

FIDC

FORUM FOR
INDIAN DEVELOPMENT
COOPERATION

भारतीय विकास सहयोग मंच

FIDC REGIONAL CONSULTATIONS



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विकासशील देशों की अनुसंधान एवं सूचना प्रणाली

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FIDC Regional Consultations: Outcomes and Way Forward

Since its inception in 2013, Forum for Indian Development Cooperation (FIDC) had the mandate of carrying out seminars, consultations, policy dialogues and conferences on various facets of Indian development cooperation. Publishing reports and producing analytical research on all the broad constituents of India's development partnership spectrum has also been the forte of FIDC. The objectives, identified to be accomplished by FIDC when it was launched can be listed under the following three categories:

Consolidation Exercise:

Address outgoing grants and loans constituting, what is called 'development cooperation', which would also seek to draw upon India's own experience as a recipient country.

- Facilitate discussions across various subject streams and stakeholders based on theoretical and empirical analysis, field work, perception surveys and capacity building needs.
- Encourage detailed analysis of broad trends in South-South Cooperation and contextualise Indian policies.
- 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.
- Study the effectiveness of development assistance in achieving India's foreign policy objectives and compare India's development assistance programmes with those of other countries.

The idea of consolidation exercise was thus to develop a narrative on South-South Cooperation (SSC) and Triangular Development Cooperation (TDC) through a Southern lens facilitating discussions and deliberations on concepts of SSC and TDC in a multi stakeholder setting comprising of policy makers, academia and Civil Society Organisations (CSOs). For practical purposes, term CSO covers entire gamut of organisations which are alternatively classified as non-governmental organisations, community based organisations, voluntary organisations, rights based organisations, etc.

Networking Plans:

- FIDC seeks to provide a platform to discuss programmes, policies and modalities related to India's development cooperation with other developing countries. It would work as an informal grouping of concerned academics, civil society representatives and/non-governmental organizations active in the field of economic, social and human development.

The idea of networking plan has been to bring in relevant stakeholders from within India, its immediate neighbourhood and a possible advancement in the extended neighbourhood. To begin with the neighbourhood exercises may well be carried out in a bilateral manner and then possible regional and/or multilateral engagements may be thought of.

Communication and Outreach Strategy:

- Establish dialogue with the Development Partnership Administration (DPA) of the Ministry of External Affairs and other relevant government agencies. With a focus on SSC, FIDC would 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.
- Raise awareness of various dimensions of the development cooperation policies through seminars, discussion meetings and publications.

Communication strategy is necessary to continue a seamless dialogue with the existing network partners and creating a channel to attract new stakeholders to participate in the dialogue.

Graduation of FIDC into Regional Consultations

As a gradual progression over time and upon growing in experience and confidence, it was decided by the stakeholders within FIDC that the platform needs to venture out of Delhi and embark upon regional consultations in different parts of India. The idea was to increase the outreach of the Forum to other cities and engage with academic institutions, civil society organisations (CSOs) and other significant actors based out of Delhi and also benefit from their experiences and perspectives.

With the above background, a proposal was floated to the Ministry of External Affairs for organising FIDC regional consultations in the cities of Pune, Kolkata, Jaipur, Chennai and Guwahati. The main objectives of regional consultations were as follows:

- To collate details on development projects run by Indian CSOs outside India and to comprehend the nature of work done and understand challenges faced by them.
- To organise regional and national seminars with the purpose of creating awareness and to conduct public debates on India's contributions to international development cooperation.
- As several actors are playing an important role in the policy formulations: parliamentarians, chambers of commerce and industry, media among many others. The endeavour was to engage them in the work of FIDC. Meetings and briefing seminars were organised for the parliamentarians for capacity building and awareness creation, absorbing their comments for systemic responses.

On receipt of necessary support from MEA, FIDC undertook 5 regional consultations in Pune (10-11 February, 2015), Kolkata (23-24 March, 2015), Jaipur (22-23 December, 2015), Chennai (15 March, 2016) and Guwahati (24-25 October, 2017). FIDC has effectively served the role of creating a communication channel between the state and the CSOs to influence policy decisions related to both domestic and foreign issues. The consultative time range February 2015 - October 2017 has seen the evolution of various government schemes like DISHA and PRAGATI with emphasis on enhanced accountability, increased speed, greater transparency and expanded awareness of India's development cooperation projects. These aspects and associated debates were captured and reflected throughout our 5 consultations and the views and observations from the ground were shared with MEA from the 5 outreach exercises. Also, through these consultations, the necessity and effectiveness of India's SSC interventions were clarified to citizens. Following key points emerged from these consultations:

Lessons from Domestic Experiences

India has evolved a mechanism of engaging various actors in the economic development. The contributions of CSOs have been of critical importance as they have brought their expertise and innovative solutions to the developmental challenges across the country. Involvement of CSOs in various capacities like public service contractors and groups working in partnerships with the state governments have over the period provided timely inputs on development issues. The institutional and developmental memory gathered by these CSOs may be leveraged by scaling up their involvement in India's partner countries for India's development cooperation projects. CSOs like SEWA are already involved in various countries of the South and many more CSOs showed keenness in venturing out of India.

Inputs from CSOs and Academia

Involvement of international CSOs in global summits and international conferences came to light during the course of regional consultations. Prior to any particular international conference or summit, the CSOs come together to discuss and deliberate the issues at hand and arrive at an acceptable consensus to be placed during subsequent global dialogue. This process is sometimes federated in nature facilitating preparation of outcome documents in an apparent bottom-up manner to give sense of participation. Such a structured process helps presenting a unified voice from the civil society in such international fora. Most of the CSOs representing the Southern world generally get co-opted even if the consensus are sometimes not in tune with the interest of the civil society located in their respective countries. As Indian and other Southern CSOs get an opportunity to be heard at global platform only through hand-holding of international CSOs, a system generated 'agency' problem creeps in and Northern CSOs manage to claim moral representation of the interests of Southern countries in such high level forum through their effective networking practices.

Certain CSOs raised the concern of inconsistent western organisations and agencies with regards to local needs and trying to create confusion on domestic deprivation and external resource creation by India. FIDC in this case has been a boon for bringing varied CSOs at a single table to discuss and deliberate the issues of development cooperation. To the satisfaction of the participants and delegates, an example was shared in our Kolkata consultation of community based non-state actors from Bhutan, India (Sikkim) and Nepal coming together for the cause of biodiversity conservation for Kanchenjunga Landscape. A population of more than 7.2 million people reside in this landscape region out of them little more than 6.3 million are from India. They are spread across 5 dzongkhas – Haa, Chukha, Samtse, Dagana and Paro in Bhutan, 4 districts from Sikkim and parts of Darjeeling and Jalpaiguri districts of West Bengal and 4 districts of Jhapa, Ilam, Taplegunj, Panchthar from Nepal. There are livelihood linkages with conservation of Kanchenjunga Landscape across these settlements. Several culturally significant pilgrimage points, a number of existing and potential tourism areas dot this region. People in this region are extremely vulnerable to globalisation, migration and other drivers of change. Another point of commonality lies in the significant high human-wildlife conflict across this region. Further, the communities share indigenous knowledge and access to natural resources. These communities joined hands together and participated in designing a common action plan for conservation of Kanchenjunga Landscape.

Inputs from consultation also added to the academic discourse on SSC and India's development cooperation. A number of publications linked to conceptualising the lexicons of development cooperation through a Southern lens came up from participants of these consultations. Some of them have been incorporated as FIDC policy briefs. A few more have been published in referred journals as well.

Inputs from Private Sector

India's pro-activeness in engaging its private sector for the community development through Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) has already started to show some positive effect though various challenges remain. It was evident throughout the 5 regional consultations that the private sector was eager to create an image of Brand India in different countries. Leveraging the private sector for development cooperation in Africa was discussed in our deliberations at Pune. It was shared that Kirloskar pumps in various African countries have resulted in increased rice productions and 'Kirloskar' has now been used as a generic term for variety of water pumps in general parlance. In the Guwahati consultation the example of Shija Hospital and Research Centre was shared where they have organised health camps in Myanmar. In their "Mission Myanmar for cleft lip and palate" in May 2013, 103 operations were performed on 87 patients and "Mission Myanmar for Sight" in December 2013, 178 patients with cataract blindness was operated upon. These missions have enhanced the goodwill between the two nations and specially Manipur and Sagaing region of Myanmar.

Role of Consultations

These consultations helped in a major way to sensitise the concerned people and relevant stakeholders in nature, purpose and implications of SSC. Different normative and conceptual reason for India's engagement in the developing world and modalities through which its positive presence has been felt by the South was shared with the participants in these consultations. On various occasions it came to our notice that the CSOs subconsciously were already engaged in activities of SSC without knowing the academic jargons and concepts of SSC and Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). FIDC consultations, in this regard, have been successful in spreading the ideas of SSC across the country and creating a constituency of SSC.

Opportunities for Indian CSOs to participate in global development debates were mostly channelled through their networks with international CSOs. Discussion in FIDC underscored the need for engaging them in framing India's official position in such debates. FIDC initiated action to engage members from CSOs in dialogues before, during and after the 3rd Financing for Development conference in 2015 in Addis Ababa. FIDC also contributed meaningfully to organising the BRICS Civil Forum (2016) in collaboration with representatives from Indian CSOs. Some of our Indian partners from the CSOs even went onto the extent of sponsoring the participation of members of CSOs from other BRICS and BIMSTEC countries. In a similar vein, FIDC was also the focal point in organising the meeting of administrators from development partnership departments from BRICS member countries in 2016.

Possible New Areas

During the consultations, several participants across India gave examples as to how India can engage with new sectors and deepen the engagement in already existing sectors. Representatives from Modern High School for Girls and Calcutta International School in our Kolkata consultation shared the steps for strengthening the cooperation in school education across the neighbouring countries. Major initiatives in water conservation was also shared by the representative from Expert on Water, a Sambulpur based CSO. Similarly, representatives of CSO from the border areas of Jaisalmer, Rajasthan shared and discussed steps for improving health (especially women health) in those regions. They also shared their problems and challenges in trying to achieve their desired goals.

Regional Variations

Through the consultations it emerged that the awareness regarding the foreign policy and domestic policies vary from state to state and that each state has differing priorities over India's foreign policy. Consultations held closer to international borders – in Jaipur (Western border), Kolkata (Eastern border), Chennai (Southern Border) and Guwahati (North Eastern border) expressed larger sensitivity to issues in cross border development. For example, representatives from Jaiselmer emphasised on the health issues and lack of medical care facilities in the region and it came out through our Chennai consultations that the fisheries sector is the area of concern for them. Some of the low hanging fruits like ease of VISA regime for medical tourism, increasing number of immigration check points and lower legal hassles for trading points, including the associated infrastructure across the North East were discussed in the Guwahati consultations.

North East Specificities

The consultation in Guwahati had specific sessions devoted to the unique nature of international boundaries across the 8 north eastern states. The idea was to leverage on the uniqueness of the NER having 98 percent international border which should be treated as an asset and not a liability for development of NER. The sessions were: Rationale for Synergies between North East and Act East Policies; Border Trade between North Eastern Region (NER) and Neighbouring Countries; Developing Regional Value Chain; Natural Resources, Water & Energy; Education, Health and Tourism; and Physical Connectivity and Infrastructure. Effect of domestic policies have a pronounced effect on the bordering districts thus, inter-linkages between foreign policy and domestic policy plays a crucial role for the North-East.

Inputs for Policy Makers

All the aforementioned outcomes from the relevant stakeholders have the potential to contribute to policy making exercise for SSC and India's development cooperation initiatives. Through discussion and deliberation based series of regional consultations, policy makers could get first-hand views about stakeholders' expectations and concerns vis-a-vis India's effort in development cooperation. They were also informed of the way non-state stakeholders can contribute effectively to different development cooperation exercises undertaken by India. Experience sharing and various case studies (Kanchenjunga Landscape and Shija Hospital) have articulated strongly to the policy makers the potential of creating a strong people-to-people connect. It was further to emphasise that supporting the social sector of the partner countries would go a long way in positively impacting the lives of people, with a logic of sharing.

A Quick Gap Analysis

It becomes amply clear that FIDC as a platform through its continuous hosting and organising seminars, consultations and conferences, both in Delhi and outside has been able to achieve most of the objectives enumerated earlier in the section. FIDC has achieved tremendous visibility with its networking initiatives. Communication and Outreach strategy has also come in handy for this purpose with publications of Policy Briefs, Discussion Papers, Research Reports and Conference Proceedings. However, the consolidation exercise is a work in progress.

