make agriculture a commercially viable and sustainable enterprise.
3. How to address a large number of water conflicts that are emerging in the context of development process? Inter-state and transnational water disputes, rural-urban, inter-sectoral, hydro-power generation versus livelihood needs, etc. The example of Nile basin initiative (NBI) in East Africa.
 4. Erosion of natural capital, eco-restoration and guaranteeing ecological security and sustaining per capita bio-space – the key for sustainable development.
 5. Treatment of industrial effluent.
 6. Rejuvenation of rivers and water bodies and maintaining overall environmental standards.
 7. Climate change and adaptation and mitigation strategies, particularly so in the energy sector; promotion of non-conventional source of energy.
 8. Protection of low elevation coastal zone in particular deltas; they are supposedly granaries of food grains but in recent times they are under stress due to various factors. The most important factor is increasing salinity of soil and groundwater which affects considerably agricultural productivity and employment; the reverse flow of seawater in deltas needs to be addressed.
 9. Protection of coastal ecology and coastal environment – the Sundarbans, the classic example – where the much needed cooperation between India and Bangladesh is required.
 10. Address also jointly the issue of limits to adaptation in the context of global dialogue on climate change.
 11. Disaster management and disaster risk reduction strategies; early warning and early action systems.
 12. Sharing experiences of flood and drought management and evolving joint long-term strategies for flood and drought mitigation.
 13. Managing water quality standards – the case of arsenic.

14. Sharing the academic experiences of natural resources accounting and ecosystem valuation and natural resources regeneration.
15. Issues pertaining to environmental accounting.
16. Attacking poverty – sharing poverty alleviation measures; examples: PDS, National rural employment guarantee scheme, direct money transfer to beneficiaries, noon meal scheme in the schools and so forth.
17. Building a resilient state and society.
18. Infrastructure building – highways, rail transport, energy, telecommunication.
19. Supply of protected water and scientific sanitation facility for all.
20. Affordable health care and social security system.
21. Affordable school education for all.
22. Encourage civil society participation in South-South development cooperation.
23. Promote consciously joint research and stakeholders' dialogue between South-South countries in all the areas listed above in particular, vital areas such as agricultural water use efficiency, ecological and environmental security, climate change, climate mitigation and adaptation, disaster management and DRR, rural-urban migration, sustainable urban and city development, water quality, drinking water and sanitation and ensuring food and livelihood security.
24. Most vital, gender disparity is very glaring in all these areas in all countries. This needs to be jointly addressed by work towards women empowerment. In this context, the initiative of women self-help groups is very important.

Endnotes

- ¹ See <http://www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/blog/2015/11/27/Cooperation-and-sharing-can-help-combat-climate-change/> for details.
- ² See “South-South Cooperation: A new glow in international cooperation.” Available at: <http://www.ictsd.org/bridges-news/bridges-africa/news/south-south-cooperation-a-new-glow-in-international-cooperation>

RIS A Think-Tank of Developing Countries

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For more information about RIS and its work programme, please visit its website: www.ris.org.in



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Research and Information System
for Developing Countries

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