The next section proposes a roadmap for future to take care of the gaps that exist.

Way Forward

The present section, in tune with the outcomes elaborated in the previous section, identifies the possible course of action that may add to effective policy making vis-a-vis India's efforts at development cooperation. The contribution of FIDC regional consultations in firming up policy response to development cooperation has already been chronicled in the previous section. The proposed way forward would also facilitate creating expanded space for the CSOs and academics, thereby carrying out the mandates given to FIDC. The last part of this section also talks about expanding the horizon of future consultations. Following are the major suggestive ways forward to take care of the gaps that exist between the intended and realised objectives vis-a-vis FIDC:

Enhancing the Role of CSOs

- **Pushing the Indian Narrative Forward**

FIDC through its Delhi based seminar series and regional consultations have been able to convey the Indian growth story to CSO community across the nation. Theoretical and conceptual understanding of SSC and India's development cooperation were also shared with CSOs. India's development cooperation initiatives, projects and future prospects were discussed with them as well. Presence of policy makers and academics within FIDC facilitated this process. These exercises of sensitising the Indian CSOs have led them to appreciate a different narrative which till now was dominated by influence of Northern CSOs. FIDC has in a major way empowered the Indian CSOs in understanding and communicating the Indian narrative on issues of SSC and development cooperation to wider global audience.

- **Greater Role Accorded to CSOs in Developing Country Strategies for International Fora**

The issue of Southern, including Indian, CSOs not getting the requisite space to articulate their views in the global forum, was raised periodically in FIDC seminars and regional consultations. Members within FIDC were of the opinion that Indian delegation to high profile international conferences must also comprise of representatives from local CSOs. Experiments in this regard was carried out for engaging Indian CSOs in a run up to the third International Conference on Financing for Development in Addis Ababa and UN Conference on Sustainable Development Goals in New York both in 2015 where FIDC side events were organised to provide a platform for Indian CSOs to present their views and perspectives. Similar consultations were organised by FIDC at BRICS Civil and BRICS Development Partnership Agency's meetings in 2016.

- **Supporting Indian CSOs**

In view of the positive experiences from the activities detailed above, efforts may be initiated in organising dialogues with Indian CSOs ahead of relevant international conferences and global summits, specially related to WTO, G20 etc. Importance of CSO dialogues ahead of international conferences and summits is imperative from the fact that international CSOs try to influence global policy making endeavours. It should be added that Northern CSOs actively participate in drafting outcome documents in international dialogues, consultations, summits and conferences. They are also engaged in agenda setting exercises. Active participation of

CSOs in formulating Indian strategy will contribute meaningfully in arriving at a unified stand for our negotiators. Given the success achieved earlier, such consultations may be planned ahead of all such forthcoming international engagements, involving multilateral negotiations.

Enhancing the Role of Academics

- **Empirical Research**

With greater exchange of ideas on development cooperation there has been a realisation within academic community to initiate empirical and analytical research on development cooperation. As India expands its bilateral, regional and multilateral engagements, it becomes even more important to commence research on theoretical framework of SSC, assessment framework, developing relevant lexicons on SSC along with documenting case studies of our development projects in other countries. Such efforts will facilitate informing the CSOs and policy makers in adding to their negotiation expertise.

- **Southern Voice**

Overabundance of Northern academics in the field of international development cooperation who study South-South Cooperation (SSC) and Triangular Development Cooperation (TDC) became evident during regional consultations. Coupled with this issue, the gap was widened due to lower volume of research by Southern academics, which was comparatively less significant for policy considerations. Consequently, the concept of SSC and TDC are predominantly viewed from a Northern perspective.

Role of Policy Makers

- **Articulation of SSC**

Shared understanding and multi-stakeholder approach of FIDC led regional consultations have brought about fresh insights to policy makers. The participatory process of sharing experiences and inputs from CSOs and academics will assist them in better articulation of SSC and India's development cooperation initiatives at various multilateral fora like G20, BRICS, IBSA and other relevant summits and conferences.

- **Foreign Policy and Domestic Policy**

The issues of developing the cross border districts coupled with emphasis on simultaneous strengthening of internal and external connectivity in North East of India came up strongly during one of the consultations. Also, a stronger linkage between line ministries, Ministry of DoNER and Ministry of External Affairs was sought for the North East. There were discussions highlighting the operational linkage between India's foreign and domestic policies. Thus, recalibrating our development efforts for North East and development cooperation initiatives for neighbouring countries can now be seen from a renewed lens. Such experiences are visible in the context of Indo-Nepal relations, for example Kathmandu based Nepal Netra Jyoti Sangh and Chennai based inter-governmental organisation Bay of Bengal Programme.

- **Attention to Specific Sectors**

FIDC led regional consultations also brought to the fore the specific sectors of development cooperation which, if paid more attention, has the ability to make India's initiatives more meaningful for the partner country concerned. Health sector and natural resource management

in Western India, fishery sector for Southern India, cooperation in primary education across our borders on the Eastern front and medical tourism across the North Eastern borders were discussed in detail in our regional consultations.

Expanding the Horizon of Forum

- **Regional Consultation**

Besides continuing with the present exercise of organizing regional consultations, a series of bilateral consultations is now necessary to be designed involving participation of relevant stakeholders from across the neighbouring countries. A gradual opening up of the platform into a regional multilateral body of relevant stakeholders can also be thought of. At this stage, for the coming year, we propose to organize five regional consultations in cities like Thiruvananthapuram, Chandigarh, Ahmedabad, Bhubaneswar and Imphal. Bilateral consultations may be experimentally started in Bangladesh and Nepal. Exercise in creating people-to-people network in Bhutan and Myanmar may be taken up subsequently if the results from Bangladesh and Nepal are found encouraging and constructive. Anticipating a positive outcome, FIDC may even think of advancing the network to other Southern countries as well, like in Africa, ASEAN and Pacific Island and Latin America

- **Fellowship Programs**

Another area of extension in terms of fellowship programs which may be granted to relevant institutions and individuals for both academic and action research maybe thought of to facilitate development of required narratives. In this regard, a capacity building and fellowship programme on principles and practices of SSC and TDC catering specifically to the CSOs may be thought of. It is imperative that people-to-people contact cannot be operationalised in the absence of a strong South-led narrative of development cooperation. While documentation of practices undertaken by CSOs can contribute immensely to such a narrative building exercise, analytical dissection of development cooperation activities to arrive at conceptual framework on SSC is also necessary.

Conclusion

The most important contribution of FIDC so far has been the simultaneous knowledge creation and influencing the policy makers and the citizens in arriving at some congruence of ideas. The learning and way forward sections have clearly enumerated the advances made in networking; communication and outreach objectives of FIDC. However, one must not lose focus of the fact that consolidation exercise is a corollary to the other two objectives in which FIDC has attained considerable traction. A meaningful strategy for future of FIDC would be to actively build on the good work of last five years and actively pursue ways forward of consolidation exercise as mentioned in the last section. FIDC hopes that relevant stakeholders would assimilate the value of such regional consultations and would be encouraged to take necessary action from the learning presented in this report.

Regional Consultations on Development Cooperation

10-11 February 2015
Symbiosis International University, Pune

Regional Consultation on Development Cooperation

23-24 March 2015
Institute of Foreign Policy Studies, University of Calcutta, Kolkata

FIDC Regional Consultation at Pune and Kolkata

South-South Cooperation and India: Insights from FIDC Multi-Stakeholder Policy Dialogues

Introduction

The regional consultations were organised by the Forum for Indian Development Cooperation (FIDC) with the objective of widening the ongoing dialogue among various stakeholders by including the views of regional actors on issues associated with the Indian development cooperation policy. With the setting up of the Development Partnership Administration (DPA) at the Ministry of External Affairs, there are new expectations across civil society and academics. This consultation series provided an opportunity to discuss scope, objectives and modalities in the realm of development partnerships. Efforts were 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 government, 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.

The role of civil society has also evolved in the discourse. Engagement of CSOs in this critical field is now viewed as a voluntary partnership which has now matured over the years. CSOs provide support at the grassroots levels. It is evident that vibrant civil society organisations are increasing their footprint in

the development cooperation landscape. Some of the CSOs have also been contributing their notable expertise in diverse sectors ranging from health, water and sanitation, micro-finance to capacity-building.

Narrative on South-South Cooperation

South-South Cooperation (SSC) has been emerging as an important component in global development cooperation arena today, notwithstanding the debate as to whether it is a substitute for or complement to the traditional donor-led global architecture of foreign aid. Recent estimates suggest that the flow of resources through SSC has risen steadily during the last decade, but North-South Cooperation (NSC) is still important.

In recent years, SSC has become more prominent in discussions on international cooperation for development as the rapid economic growth experienced by many Southern economies has enhanced their importance, role and visibility in global affairs. The modalities for SSC have taken different and evolving forms, which include capacity-building, training, technology transfer and financial assistance. SSC has developed in such a way that the process has become a multifaceted engagement. The element of cooperation is critical to the extent that it

enables partner countries to progress on their own, which, in turn, presupposes horizontal supportive flows in the form of trade, technology and investment.

SSC aims to discover and exploit the principle of 'complementarity' in production, consumption, trade, investment, and technological and development cooperation. These processes are inter-linked and may in turn generate forward and backward linkages, which eventually may produce positive synergies across the Southern economies. The sharp expansion in trade and investment linkages among the Southern countries underlines this phenomenon.

India has a long history of development partnership, moving from a net aid receiver to a rising development partner. The rehabilitation schemes in Sri Lanka, power plants in Afghanistan, connectivity projects in Nepal and Myanmar, lines of credit to Africa, etc., are a few prominent instances of India development partnership activities.

In view of India's growing emphasis on strengthening SSC, some important issues require attention at this juncture for policy cohesiveness. They are:

- Developing a theoretical structure that explains the rationale of SSC and conceptualises its attributes in a transparent and unambiguous manner;
- Deliberations on possibilities and necessities of going beyond the paradigm of SSC (which is till now limited to cooperation at the level of national governments) that create adequate and effective space for non-state actors like private enterprises, CSOs and even communities; and
- Initiating an informed discussion towards creation of an effective evaluation structure for SSC.

In this regard, FIDC organised two important regional consultations on 10-11 February 2015 in Pune and on 23-24 March 2015 in Kolkata in

collaboration with the Symbiosis International University, Pune and the University of Calcutta respectively. This Policy Brief builds on the deliberations that ensued during these regional consultations. In general, these consultations provided an opportunity to discuss scope, objectives and modalities in the realm of development partnerships. Efforts were made to collectively explore nuances of various narratives on SSC and deliberations on Indian policy framework and various bilateral and multilateral programmes being administered by the Government of India. Special sessions emphasising the role being played by the education sector in fostering SSC were scheduled in both the consultations. Representatives of the private sector also contributed in these deliberations.

Major issues and the consequent recommendations emerging from the two consultations are summarised as follows. These recommendations are broadly classified under four heads:

- Facilitating participation of Indian CSOs in development cooperation;
- Facilitating Indian educational institutions in expanding their footprint to global South;
- Identification of India's potential role in the broader perspective of South-South Cooperation; and
- Recommended way ahead for FIDC.

I. Facilitating Participation of Indian CSOs in Development Cooperation

Both consultations underscored the importance of CSOs in enhancing India's development cooperation from the perspective of SSC. They revealed that there are a number of challenges facing the CSOs in terms of outreach due to the presence of a number of policy constraints of various dimensions such as RBI regulations, lack of banking regulations, issues related to Ministry of Home affairs (tax and Foreign Contribution Regulation Act related issues), etc.

There are restrictions on bringing money from foreign countries and there are many disclosure challenges. Accounting standards are different that create audit issues.

It is felt that necessary policy changes are required to facilitate smooth and seamless participation of the Indian CSOs in development cooperation. Issues related to capacity constraints faced by the Indian CSOs also came under discussion. The major constraints identified were in respect of programme design and planning, monitoring and evaluation of the interventions and their proper documentations. It was proposed that measures to augment these capacities are necessary from within the CSO community, with academia and professionals providing a hand-holding support to them. It was emphasised that the CSO sector is extremely useful for formulation of policies and is helpful in planning programme structures and processes. The essentiality for “need based planning” and capacity building for the NGOs need also to be strongly emphasised.

South-South Cooperation involves supporting partner countries in accordance with their felt needs. Under such circumstances the role of DPA revolves around matching the desired services with the expertise of best suited CSOs in terms of expertise and experience to provide the required service. It is strongly felt that a process be initiated for formulating the criteria to be used in helping the DPA to identify the relevant CSOs on a case-by-case basis. The potential role of FIDC in facilitating the identification of CSOs and experts was also underscored.

II. Facilitating Indian Educational Institutions in Expanding Their Footprints in Global South

Given its advancements in the field of education in general and higher education in particular since independence, India can provide considerable support to its Southern partners in development. Such an effort

would also add considerably to the growth potential of India. This assertion was endorsed by participants in both the consultations. While the Pune consultation was exclusively centred on the role that Indian institutions of higher learnings can play in SSC, the Kolkata consultation highlighted the potential role of school education in propagating the spirit of development cooperation across global South.

The Pune consultation identified the need to generate a reliable database of international students – country-wise, discipline-wise and institution-wise – pursuing higher education in India with active support from Foreigner Regional Registration Offices (FRRO) and the Association of Indian Universities (AIU) so that whenever required contact with them could be established. In view of the recent trend of increasing enrollments of international students in privately-run institutions of higher education, it was argued to identify the strengths and weaknesses of private institutions vis-à-vis their public counterparts and develop a suitable policy matrix to harness their respective advantages in attracting international students. It was mentioned during the course of the discussion that private universities are better equipped in designing programmes according to the demands of international students. Single window facility – presence of professionally managed designated desk for international students – provided by major private universities to students seeking admission would also help them attract more students. There were also suggestions that Indian Missions abroad may devise mechanisms to facilitate brand-building exercise of such potential universities in their respective areas of activity. Education Expos, highlighting the achievements and deliverables by such universities may also be sponsored by relevant agencies under the Government.

The Kolkata consultation underscored the need for making further efforts for enhancing the spirit of SSC through academic exchange programmes among school students from across

the countries of the global South. It also urged for exposing students to the life and experiences of Southern countries through appropriate inclusions in their curriculum.

III. Identification of India's Potential Role in the Broader Perspectives on South-South Cooperation

Sharing Success Stories of Indian CSOs

Several instances of successful development interventions by Indian CSOs, business houses and educational institutions – both in Southern countries and within India – were showcased during the consultations. Some successful experiences of interventions by organisations in other Southern countries were also highlighted. Such experiences should be shared among the Southern partners for possible replication with necessary modifications to suit local requirements. The successful interventions made by BRAC, an international development organisation based in Bangladesh and the largest non-governmental development organisation in the world, in terms of number of employees as of June 2015 also came up for discussion. Experiences out of the formulation of a joint action plan prepared by India, Nepal and Bhutan to facilitate conservation at a cross-country landscape level (Kanchenjunga) were also appreciated by the participants during the Kolkata consultation. Participants in the consultation felt that efforts are necessary to identify the key points vis-à-vis their success, which may inform the process of SSC in general.

The regional consultations aimed at bringing together CSOs from diverse backgrounds working extensively on multiple issues across India. Both the consultations had participation of varied number of CSOs which can be seen as successful case studies and could be replicated in the development cooperation needs of the developing countries.

The Pune consultation had representation of CSOs from the Western region. YUVA Rural

Association has been successful in doing “need based planning” in the Vidarbha region in Maharashtra. The region has now more than 1000 organisations working for poor people. People's Organisation and People's Institution (POPI) has similar thoughts but is different in functions. There is a slight difference wherein organisations negotiate with the state for their rights and institutions are mainly dealing with SHG's which are linked with banks.

BAIF (Bharatiya Agro Industries Foundation) Development Research Foundation is yet another success story. BAIF is operating in more than 100,000 villages in the areas of cattle development, livestock and watershed development. There are both on-farm and off-farm activities. The thrust are livestock development and dairy development.

Pradeep Lokhande from Rural Relations majorly works on rural linkages and relations. He stressed on the need for basic amenities for education, health, sanitation, etc., in Indian villages. Ashta No Kai, another Pune based NGO, is funded by local people of Japan. The focus of the organisation is on empowering rural women and girl child. Another success story worth taking note of is Sewamandir which operates in Udaipur and mainly takes in integrated rural development programmes. It has collaborations with Norway and Netherlands. The other CSOs included Mahila Chetna Manch, which works on Gender issues and capacity building for NGO's, sharing expertise, research and policy analysis, livelihood promotion and dairy, agriculture and horticulture promotions and BUILD, which mainly focuses on slums in Mumbai and helps in areas of monitoring, evaluation and disaster management and mitigation. It is also engaged in social outreach programmes.

While the Pune consultation focused on the Western region CSOs, the consultation in Kolkata had representation of CSOs from the Eastern region. The CSOs who participated in the consultations work in multiple areas and shared their rich experiences and challenges faced by them during the course of the deliberations.

The Ashden Foundation worked in the various SAARC countries, African countries and South American countries. The main task of this NGO is to provide off grid electrification mostly to the rural people. The NGO comes under the ambit of National Solar Mission. Ambassador Amitava Tripathy shared his experience as an international advisor to the organisation Hand-in-Hand, which works to alleviate poverty, micro-financing, women empowerment and child education. The organisation has spread its network not only to the states of Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, Maharashtra, Rajasthan and Pondicherry, but also in countries like Afghanistan, South Africa, Brazil, Cambodia etc.

The Sustainable Action and Network through Community Leaders Programme (SANKALP) was yet another success story. The main task of the organisation is to give training to different officials regarding protection and conservation of forests and bio diversity and sustainable development. Another CSO included PRADAN, a Delhi-based organisation, which mainly focuses on the development of the Ethiopian region through cross-learning and cooperation. Another organisation within PRADAN is KABIL, which mainly works for empowerment of the women in Ethiopia and conserves rain-water for utilisation purposes. The consultation also had the representation from S M Seghal Foundation, New Delhi which mainly focuses on micro-financing, women empowerment and livelihood.

The Role of Industry and Private Sector

The role of private sector enterprises in enhancing SSC cannot be over emphasised. Several successful experiences of SSC, involving corporate sector partners, were discussed during the deliberations. The main concern that came up was related to the urgency of creating a positive and effective image of 'Brand India' that would attract attention of citizens and governments of Southern partner countries. An idea was mooted in terms of extending the use of CSR

funds by the corporates beyond the domestic boundaries.

The private sector and industry assumes an important role in the process of development cooperation. Instances of *Kirloskar Brothers* in contributing to the growth in agricultural productivity in some African countries were presented and those by *Arcelor Mittal* were discussed in some detail during the consultations. The industry also has an important role to play; for instance, MCCIA, which alongside Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) initiatives also takes up individual initiatives for development projects. Presently, the CSR activities are limited to certain areas only thereby restricting the reach of such initiatives.

Need for a Robust Theoretical Framework of SSC

The consultations also expressed concern about the lack of a concrete theoretical paradigm of SSC backed by strong field level evidences, leading to potential flaws about the sustained success of SSC in ushering in development among the countries of global South. It was strongly felt that a separate exercise may be initiated to gather successful case studies – both within India and outside – that will help understand the broad parameters of SSC and link them into a concrete theoretical framework.

On a conceptual level India's development cooperation is based on the structuralist foundation where persistence and predictability of policies are important to augment supply conditions in the partner countries. Improvement in the supply condition is based on demand driven considerations of the recipient countries. India's endeavour has been to overcome supply bottlenecks in several sectors including those of agriculture, manufacturing, external sector, etc. to prevent sectoral as well as overall macroeconomic imbalances in the long run. India has the perception that growth can be achieved with macroeconomic instability since latter is inherent in the Southern partner countries. At a time when countries persist under 'under employment equilibrium', the

risk of macroeconomic instability is likely to persist. Growth can be spurred in a partner country with sectoral cooperation. It is in this context that India provided several project level support through different ministries and this can be called as 'Mission Approach'.¹ This, however, has happened around the result oriented ingredient approach which provides for development assistance at five different levels: trade and investment; technology; skills upgrade (capacity-building); line of credits; and grants. These five levels of engagement are seen as part of a 'development compact'.²

The 'compact' is among the Southern partners for mutual economic growth. The idea of 'the development compact' has evolved through the years since it was first mooted by Norway's Foreign Minister Thorvald Stoltenberg in 1989 as 'development contract'. The concept was further refined as 'mutuality of obligation' and 'reciprocity of conditionality' by Prof. Arjun Sengupta in 1993.³ These terms were propounded for North-South exchanges; however, the new context of development compact with the Southern actors at its core has seen variations from the past. Now, it is no longer about the imposition of conditionalities on recipient countries but more on the principles of SSC such as mutual gain, non-interference, collective growth opportunities with absence of conditionalities.

The necessity of developing a distinct framework for evaluation centred on the principle of 'mutual benefits' accruing to the partners in cooperation was also highlighted. The existing evaluation framework to assess the effectiveness of development cooperation is based on the spirit of traditional aid architecture that is often donor driven. SSC – with demand-driven partnership as its focal point – logically requires an altogether different framework and architecture for its evaluation. In further appreciation of the feature of SSC, that it strives for mutual benefits between the partners in cooperation – both the recipient and the provider

– an evaluation perspective, that captures the actual flow of benefits across the partners in cooperation, as opposed to the traditional measure of impact of aid/grants on the recipient country, has been identified as an important component of the new evaluation framework.

It is also imperative that such an evaluation framework is intimately linked not only to the theoretical framework devised for SSC, but also to the findings from the case studies of interventions that emerged to be successful or otherwise. In this context, there is need for organising capacity building events to augment the capabilities in evaluation of SSC, involving policymakers, practitioners and academia.

Recommended Way Forward and Role of FIDC

In view of these findings, it was recommended that efforts of FIDC should include developing a template for case studies to be initiated and evolving a robust methodology to understand the various nuances of SSC. To facilitate such activities, it was proposed to form two working sub-committees within FIDC. While the first such sub-committee would develop a template to record experiences from successful interventions through case studies, the second one will help evolve robust research methodologies that inform the SSC narratives and provide inputs to identify the implications of the several components of "development compact", viz. capacity building, trade and investment, development finance, grants and technology transfer. The exercise by the first sub-committee will also help revise the structure of the CSO directory developed by FIDC.

The overwhelming response received from the CSOs, business houses, academia and other stakeholders in India's development cooperation during these regional consultations, called for organising more such consultations for regions that are yet to be brought under the purview of such consultations.

Conclusions

The consultations served a number of purposes towards strengthening India's participation in and conceptualisation of SSC. First, it not only highlighted the necessity of going beyond a government-to-government approach to SSC and involving other potential partners from the corporates, CSOs and even the communities, but also confirmed their willingness and capabilities to undertake such missions. Second, it underscored the need to develop a broad theoretical framework to delineate the contours of SSC and deciding on the future roadmap to be followed in actualizing SSC in its true spirit of win-win partnership. Third, the consultations opened up a meaningful dialogue to involve India's strong achievements in the education sector as a springboard for expanding the scope for SSC. Fourth, a paradigm shift necessary in the evaluation architecture for assessment of SSC was also emphasized. Finally, these consultations succeeded in creating an ideal platform for multi-stakeholder dialogue to facilitate an effective process of policy making.

There is a need to re-define South-South cooperation in light of the challenges faced by developing countries and also to theorise on the basis of evidence to substantiate the South's policies. The Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) in our country have come a long way in terms of channelising development activities both in India and other developing countries. What is needed is to regulate them and also to look at the CSR activities of Indian companies abroad.

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Concept Note

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, 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.

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 a regional consultation during 10th and 11th February, 2015 in Pune and plan to hold during 23rd and 24th March, 2015 in Kolkata. Partner institutions identified for the regional consultations are Symbiosis International University and University of Calcutta for Pune and Kolkata respectively.

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.

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 utilized 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 Western part of India we intend to carry out consultation in Symbiosis International University, Pune and the consultation in the Eastern region will be convened at the University of Calcutta in Kolkata.
- There are several actors that play an important role in the policy formulation. They include CSOs, 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 and Eastern CSOs working in Global South including Nepal, Bhutan, Maldives, Sri Lanka etc. among many other nations.

If this exercise is successful, one may think of hosting such events more frequently and in other locations as well.

Agenda

Effort shall be made at the two 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 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 sector. However, generally observed phenomenon regarding the activities of Indian CSOs are that they have been suffering from either capacity constraints and/or policy constraints to extend their activities beyond India. Thus, the suggested point of discussion during the CSO consultation in the Technical Session IV would be on:

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

We endeavour the consultations to last for one and half days. 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.

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 Organizations* that was prepared in 2013.
- An enhanced understanding on development cooperation and its operational components.
- Compilation of CSO success stories.

Outcome

- The regional consultations have succeeded in spreading the idea of South-South Cooperation amongst multiple stakeholders in the regions covered;
- It was pointed out that the template of the CSO directory 'Profile of Indian Voluntary Organisations' needs to be revisited in order to make it concise yet informative;
- After the two regional consultations in Pune and Kolkata, it was proposed to organise separate regional consultations in other parts of the country specifically, one in the North Eastern region; and
- The regional consultations have resulted in the inclusion of CSOs from different regions of the country in the directory which would assist in developing a larger network director of Indian CSOs.

Recommendation

- A series of FIDC policy briefs covering successful case studies of CSO interventions in other developing countries should be undertaken;
- The CSO directory should be refurbished incorporating the suggestions of the CSO members;
- Some FIDC sub-committees should be set up to address multiple aspects arising out of the regional consultations; and
- A national seminar may be planned where CSOs from all the regions could come forward and discuss individual experiences at the national level.

FIDC
Forum for Indian Development
Cooperation
भारतीय विकास सहयोग मंच



RIS
Research and Information System
for Developing Countries
विकासशील देशों की अनुसंधान एवं सूचना प्रणाली

Forum for Indian Development Cooperation Regional Consultation

22-23 December 2015

Jaipur

FIDC Regional Consultation at Jaipur

The Third Regional Consultation was organised by the Forum for Indian Development Cooperation (FIDC) on 22 and 23 December 2015 at Jaipur, Rajasthan. It brought together civil society organisations (CSOs) of the Western region of the country, members of the academic community and policymakers to discuss India's Development Cooperation and South-South Cooperation (SSC).

Background of India's Development Cooperation

At the inaugural session, Professor Sachin Chaturvedi, Director General, RIS made the welcome remarks. Mr. A.K. Sahu, Joint Secretary (DPA II), Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India delivered the inaugural address. Professor V.S. Vyas, Professor Emeritus, Institute of Development Studies (IDS), Jaipur delivered the keynote address. Dr. Kaustub Bandyopadhyay, Director, PRIA and convener of the FIDC Working Group on CSOs extended the vote of thanks.

Mr. Sahu in his inaugural address underlined that since Independence, India has performed extremely well in several areas including in new technologies, such as biotechnology, ICT, genetic engineering. India in its early years of independence realised the need of capacity building in fellow developing and newly decolonised countries. India addressed this challenge by launching fellowship programmes in the early 1950s which has now reached an impressive figure of 15000 scholarships per year in 2015, starting with a small number of seven scholarships. In 1964, these scholarships were formalised to be a part of the Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation (ITEC) programme. At present, under ITEC, India engages with 161 countries through 52 institutions, covering

more than 250 courses. Apart from capacity building, India's development cooperation is also manifested through the modalities of lines of credit, grants and disaster relief.

The importance of CSOs in the development context within India and in other developing countries was also discussed. In this context, he mentioned that India considers CSOs as an important stakeholder in furtherance of its development cooperation and that Indian government is committed to leveraging their strengths and experiences in advancing development partnership across different countries. Here, the role of platforms like FIDC assumes special significance for getting feedback on the Indian programmes as it may help in consolidating the development cooperation linkages across various countries in different regions. Mr. Sahu also contextualised international policies on development aid. The historical promise of North-South development aid to the tune of 0.7 per cent of GNI, as agreed in the Pearson Commission Report, has not been fulfilled by the DAC members. South-South Cooperation (SSC) has emerged as complementary to North-South Cooperation (NSC) with India as one of its major proponents. India has its own development narrative and must not be seen as a donor under the Western definition. However, in India some of the fundamental issues including poverty alleviation, reduction in child mortality and other social ills still persist, leading to several exclusions ultimately resulting in increased inequalities.

SSC in Agriculture

In his keynote address Professor Vyas focused on 'Agriculture and South-South Cooperation'. He underlined that India had a rather satisfactory

rate of growth in agriculture and expressed his happiness over agriculture and rural development being the focus areas of the Indian government. In this process, India has benefitted from the experiences of several developing countries. However, an area where significant cooperation between India and other countries of the South has been of critical importance is genetic research in wheat and rice that made the Green Revolution possible. He also pointed out contributions of other Southern countries like Mexico in wheat and the Philippines in rice. Today, he emphasised, India is in a position to contribute in many areas of agriculture development.

It is generally assumed that as agriculture is dependent on local conditions and environment it leads to negation of international cooperation. However, there are a number of areas where international cooperation could be mutually beneficial for the countries. Such cooperation in the agriculture field can be observed in the areas of post-harvest technology, organic farming, integrated pest control, energy management, water harvesting technology, frontier technologies like tissue culture, application of IT in farming and institutional innovation in credit and marketing. Special emphasis should be given on the contribution of IT in agriculture in not only educating the farmers on new farming techniques but also on carrying out cash transaction through mobile technology as has been done in Kenya. It was highlighted that in the field of agriculture, a mere transfer of technology will not go a long way in solving the issues; therefore, institutional support is also required. It was emphasised that India has significant experience in these areas through dedicated institutional programmes. Therefore, India can contribute significantly in the areas of determination of agricultural prices, buffer stock and procurement.

Role of CSOs

As mentioned above, the role of CSOs with proven abilities in development projects was also discussed in the consultation. It was pointed

out that the Indian government and international institutions are working in these areas, but the role of CSOs in them is irreplaceable. CSOs contribute in the area of innovation at the local level, apart from showcasing their expertise in the project implementation arena. The government comes up with policies for implementation on national level, but many times it is found that the local conditions differ from region to region. It is here that the CSOs must accept the responsibility of carrying out innovation at the local level to make the programmes successful. Secondly, CSOs must also have the ability to adapt themselves to the local conditions and communicate the adaptation to the concerned authorities. Advocacy and extension is the third area where CSOs must act. Spreading the knowledge of a government policy amongst the wider populace is extremely important for the success of the programmes and CSOs play an active role in this regard. Protest and constructive criticism of the policies and programmes is the fourth area where the role of CSOs becomes significant. It was stressed that instead of government or private sector, only CSOs can take up the mantle in these areas. It was also pointed out that cooperation of the government, policymakers and concerned authorities is of paramount importance for earnest and sincere CSOs to prosper and assist them in the success of the programmes and policies.

Thus, onus also lies with the CSOs to increase their effectiveness in the development sector. In this regard, it was categorically mentioned that CSOs should only contribute in the areas where they have a distinct expertise. This point bears greater significance for SSC because the credibility of India gets reflected directly through the credibility of its different stakeholders. Development activities should begin with a full acquaintance with local environment, both social as well as physical, and with a sense of responsibility and respect for the partners. It was elaborated further that the CSOs must carry out the development work in the countries of the South with a sense of humility – a quality lacking in Western countries' engagement with developing countries.

The key issues that emerged during the two-day consultation are extremely important for developing an Indian narrative on South-South Cooperation. Some of the actionable points for different stakeholders are discussed below.

Role of the Academia

It was discussed during the consultation that the academic community should consider undertaking specific case studies for understanding successful civil society experiments and also those of failures. This, in a larger context, would help in drawing necessary insights for various development experiments. While doing so, a matrix may also be considered, which may have sectoral interventions on one side and engagement of CSOs on the other. This matrix may help in selecting probable partners for possible development interventions. Collective action and research under various projects may help in drawing academia closer to civil society organisations for the better understanding of the changes and variations in the policy and, of course, in the funding patterns. This would have a long lasting impact and would help in understanding the triangle of policy making, systemic changes and evidence collection.

It was also suggested that some of the issues that may be captured in form of case studies are the inclusion of specific nutrients like zinc in rice. Academic institutions in partnership with CSOs, who have worked in South Asia Peace corridor and have participated in the government led policy initiatives, may also be involved in the case studies. In the case of Rajasthan, programmes such as Lok Jumbish (People's Movement), Shiksha Karmi (Education Worker), Balika Shivirs (Girls' Education Camp), etc., are worth documenting where CSOs have played a vital role.

Scope for Policy Responses

The deliberations at the Consultation Meeting also called for creating and sustaining for flourishing of the CSOs. For this, it is important to pay greater attention to facilitating the

process of globalisation of the CSOs. This is an unfinished agenda, which is adversely affecting India's policy objectives and at the same time also undermining the potentials and capabilities of Indian CSOs. There are several policy responses that are required for facilitating such a role; for instance, registration of CSOs should be centralised. Instead of confining them to specific pockets in different states, they should be allowed to work anywhere by fulfilling the accounting responsibilities and meeting specifications for book-keeping. At present, there are various restrictions and control mechanisms imposed on the Indian CSOs who want to work outside India. These need to be liberalised, rationalised and synchronised. In this context, necessary collaboration between the Reserve Bank of India (RBI), Foreigner Regional Registration Offices (FRRO), Foreign Contribution Regulation Act (FCRA) and Income Tax Department may be envisaged. To make it rational, CSOs may be given a unique code number as their identity to track financial and other regulatory requirements may be necessary. Another actionable response propounded was that good and credible CSOs should be encouraged to work outside India, provided they are well acquainted with the background and legal systems of the partner countries. In such special cases the Income Tax Department may give additional incentive over and above what is available under section 80G or 35AC or 10(23) for CSOs working outside national boundaries.

However, it was also cautioned that CSOs should not oversell themselves without realising their limitations. Some of the organisations like PRATHAM have come up with modalities to review education policy, which are useful irrespective of geographical location. In fact, PRATHAM created capacities across Pakistan, Tanzania, Kenya, Uganda, Mali, Senegal, Mexico and Nigeria, where ASER (Annual Status of Education Report) has been launched as a primary instrument for assessing efficacy of policies in the education sector. These kinds of sectoral collaborations are extremely important.

In fact, they also provide avenues for CSOs to cooperate with each other, which may become an important part of India's soft power diplomacy.

FIDC/DPA

Another dimension that came up for discussion relate to clarity on the way forward, particularly in the context of identifying instruments for facilitating academia in CSO linkages. In this context, there is need to develop a framework for evaluation that may juxtapose Indian ethos and ideas with DAC criteria of relevance, effectiveness, sustainability, efficacy, and impact. It was cautioned that development is a slow process; hence no quick solutions would work.

Evaluation and Sectoral Linkages

The Jaipur Consultation had three parallel sessions focusing on sectoral evaluation concerns which laid emphasis on transitioning from the project based evaluation to programme based evaluation. The first session on Natural Resource Management (NRM) was chaired by Dr. Indira Khurana, IPE Global, Delhi.

While summarising the key points in the working group, Dr. Khurana mentioned that NRM is a huge sector involving resources like water, land, grasslands and forests and it covers an expansive physical area. Community and CSO partnership in this regard under the rubric of SSC should be based on the principles of equity and mutual learning with a strong bond of trust. Therefore, there is need for encouraging community planning with due possibilities for modifications in traditionally decided framework and the community as a whole must be encouraged to own up the intervention. Since the NRM projects take time to show results, evaluation can be conducted in phases: at design stage, during mid-term and at the end-term. This would also allow for corrections during the implementation process. In other words, it creates space for incorporating the learning into subsequent programming. Owing to the mutuality of natural resources, the evaluation process must capture various

components. Any attempt to address one natural resource – forests, for example – will affect other resources as well, such as land, water and grasslands. The evaluation criteria should also capture changes in these resources. Evaluation mechanism for NRM must also have a strong focus on conflict resolution as most of the communities are not homogeneous and interests of some may overpower the interests of others. Effect on gender and marginalised groups needs to be captured well. Incorporation of qualitative and quantitative indicators is also important in the evaluation process. Linkages of national and international policies with the policies on NRM must be coordinated to avoid conflicting situations.

In the second working group on Rural Development, Mr. Harsh Jaitli, CEO of VANI, New Delhi mentioned that in the evaluation process, trust and ownership are extremely important for drawing right inferences and also how local area's sensibilities must be heeded. Apart from factoring various indicators, as may be decided from time to time, it would also be relevant to capture process documentation, which should give ideas about the dynamics of changing responses while a project is evolving. To negate the coordination failure, volunteers and ground level personnel must also be trained from the perspective of evaluation. Flexibility must also be ensured in the evaluation process when a broad based evaluation technique is adopted with the option of incorporating changes based on local conditions on a case to case basis. During the process, informal learning is possible and there should be space for this.

The third working group was chaired by Professor T.C. James, Visiting Fellow, RIS, where evaluation of health and education projects was discussed. It was pointed out that planning, monitoring and evaluation must go in unison with simultaneous involvement of all the stakeholders at every level. This group reiterated the usefulness of involving the community in the evaluation process. The group emphasised that the horizontal (across various sectors) and vertical linkages in

project implementation should be brought out clearly in the evaluation along with qualitative and quantitative aspects. A compendium of successful examples of community interventions made in India and also abroad by India should be brought out. This would contribute to better development partnership interventions in the future. India should highlight its experiences with community level interventions to other countries so that they could learn from the same and adapt the best practices to make various programmes successful.

Way Forward

In the concluding session, it was pointed out that experience with incoming assistance should be leveraged for India's external engagements. Similarly, necessary lessons from SSC may also be learnt for required course correction.

For instance, while laying out railway track in Ethiopia, China used gauge tracks, for which parts and components were only available with China. These kinds of limitations should be discussed and commented upon when South-South Cooperation is being discussed. Also, the CSO representatives voiced their concerns that ground knowledge gained by them is not being duly absorbed by the policymakers. This, the members of the consultation emphasised, could happen only when there is deeper engagement among all stakeholders on issues related to the challenges of development, rather than a superficial engagement. The regional consultation in Jaipur ended with a resolve to take forward the work programme of RIS/FIDC to other regional centers of India as well.

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. With the setting up of Development Partnership Administration (DPA) within the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA), there are new expectations across civil society and academics. Also, the DPA was keen in using the expertise accumulated by the CSOs through their important work on various areas that include education, health, disaster management and urban development. A directory with profile of Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) has been published by the FIDC in this regard. 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 directory has helped in facilitating the process of exchange of experience and information. It has also served as a reference point for the DPA and other relevant agencies. 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 its outreach should be spread to other cities as well. Taking this idea forward, we conducted so far, two regional consultations in Pune in collaboration with Symbiosis International University and in Kolkata in collaboration with Calcutta University and a number of regional consultations have been planned for 2015 and 2016. A regional consultation in Jaipur is being organised on 22-23 December 2015 with the purpose to facilitate interactions among various stakeholders particularly focusing on CSOs, academia and policy makers.

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 and practice. This consultation series would provide an opportunity to discuss scope, objectives and modalities in the realm of development partnerships. The idea is to collect successful development models from across the country which may be replicated in the other parts of the developing world.

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.

- FIDC is exploring ways of evolving mechanisms for strengthening communication across various actors. The key objectives may be summarised as follows:
- 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.
- Through regional consultations, FIDC intends to deliberate on SSC, identify best practices and explore ways to not only scale up but also replicate those best practices in fellow developing countries.
- 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

North India being the cradle of green revolution and the consequent facilitator in adoption of new technological revolution in the fields of agricultural production, animal husbandry and food processing, experiences gathered in the Northern region can help provide development cooperation in related areas in many Southern countries around the world. The state of Rajasthan is an excellent example where CSO interventions have resulted in development despite the constraints faced by the state both in rural and urban areas. Successful interventions by CSOs in promoting rural development will be of interest to our partner countries in SSC. A session on such achievements will help showcase some such interventions. Several successful interventions in urban development and planning are also a hallmark of this region, which may also be discussed at length. Cooperation in capacity building is a hallmark of India's support to Southern countries. Successful experiences in Natural Resource Management and sectoral evaluations will be our focus areas for Jaipur consultation.

Thus, the suggested points of discussion and intended outcomes during the consultations would be:-

- 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 Organizations* that was prepared in 2013.
- An enhanced understanding on development cooperation and its operational components.
- Compilation of CSO success stories.

FIDC
FORUM FOR
INDIAN DEVELOPMENT
COOPERATION
भारतीय विकास सहयोग मंच


Ministry of External Affairs
Government of India
विदेश मंत्रालय
भारत सरकार



RIS
Research and Information System
for Developing Countries
विकासशील देशों की अनुसंधान एवं सूचना प्रणाली



MIDS
Madras
Institute of
Development
Studies

Forum for Indian Development Cooperation Regional Consultation

15 March 2016

Chennai

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, were flagged by some participants as an evidence of positive implications of NSC for a developing economy. These institutes 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. 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 confusing. 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 brining 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.

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>



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Regional Consultation on “Development of North East India and India’s Act East Policy: A Quest for Synergy”

**24-25 October 2017
Guwahati, Assam**

Inaugural Session

Dr Amiya Sharma, Executive Director, Rashtriya Gramin Vikas Nidhi (RGVN) Society, Guwahati, made introductory remarks during the inaugural session. Prof. Sachin Chaturvedi, Director General, RIS, in his welcome remarks set the platform for discussion, and stressed that the consultation may come up with important pointers for India's Development Cooperation in expanding cross-border and rupee trade, promoting regional value-chains and may help providing services in health, education with the neighbouring countries in the East and the South-East Asia.

Mr Alok Dimri, Joint Secretary, Multilateral Economic Relations (MER) Division, MEA, in his special remarks expressed satisfaction on how the FIDC from its inception could create a community, which has brought out different developmental perspectives through consultations and interactions. He expressed his delight that FIDC is looking towards a new geography i.e. North East Region (NER) and across the eastern border. He said that definitions and parameters of the development have changed, and are evolving and now includes among other parameters, access to energy and improvement in quality of life. The development imperative of the NER must take this into account while moving forward. Another dimension, which can be explored, is whether there are low hanging fruits, lying unclaimed at the peripheries across the border. From a policy perspective, these fruits may not be monumental in magnitude, but a small beginning can be made from these peripheral opportunities through the Act East Policy for pushing development of the NER region. He added that globally the meaning of development has expanded from being limited to looking at conventional parameters, such as infrastructure and tourism among other parameters, to being people-centric. The aspect of 'sustainability' is also important driver of development. He also pointed out, this consultation would perhaps look at 'cross fertilisation' in terms of interdisciplinary convergence to contribute to the development of the NER, going beyond the traditional approach in different disciplines, striving to contribute to the development imperatives in isolation.

Mr Naveen Verma, Secretary, Ministry of Development of North- Eastern Region (DoNER) delivered the keynote address. He pointed out that the Agenda for development of the NE must address specific issues, which in turn, would ultimately lead to prosperity of the people of the NER in terms of higher income. The region is not a homogenous region; each state within the NER differs from the other on many parameters, such as the level of urbanization, per capita state domestic product, and the number of ethnic communities. He highlighted that the Agenda for the development of NE must be in terms of giving practical suggestions on specific areas that involve addressing state-specific issues with the NER like problems faced by 'Border Haats' and Land Customs Stations (LCS) in addition to emphasis on a few selected value chains, like pineapple, ginger, textiles, bamboo among others. He underscored the need to formalize prevailing informal trade along the borders of the NER neighbouring countries are unhappy over the Non-Trade Barriers (NTB), erected by India. Another area he flagged was on the challenges in logistics to ease both internal trade with other parts of India and external trade with the neighbouring countries. He pointed out that Ministry of DoNER in collaboration with the NEDFC (North Eastern Development Finance Corporation), a public sector undertaking and the Non-Banking Financial Company (NBFC) have already launched a Venture Fund through which new investments are expected in the NER. In spite of considerable progress in air, rail, and road connectivity; there is need to improve them

further while new ventures are in the pipeline. Some of these ventures would include access to the Bay of Bengal through the Barak River, connecting Tawang Chu in Nagaland to Myanmar and the 4-lane road connecting Dimapur to Kohima. On rail connectivity, he observed that 30 per cent of the total investments in new railway tracks were in the NER even as the broad gauge has extended to Tripura. Three states of the NER have already been included in the map of broad gauge. He envisioned that very soon, connectivity can be extended from Imphal in India to Mandalay in Myanmar, and even beyond towards Far East. Inland waterways, he pointed out, reduce distance to travel considerably; for which services such as Ro-Ro ferry have been explored. He also stressed the need to expand the air network both within and beyond NER which can act as stimulus to grow towards traffic in NER.

While delivering Vote of Thanks, Prof. Milindo Chakrabarti, Visiting Fellow, RIS, emphasized that although NE policy and Act East policy have been pursued vigorously, there appears to be disjoints between one another. He pointed that this consultation would be centered around concerns about how NE Policy and Act East policy can be linked to each other inasmuch each of these can reinforce the other. This linkage, he mentioned could then help leverage India's development efforts in the neighboring countries to harness growth and development in the NE India.

TECHNICAL SESSION: I

Synergy between North-East (NE) and Act-East Policies – the Rationale

Amb. S.T. Devare, Chairman, Research Advisory Council, RIS, chaired the Technical Session I on “Synergy between NE and Act East Policy – Rationale”. He pointed out that the NER was very much at the core when Look East initiative was launched by the then Prime Minister, Late P. V. Narasimha Rao. Speaking on the NER, he pointed out that aspirations of the NER, which were set out when the Look East Policy was initiated, have not been fulfilled. He stressed on the importance of extending connectivity from NE states to the Eastern neighbours. He mentioned increasing interest shown by countries such as Japan, China, South Korea and ASEAN countries towards the NER; which indicates untapped potential of the region. In addition, he emphasized that study could be conducted on how India contributed to the neighbouring countries, and at the same time what are best practices, which India should learn from these neighbouring countries. He reiterated that NER should not be treated as a transit or a corridor to the neighbouring countries, as apprehensions remain that Act East Policy could bypass the NER in the process.

Prof. Sachin Chaturvedi laid emphasis on the idea that there should be no notion of bypassing of the development imperatives of the NE states, while deliberating on the Act East Policy. In addition, he also stressed that development strategies must be formulated by keeping people at the centre. He cited an example of how people from Tripura have integrated with the people from Bangladesh. This relationship he mentioned has remained on a high pitch at most times, irrespective of prevailing political dispensations on either side of the border. Another dimension identified by him was the role of investments through the Special Purpose Vehicle (SPV) route to integrate synergies between NER and Act East policies; particularly given SPVs have worked in the CLMV countries (Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar, Vietnam) thereby ‘crowding in’ private investments in the region. He pointed out that trade and economics remain as important pivots in the development of the NER.

According to Mr Alok Dimri, the interlinkage between the NER and Act East Policy can also be seen through regional dimension integrated with geography for development cooperation. He highlighted that during the World War II, Tezpur in Assam served as the connectivity hub where supplies were transferred for various purposes in the Eastern Region of the Pre-Independence India. He also mentioned, nation states were not ‘purely rational’ in economic parlance rather they have behavioural characteristics, which should be factored in while undertaking development cooperation. He also pointed out that over and above trade, music, culture and other such soft dimensions are equally important for the development cooperation in the context of integrating the NER with Act East Policy.

Mr V. Vualnam, Chief Vigilance Officer, National Textiles Corporation, identified that people of the North-east have strong ethnic, historical and cultural linkages with the people in the South-east Asia, Citing James C. Scott, he pointed out that the map which Mr. Scott generated for his studies comprised entire NER and countries of the East Asia, which reflects historical similarities within the region. However, these linkages seem to have withered away not only because of the

rise of nation states but also owing to language barriers. Hence, policy interventions can be steered in finding avenues for new interactions and for reviving the existing ones, which even include exploring religious sites pertaining to Buddhism. He mentioned how the initiative of doing away with protected area permits has worked positively and only reflects that the NER has been opening up and has become more accessible. Mr. Vaulnam proposed increasing legal entry points along the border. He pointed out that up till now people with even legal credentials were passing through tiresome jungle roads and hills. This initiative would not only make the legal transit of people across borders more convenient, but also facilitate better operating ground for security agencies. Moreover, he also spoke on consolidating existing free entry points of the locals on the lines of US-Canada model of cross border flow, instead of 'free for all' model existing along the US- Mexico border to facilitate legal flow of people along the porous borders. Additionally, differences have emerged among the local communities. Experts on the NER should focus on how to resolve local differences in identities and communities to facilitate development and peace instead of limiting their expertise in pointing out the local tensions and differences among the communities. He also emphasized on the urgent need to utilize natural resources of the NER in a sustainable manner.

Mr. S.N. Pradhan, Joint Secretary, Ministry of DoNER narrated 4 aspects of new initiatives undertaken by the ministry for the development of the NER. First is organization of the regional consultations between NER and South Asia and South- East Asia. Second is to synergize both within the NER and across borders with neighboring countries. Third is the emergence of Act East, in which he highlighted working towards "Happy Borders". And finally, the idea is to leverage on the uniqueness of the NER having 98 per cent of the international border, which should be treated as an asset and not a liability for development of the NER. This year (2017-18), ministry is expecting around Rs 44 thousand crore to be allocated for the NER, which may touch around 50,000 crore when the railway budget of the region would be included. Key Sectors have been identified by the DoNER to be 'economic game changers' for the NER with significant socio-economic impact. One such area identified is tourism. The second is the North East Cane and Bamboo Development Council, initiated by the ministry of DoNER. It is in the final stages being of set- up. Bamboo is considered to have a significant socio-economic impact for the NER. The third is STINER (Science & Technology Interventions in the NER), which can give impetus to three verticals, identified by the ministry (farm, non-farm and others under which basic technologies could reach the rural areas to make a difference). The ministry found more than 300 technologies within the scientific bodies of the GoI, including CSIR among others, which possibly can have some connection with the NER. In addition, the North-Eastern Council (NEC) and the DoNER have come together to develop a joint effort, which would go a long way in coordinating implementation of the projects in the NER. Additionally, DoNER had also initiated the Japan-India Coordination Forum for development of the NER in synergy with the MEA. He also mentioned that countries such as Japan through JICA among other countries are bullish about investing in the NER.

TECHNICAL SESSION: II

Border Trade-Current Status and Future Prospects

Prof. N.S. Siddharthan, Hon. Professor of Economics, Madras School of Economics, chaired the Technical Session II. He pointed out the need to understand ground realities in terms of easing trade across borders. He also suggested that tabulating customs data in terms of goods traded, values and districts involved would help analysing cross-border trade.

Dr Prabir De, Professor and Coordinator, ASEAN-India Centre (AIC) at RIS, New Delhi, highlighted that both formal and informal trade exist within and across the NE states, and that the NE states suffer due to high transportation costs. India's trade with East Asia is 25 percent; most of it is carried out through oceans and only a negligible portion is carried through the NE states. He talked about the emerging scenario of the NE states for the Act East Policy with a series of development including development of strong bilateral relations with Myanmar and Bangladesh, emerging sub-regional activity through the BBIN (Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Nepal) connectivity, and working regional relationship such as the ASEAN-India and the BIMSTEC. Citing a study conducted by the ERIA (Economic Research Institute for ASEAN and East Asia), the NE states appear as a pivot to the trade dynamics in the East Asia and the ASEAN countries. According to him, challenges to border trade mainly were huge burden of trade costs due to high complexity in supply chain, especially because of NE states being landlocked in comparison to the rest of India. In addition, he drew from the evidence published by the Asian Development Bank (ADB), that trade costs were higher for corridors connecting NE states with Nepal, Bangladesh and Bhutan in comparison to those linking other parts to the same countries. Such high costs of trade can be attributed to absence of Standard Operating Procedures between Moreh and Tamu, lack of physical infrastructure and lack of food-testing laboratories; besides the lack of basic trade infrastructure from the perspective of Integrated Check Posts. He underlined on the need to strengthen digital infrastructure in the NE states to enhance facilitation of paperless trade. Initiatives such as more cross-border bus services, ferry services and one-stop border cross should also be considered.

Prof. Gurudas Das, National Institute of Technology, Silchar pointed out that connectivity remains an important issue, impeding seamless border trade. The Centre-State perspective of security blocked the flow of national resources to frontier regions, which did not allow development of the essential linkages for resources industry and trade. Because of this, the entire region has remained peripheral to the national economy, which in turn, has manifested a kind of dependent development syndrome. High transportation costs and limited market accessibility, he argued to have served as bottlenecks stopping entry of poor population of the region into the orbit of the national programmes of industrialization based development. Post liberalization reforms of 1991 have aggravated inequality and regional disparity among the states, particularly the NE states. He underlined that state sponsored growth efforts directed towards the peripheral areas would be able to use the institution of markets in a better way by integrating cross-border markets along with harnessing of cross border synergies, which could serve as a theoretical rationale to look beyond the framework of National economy and state centric mind-set while formulating development of the peripheral areas of the NE. He presented the status of trade between the NE states and the neighboring countries between 1998-99 and 2012/13. Trade with Bangladesh comprised 91 per cent of the total trade of the NE states, followed by Bhutan (6 per cent) and Myanmar (3 per cent). In terms

of commodities traded, ores and minerals constitute around 79 per cent of NER's exports while manufactured imports constituted 53 per cent of the total imports. In terms of the share of the NE states in trading with neighbouring countries, Meghalaya constituted 56 per cent of the total NER trade, followed by Assam (22.5). He said that overall exports from the NER were in terms of raw materials while imports were in the form of manufactured goods. What can be inferred is that major exports from the NER were in ores and mineral typically from Meghalaya and major imports as manufactured goods from the neighbouring countries, mostly from Bangladesh. He pointed out that India's share with the border trade with Myanmar was only 3 per cent in comparison to China (53 per cent) and Thailand (27 per cent). He pointed out that trade has been low due to the presence of similar competitive resources in the NER and the neighboring countries, which forms a weak basis for trade. He stressed that development of the NER lies in the development of a regional value chain from the NE across Myanmar with Thailand.

Ms Annu Darin, Deputy Commissioner, Office of the Commissioner, Central Excise and Service Tax, Guwahati, informed that the NER shares an international border stretching 5,132 km (5,400 including Sikkim) with Bangladesh, Bhutan, Myanmar and China. She mentioned that Shillong (Meghalaya) is currently the Headquarters of the Customs (Preventive) of the NER. She listed down the functional Land Customs Stations (LCS) in the NER along with the major goods traded. She mentioned that the Agartala division has 2 major LCS (Agartala LCS and Srimantapur), sharing border with Bangladesh. Major exports from these two were iron and steel and spices whereas major imports were cement and Dry Fish. She identified lack of the power supply as an important obstacle for LCS being often non-functional.

Dr Ch Priyaranjan Singh from the Manipur University highlighted existence of incredible vibrancy in trade, investment and IT in the NER. He pointed out that there is an immense amount of capital in the NE states, and new generation of traders and entrepreneurs of the NER are looking towards Act East Policy in many ways to invest their capital in the border trade. He, however, flagged that current border trade, particularly, between Manipur and Myanmar is abysmally low owing to policy paralysis. He pointed that important ministries – Ministry of Commerce and Industry, Ministry of Defence – are at loggerheads. The Ministry of Commerce is willing to develop trade and extended incentives and concessions, the Ministry of Defence on the other hand is concerned with the arms trade and insurgency. He also stressed that the government of Manipur is least concerned about the prospects of trade across the border. He empathetically said that it is important to set - an Executing Agency to implement Act East Policy, integrating NER. This Agency would help identifying tradeable commodities from industries and agriculture.

Dr. P K Anand, Visiting Fellow, RIS, pointed out that India has enough potential to trade with Bangladesh in economic terms, followed by Pakistan and Japan. Trade is a two-way process and thereby should be looked into in terms of both export and imports, rather than in terms of exports or import substitution alone. He stressed that a way out to enhance both exports and imports simultaneously with neighbouring countries is through value- chains. In addition, he mentioned while shortcomings exist in the outcomes of Free Trade Agreements (FTAs), the merits of FTAs should not be overlooked. He also emphasized importance of SPVs in creating infrastructure for facilitating border trade.

TECHNICAL SESSION: III

Developing Regional Value Chains

The IIIrd Technical Session was chaired by Dr S.C. Srivastava, Professor, North-Eastern Hill University (NEHU). He pointed out role of removing various barriers, which hamper growth of value- chains.

Prof. Milindo Chakrabarti highlighted that creation and expansion of regional value- chains would address fragmentation of the NER Economy and also ensure livelihood security. He underlined the need to create value- chains in important products such as Ginger, Pineapple, Bamboo, Kiwi fruits and traditional handloom and handicrafts. These products have immense potential for accentuating competitive and comparative advantage across the East -Asian Region.

A successful instance of value- addition to processed pork products was presented by Mr Anabil Goswami, Co-founder Arohan Foods, Guwahati. He pointed out that pork, an excellent source of protein, has highest level of production and consumption in the NER. However, the piggery products face issues of hygiene and scalability. Mr. Goswami mentioned that his start-up 'Arohan foods' could address all these issues. He mentioned that availability of finance from sources other than PSUs is not a constraint for if the projects are scalable. However, government finance and incentives already in place are yet to be implemented in a way so that it reaches entrepreneurs in the desired manner. He also emphasized farm -level policy interventions as one of the important requirements if value- chains are to be improved and expanded.

An important issue identified by Dr Jayanta Choudhury, Tripura Central University, was non-availability of Value- Chain Finance. Key challenges for consideration in Value -Chain Finance identified by him were the strength of the value chain in terms of opportunities and challenges; risks involved and third, the technical, business and financial services and support and finally business model to be followed. He highlighted five pillars or C's of lending, applicable in Value-Chain Finance, as Character, Capacity, Capital, Collateral and Conditions. He told about three key parameters towards approaching Value -Chain Finance – First, looking at the collective set of actors, processes and markets of the system as opposed to an individual lender -borrower within the system; second, in terms of systems, the decisions about financing are based on the health of the entire system, including market demand and not just on the individual borrower, and third, specialization which means to offer Agriculture VCF, knowledge of the agricultural system to be known. And finally, he said that the success and limits of Value Chain Finance are tied to the quality of cooperation among actors.

Dr Yogesh Gokhale, Adjunct Faculty, The Energy and Resources Institute (TERI), New Delhi, pointed out common ecology across the region with similar cultural ethos. Among various suggestions, Reducing Emissions from Forest Degradation and Deforestation (REDD+) projects can be potentially developed for abandoned jhum lands. In addition, he emphasized the need to providing Minimum Support Price to range of Non-Timber Forest Products (NTFPs), unique to the region. He highlighted on the need of building on the value chains in consideration of environment and ecology concerns, especially since the natural resources management is a binding factor for

local communities with the NER and across the border. Need to appreciate heterogeneity, social and environmental dimensions while formulating policies was also stressed.

Dr Kanak Haloi, Professor and Head, National Institute of Rural Development & Panchayati Raj (NIRDPR), Guwahati, pointed out the issues for consideration while formulating policies. He highlighted market related rules and regulations such as taxation among others increases the cost of business and reduces margin of profits, thereby making trade- related opportunities less lucrative. And to these, inadequate infrastructure in the NER, capability/incapability of traditional society to adapt to new technology and change and the issue of identity crisis that the communities would try to preserve while undergoing change were important issues to be addressed to facilitate value- addition.

TECHNICAL SESSION: IV

Natural Resources, Water and Energy

Dr Amiya Sharma chaired the IVth Technical Session. Dr Sharma talked on the importance of preserving natural resources and environment in the NE.

Dr Abhinandan Saikia, Assistant Professor, Centre for Ecology, Environment and Sustainable Development, Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Guwahati, said that while Mon in Nagaland scored high on the Combined Index for Health attainments, its performed poorly on the HDI according to the Nagaland Human Development Index 2001; indicating that the methodology of the HDI calculation may not necessary be representative of the true scenario of Human Development. He highlighted that Nagaland itself is divided into four eco- zones; suggesting the diversity within the states of the North East. He pointed out that diffusion of innovation, especially in Agriculture, depends on the social factors and values of the society in addition to market factors. He also highlighted that North-Eastern economy is largely based on subsistence agriculture. He presented comparisons between Shifting cultivation and Terrace Cultivation, prevalent in the NE on parameters such as whether knowledge was locally developed or brought in from outside, primary objective of such cultivation for production or consumption and whether decision making was based on village council or individuals, among other parameters. He also highlighted the need for increased engagement of organisations such as Entrepreneurship Development Institute of India in the NER. Possible Areas of Cooperation for advancement of value -chains as identified by him were beekeeping, bamboo chain, food processing, weaving, traditional jewellery and rubber, among others.

Mr Barun Barpujari, RGVN, highlighted emergence of the NER as an oil-refining hub, which has established its competitive advantage vis-à-vis countries such as Bhutan and Bangladesh on refining capacity. Additionally, he also mentioned that cooperation across NE borders on oil pipelines, natural gas and power supply exists already, but they need to be enhanced further.

Dr Tapas Kumar Giri, Associate Professor, Rajiv Gandhi Indian Institute of Management, Shillong, pointed out that Bamboo serves as a critical asset and is a lifeline of the tribal communities in the NER, particularly those involved in Jhum and Terrace cultivation, and hence, Bamboo identified as a natural resource, should be utilized in a sustainable manner. He also highlighted that there is an urgent need to create an enabling environment for entrepreneurs, associated directly or indirectly in the utilization of bamboo to facilitate backward and forward linkages in the form of incubation centres and other facilities.

TECHNICAL SESSION: V

Education, Health and Tourism

Professor Pulin B. Nayak, Former Director, Delhi School of Economics, chaired the Vth Technical Session. He recollected, how earlier development theories revolved around mostly on the need for accumulation of capital. But later people realized capital should not be treated as homogenous and thus, capital was categorized into several components – physical capital, human capital and social capital. Development theory ever since has moved away from just concentrating on physical capital, rather emphasizes on the need for human and social capital. This has reoriented the focus on Education and Health as important areas of development cooperation and in the overall development of the NER.

Smt. Mamata Shankar, Economic Advisor, Ministry of DoNER, pointed out that the ministry is very strongly understand the immense opportunity NE states have in tourism in terms of employment generation, entrepreneurship and revenues. Dr Kh. Palin, Founder and Head, Shija Hospitals, Imphal, highlighted that approximately Rs 1500 crore per year is spent by people of Manipur outside the NER for treatment, pursuing medical education and nursing studies. This outbound of people for medical- related activities is largely true for other states of the NER as well. He cited example of a cancer patient from Mandalay, who had to travel through Yangon, Kolkata, Imphal to reach Shija. He also narrated Mission Myanmar, a goodwill mission, carried out by Shija hospitals where 339- free operations were carried out along with training of 2 surgeons and 6 nurses in Myanmar. A free- health camp at Kale, Myanmar, with 2,076 patients who had several kinds of illnesses were treated during the goodwill mission. He pointed out that these are opportunities which if leveraged can push medical tourism. In addition, he also mentioned that there exists a considerable prospect for medical tourism at affordable rates, provided bottlenecks in connectivity are removed.

Prof. T.C. James, Visiting Fellow, RIS, highlighted that the NE has immense prospects for traditional medicine. He also pointed out that the problems of the health sector in the neighbouring countries and the NE are similar. Prof. James also mentioned that there are hospitals in the NE and the neighbouring countries, which can serve as role models going forward in the health sector.

Shri Manoj Kumar Das, Director, Indian Institute of Entrepreneurship, Guwahati emphasized on the need to attract quality tourists by branding unique features of the NER such as local cuisine, handicrafts and handlooms Natural Ambience among others. He also pointed out that the NE can become a hub of adventure tourism given its diverse landscape and geography. In addition, he laid emphasis for innovative projects in tourism and for increasing standard of hospitality service; as tourists look for unusual experiences and roadside amenities among others.

Dr J.V. Madhusdan, Professor, Department of Education, North Eastern Hill University flagged an important area of concern; that is the low ranking of the NE states on Education Development Index(EDI). He proposed that the primary education can be more effective if it is linked with some productive skills.

A few suggestions, including reduction in red tapism, were made, and there was also a proposal for Joint Coordination Committee comprising Home Ministry, Ministry of Health, Civil Aviation and MEA with support from the Ministry of DoNER for promoting medical tourism along and across the border.

TECHNICAL SESSION: VI

Connectivity and Physical Infrastructure

The VIth Technical Session was chaired by Mr P. K. Barua, M.D., Assam Gas Company Limited (Rtd). He highlighted from his experience in the NER that before any project is undertaken, a Detailed Project Report (DPR) should be made along with the engagement of the local people and the state government. Otherwise, possibility of problems arising is likely while project is under implementation, and this would halt the completion of a project.

He enumerated many projects in the NER funded by EXIM Bank, including a Bamboo processing plant in Sibsagar and Mizoram Floriculture Unit in Mizoram. He said that finance is not a constraint, rather lack of connectivity due to poor road escalates overhead costs reducing potential competitiveness of the goods and services despite of their high quality. Besides, there is an internal security problem in the NER, which constraints mobility of goods and people. He highlighted the need to go to the villages to identify products for local production and exports.

Mr Pratim Bose, Kolkata Bureau Chief, Hindu Business Line, pointed out that though rail connectivity has improved sufficiently, still last mile road connectivity in the NER remains very poor. He highlighted that this last mile connectivity along with the poor existing roads have not been taken care of; so even the progress in rail connectivity doesn't contribute for desired achievements. He pointed out that there is no rail connectivity among all capitals of the NE states. He told that local communities and panchayats of Meghalaya and Manipur, respectively, have opposed reaching of railways. Act East Policy, he mentioned, should be seen from both land and maritime connectivity. He stressed the need of developing digital connectivity in addition to various forms of physical connectivities. He emphasised that NE is not an integrated region, and therefore, an area-wise analysis would be important. He also highlighted that the coal from Meghalaya is one of the finest in the country with high sulphur.

He identified lack of database for different products in the NER, and stressed the need to augment overall storage capacity in the NER. He called for a report- card on the status of the existing connectivity projects. Pointing out to the various presentations made over the 6 sessions, he highlighted that there appears indeed an intention and willingness to develop the NER. He also pointed out that whether there were any trade-offs between development and identity of the communities, whether the communities would lose identity with the development of the NER thereby, these trade-offs are important issues.

In concluding the session, Chairman, Mr Barua, said that there exists a visible emotional integration of the NE region with rest of India, but the aspiration of the youth of this region are yet to be fulfilled.

Valedictory Session

Dr Kh Plain delivered the welcome address during the Session. He stressed that we shall focus on the advantages rather than pondering over disadvantages. Professor Milindo Chakrabarti summarized the outcomes of the 2-day consultation (given as major take aways below).

Mr Seshadri Chari, Member, Governing Council, RIS, chalked many of the advantages and the strengths of the NE states while comparing with other states. He said that this consultation can initiate a work -plan for development and integration of the North East. He emphasized on turning the so-called disadvantages of NE into opportunities. He also highlighted that NER should be treated as the 'mainstream' to which the rest of India would need to connect rather than looking the other way around. Such a change of mind-set can be a help for formulating policies.

The valedictory address was delivered by Professor Braj Behari Kumar, Chairman, Indian Council of Social Science Research. Prof. Kumar spoke emphasized on the need to realize the journey from 'Look East' towards 'Act East' Policy. The achievements and the failures in this journey should be analysed and assessed and focus should be on the action rather than deliberations limited to talks. He pointed out that the isolation of the NER from the rest of India was a result of the policies followed during British rule in India. He flagged that prevailing governance issues and failures on the level of the state and Tribal Councils have impeded development of the NER. He talked about the dynasties that prevailed in the NER for hundreds of years, and thereby, underlined that the history of the NER must be included in the text books used in schools and universities across the country. In addition, he pointed out the need to stop referring to parts of India, other than the NER, as 'Mainland', and emphasized on the need to translate all discussions initiated during the consultation into tangible actions.

The concluding remarks were presented by Prof. Sachin Chaturvedi, as he summarized the discussion made over two days of the consultation. He stressed on consolidating the recommendations for benefitting both the external and internal sectors, in order to realise the journey from Look East to Act East in all forms of connectivity. He proposed to share these recommendations with the NITI Aayog, Ministry of DoNER, and the concerned state governments, apart from other stakeholders. Important learning from the consultation as he identified are listed as follows.

- Top priority should be given in strengthening services in Health-care and Education in both in the NER as well as in the neighbouring countries.
- A study can be conducted to find the total outflow of human resource from the NE to other countries for pursuing higher studies in medicine as well as for treatment. This study can be supplemented by identifying scope of improvement on the supply- side gaps that are persisting in the NE states.
- Focus could shift to villages in terms of improving physical and virtual connectivity.
- To collect district level socio-economic data of all NE states.

- To find whether there exists constitutional provisions or administrative impediments to inter-regional mobility.
- Consultation or a Policy brief document on the pattern of trade from NE states to neighbouring countries in terms of goods and services should be brought out. In addition, a study to identify reasons behind NE states exporting raw materials to neighbouring countries while importing the finished products made from the same raw materials is also suggested.
- Need to identify the existing gaps in the trade infrastructure with the given resources (finance and other schemes).
- Proposal to Ministry of AYUSH to conduct a survey to find out how NE can strengthen its traditional Medicine.
- Creation of a preliminary documentation on the statistical data on areas such as logistics cost, district- level human development indicators and trade facilitation of the NE states among others.
- The consultation ended with the vote of thanks by Ms Dhriti Gogoi, RGVN.

Major Takeaways from the sessions during the consultation

The overall essence that emerged during the consultation is that one size fitting all strategies would not work for the NE states since there exists heterogeneity among them and even within them. Incidentally, there appears to be more homogeneity among the communities living close across the border. Key takeaways from the consultation are as follows.

Inaugural

- Although NE policy and Act East policy have been pursued vigorously, there appears to be a disjoint between them. Therefore, consultation would be centered around concerns – how NE Policy and Act East policy can be linked to each other inasmuch each can reinforce the other. This linkage can then help leverage India's development efforts in the neighbouring countries to harness growth and development in the NE India. It was pointed out that consultations on the NER, hitherto, were primarily limited to discussions on the physical connectivity and infrastructure. While enhanced physical connectivity remains a necessary condition for development, it may not certainly translate into a sufficient one. Therefore, a strong people-to-people connect is required to complement and support growth of the physical infrastructure.
- This consultation may provide important pointers on India's Development Cooperation imperative in expanding cross border and rupee trade, promoting regional value- chains and helping provide services in health and education with the neighbouring countries in the East and in South-East Asia.
- There has been considerable progress in air, rail and road connectivity; however, these need further improvement. In the long run, connectivity can be extended from Imphal in India to Mandalay in Myanmar, and even beyond towards Far East.
- Exports from the NER are processed and sold back to India. The example of pineapple point out how India is importing juice and other processed variants, while exporting raw fruits from the North-Eastern states.
- Tourism -- adventure, medical, religious – has been identified as an important area, and may get further impetus in the NER through the India-ASEAN connectivity.
- Performing and Contemporary arts such as music, folk dance, etc. in addition to sports and local cuisine, should be further popularized to supplement development cooperation.
- Additional measures that can be undertaken to enhance development include formalization of prevailing informal trade along the borders of the NER, establishment of product testing labs in the NER based on the mutually accepted standards by the NE states and neighbouring countries.

Synergy between North-East (NE) and Act-East Policies – the Rationale

- Development strategies must be formulated by making them people -centric.
- Countries such as Japan, China, South Korea and ASEAN countries have showed increased participation in the NER.

- The NE states and the neighbouring countries can learn best practices from one another.
- Investments through the Special Purpose Vehicle (SPV) route can be undertaken to integrate synergies between the NER and Act East policies, given the success of SPVs in 'crowding in' private investments in the CLMV region.
- Increasing legal entry points and consolidating free entry points would not only make movement of goods and people across the border convenient but also facilitate border security forces to better monitor legal transit of goods and people across borders.
- Efforts have been undertaken by the Ministry of DoNER and North-Eastern Council (NEC) to coordinate jointly in the implementation of the projects in the NER; including coordination in monitoring expenditure of the Gross Budgetary Allocation.

Border Trade: Current Status and Future Prospects

- Both formal and informal trade exists within and across the NE states.
- Overall exports from the NER are in terms of the raw materials while imports are in the form of manufactured goods.
- Connectivity and market accessibility remain important issues, impeding seamless border trade.
- Lack of power supply is an important obstacle for LCS, which are often non-functional.
- In India, there exists enough potential to trade with Bangladesh in economic terms, followed by Pakistan and Japan.
- Important ministries of the Union Government – Ministry of Commerce and Industry, Ministry of Defence – were at loggerheads. While the Ministry of Commerce is willing for the development of trade and extended incentives and concessions, the Ministry of defence, main concerns are on the arms trade and insurgency. It also appears that the Government of Manipur has least concerns regarding prospects of trade across the border.
- Border- related policies should be multidimensional due to variations in terms of goods traded across the NER-East Asian countries
- While shortcomings exist in the outcomes of the Free Trade Agreements (FTAs), the merits of FTAs should not be overlooked
- Setting- up of an Executing Agency is a must to implement Act East Policy integrating NER. This Agency would help identify commodities that are tradeable from industries and agriculture..
- Necessary compulsion is required to strengthen digital infrastructure in the NER to enhance facilitation of paperless trade.

Developing Regional Value Chains

- The creation and expansion of regional value- chains would address the fragmentation of the NER Economy and also ensure livelihood security.
- There is a need to create value- chains in important products such as Ginger, Pineapple, Bamboo, Kiwi fruits and traditional handloom and handicrafts.
- Inadequate infrastructure in the NER, capability/incapability of traditional society to adapt to new technology, and the issue of identity crisis, which communities may try to preserve while undergoing change, are identified as important issues to be taken into account to facilitate value- addition.

- A successful instance of value- addition in processed pork products by a start-up demonstrated that farm- level policy interventions are important to improve and expand value -chains.
- Availability of finance from sources other than the PSUs for a start-up or a business is not e a constraint if the projects are scalable. Government finance and incentives already in place are yet to be implemented in a way to reach entrepreneurs in the apt manner.
- Non-availability of Value -Chain Finance has been identified an important issue. The challenges, pillars and implications of financing value chains were highlighted. Key challenges for consideration in Value- Chain Finance identified are the strength of the value- chain in terms of opportunities and challenges; the risks involved and the technical, business and financial services and support and finally the business model followed. The five pillars or C's of lending applied in Value- Chain Finance are Character, Capacity, Capital, Collateral and Conditions.
- Market- related rules and regulations such as taxation among others increase cost for business and reduce the margin of profits, making trade- related opportunities less lucrative.

Natural Resources, Water and Energy

- North-Eastern economy is largely based on the subsistence agriculture.
- Diffusion of innovation, especially in agriculture, depends on the social factors and values of the society, besides market factors.
- The NER has emerged as oil -refining hub, which has established its competitive advantage vis-à-vis countries such as Bhutan and Bangladesh on refining capacity. Cooperation across NE borders on oil pipeline, natural gas and power supply exists already, but needs to be further enhanced.
- Bamboo serves as a critical asset, and is a lifeline of the tribal communities in the NER, particularly the communities involved in Jhum and Terrace cultivation, and hence, Bamboo, identified as a natural resource, should be utilized in a sustainable manner. Need is to create an enabling environment for entrepreneurs, associated either directly or indirectly in the utilization of Bamboo, to facilitate backward and forward linkages in the form of incubation centres and other facilities

Education, Health and Tourism

- Education and Health are identified as important areas of development cooperation and in overall development of the NER.
- The NER has immense opportunity in tourism for employment generation, entrepreneurship and revenues. Measures have been undertaken by the Ministry of DoNER to boost tourism.
- Outbound of people from Manipur and other states of the NE is towards other countries for treatment and medical studies. There has been lack of medical facilities in the neighbouring countries, such as Myanmar. Therefore, considerable prospects exist for medical tourism at affordable rates provided bottlenecks in connectivity are removed.
- The NE also has immense prospects for traditional medicine.
- There is a need for innovative projects in tourism and increasing the standard of hospitality services especially; since tourists look for unusual experiences and roadside amenities among others.
- Need to attract quality tourists by branding unique features of the NER, such as local cuisine, handicrafts and handlooms Natural Ambience among others. The NE can become a hub of adventure tourism; given its diverse landscape and geography

- An important area of concern is the low ranking of NE states on the Education Development Index (EDI). It is proposed that primary education can be more effective if it is linked with students gaining some productive skills.
- Proposal to reduce red tapism and establishment of the Joint coordination committee, which would include the Home Ministry, Ministry of Health, Civil Aviation and MEA with coordination and support from the Ministry of DoNER to promote medical tourism along and across the border.

Connectivity and Physical Infrastructure

- Detailed Project Report (DPR) is required with the engagement of the local people and the state governments before any project is undertaken.
- Finance is not much of a constraint rather lack of connectivity owing to poor road conditions escalates overhead costs, thus reducing potential competitiveness of goods and services, in spite of being of high quality.
- Internal security problems in the NER also constraints mobility of goods and people.
- Though rail connectivity has improved as per latest updates; last mile road connectivity in the NER remains very poor. If this not taken care of, the progress in rail connectivity would not contribute to desired level of intended achievement.
- The lack of database of different products in the NER
- Need to augment storage capacity in the NER
- Proposal is for a report- card on the status of the existing connectivity projects
- There visibly exists emotional integration of the NE region with the rest of India, but aspirations of the youth of this region are yet to be fulfilled.

Valedictory

- Prevailing governance issues have impeded development of the NER
- This consultation should initiate a work plan for development and integration of the NER
- The NER should be treated as the 'mainstream' to which the rest of India would need to connect rather than looking the other way around. Such a change of mind-set would help formulation of apt policies.
- Need to realize the journey from 'Look East' towards 'Act East' Policy. Thus, emphasis is laid on the need to translate all discussions initiated during the consultation into tangible actions.
- It is pointed out that the history of the NER must be included in the textbooks for schools and universities across the country.
- Top priority should be given in strengthening services in Health-care and Education in both the NER as well as the neighbouring countries.
- A study could be conducted to find the total outflow of human resource from the NE to other countries for pursuing higher studies in medicine as well as for treatment. This study may supplement in identifying scope of improvement on the supply side gaps persisting in the NE states.
- Focus should shift to villages in terms of improving Physical and Virtual connectivity
- To collect district level socio-economic data of all the NE states

- To find whether there exists constitutional provisions or administrative impediments to inter-regional mobility.
- Consultation or a Policy brief is required on the trade pattern of the NE states to neighbouring countries in terms of goods and services. In addition, a study is suggested to be done for identifying reasons behind NE states exporting raw materials to neighbouring countries while importing the finished products made from the same raw materials.
- Need to identify existing gaps in the trade infrastructure with given resources (finance and other schemes).
- Proposal is to Ministry of AYUSH to conduct a survey on how NE can strengthen its traditional Medicine.
- Creation of a preliminary documentation on statistical data is suggested on areas, such as logistics cost, district level human development indicators and trade facilitation of NE states among others.

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 (SSC) and contextualize 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.

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 its outreach should be spread to other cities as well. Taking this idea forward, we conducted so far, four regional consultations, in Pune in collaboration with Symbiosis International University on February 10-11, 2015, in Kolkata in collaboration with Calcutta University on March 23-24, 2015, in Jaipur was organised on December 22-23, 2015 and in Chennai on the 15th March 2016, in partnership with Madras Institute of Development Studies (MIDS) and Bay of Bengal Programme Intergovernmental Organization (BoBP-IGO).

A consultation is now being proposed to be organized in Guwahati on 24th and 25th October 2017 to engage with academia, CSOs and other stakeholders from across the North East states of India representing different domains.

The Context

The idea of the regional consultation in Guwahati is, however, to go beyond introducing the concept of SSC to the relevant stakeholders of the region. In addition to opening up a platform for developing people-to-people contact across the border, it plans to locate North-East region of India as a hub to facilitate development cooperation across the border with countries in the immediate neighbourhood (Bangladesh, Nepal, Bhutan and Myanmar) and even those located a little beyond (Cambodia, Laos PDR, Vietnam). India's SSC projects in the region is given in annex 1. The possibility of synergies between the developmental activities planned for the North Eastern Region of India and India's initiatives of development cooperation with the countries in the immediate neighbourhood like Myanmar, Nepal, Bangladesh and Bhutan is intense. India's engagement with countries beyond immediate neighbourhood – Cambodia, Laos PDR and Vietnam has also been increasing rapidly. Expectedly, the mutual benefit accruing to India from such development cooperation activities will spill over in a more than proportionate manner to the North-Eastern states of India. For such an effort to fructify, it is necessary that a clear convergence between India's Act East Policy and North Eastern Region Vision 2020 is established. Such a convergence can be achieved only when a thorough ground level one on one mapping of interventions both within the North-Eastern region and the countries in the neighbourhood is carried out. The proposed consultation will attempt to develop the future roadmap of such possible synergies.

This consultation would have special significance due to eight constituent states of the North Eastern Region (NER) sharing over 5,400 kilometres of international border (about 98 per cent of its entire border area) with China (southern Tibet) in the north, Myanmar in the east, Bangladesh in the southwest, Bhutan to the northwest and Nepal in the west. Cambodia, Lao PDR and Vietnam who do not have immediate national borders with any of the North-Eastern states but, have promising linkages with the region, may also be suitably covered. Two very important features that the North-Eastern India share with its neighbours across the border and a little beyond are that they together constitute one of the 8 important biodiversity hotspots in the world and a prominent global poverty hotspot as well. Given the current efforts at implementing the sustainable development goals (SDGs) with the avowed motto that “no one is left behind” by the year 2030, a synergy between the development strategies for the north-eastern region of the country and those located in its immediate neighbourhood cannot be overemphasized.

Over the last few years considerable efforts have been put to develop multi-modal connectivity infrastructure both within the north eastern region and across the countries under review. Infrastructural efforts to facilitate trade across the border have also been initiated. The need for creating a new set of institutional infrastructure that complements the efforts at building physical infrastructure is being urgently felt. New efforts are now imperative to extend the economic process of value creation in an ecology and environment friendly manner in the extended geographical space being considered for this consultation. Such an effort would involve designing relevant architecture for institutional connectivity – networks of communities with support from members of academia and CSOs located on both sides of the border. Expanding the opportunities of local trade which were the norms prior to independence can also play an important role to establish the necessary institutional infrastructure.

Value creation in a sustained manner is possible through creation of business opportunities for entrepreneurs of the region is the need of the day. Such efforts can be initiated through interventions in five distinct but critically interlinked domains. The five areas where sufficient attention may help achieve a win-win partnership may include (a) connectivity and physical infrastructure; (b) developing primary and secondary sectors of economic activities through enhancing regional value chains involving efforts in trade, agriculture, horticulture-floriculture and SMEs, (c) natural resources, water and energy (d) education, health and tourism and finally (e) capacity building.

The link states with our neighbouring countries are as follows:

- Mizoram and Manipur for Myanmar
- Assam and Sikkim for Bhutan
- Meghalaya, Tripura and Assam for Bangladesh; and
- Sikkim for Nepal

Development Cooperation in neighbouring countries and development interventions in the North East of India should simultaneously take care of in-situ livelihood generation. There needs to be a synergy between internal development strategy and external development cooperation strategy for partner countries. Two visible roadblocks for effectively linking these two processes for the last 60 years have been lack of connectivity both within and beyond the borders and lack of necessary institutional structure to facilitate such a linkage.

The first roadblock has been removed to some visible extent over the last decade and a half. Even some of the broken linkages are being taken care of. (3Rs – Road, Rail, River and 1-A – Air Connectivity) However, infrastructural network, however efficient it is, cannot generate livelihood

opportunities if not backed by efficient institutional mechanisms. For example, India's trade volume with its neighbouring countries of Nepal, Bangladesh, Bhutan and Bangladesh has increased over the years but not through the North East; the Buddhist tourism sector has evolved but the North East of India has been left out; and the literacy rate and education in the North East students has increased but higher educational institutions are still small in number in the region.

As mentioned, considerable investment in the hard infrastructure has already been done. However, on the issue of soft power investment, the pace has been slow. Possible areas of investment which requires further discussion at a multistakeholder platform for synergising North East with Act East Policy are as follows:

- Language: North East has a good English based education and has the potential to impart English education to the people in Southeast Asia and East Asian countries. ITEC programmes for language training can be taken up in these areas.
- Health: This is one sector where the North Eastern states can play an active role for the health tourism from Bangladesh and Myanmar. Investment in the health infrastructure will not improve the health of the states but also of the entire region.
- Culture: The people of North East have strong ethnic and cultural linkages with the people in the Southeast Asia and this can be used to strengthen the ties. This can be linked with the border infrastructure/border connectivity issues where dedicated cultural/social spaces can be created in the border haats.
- Tourism: Promoting a new Buddhist Tourism Network from to attract tourists from Thailand , Cambodia, Laos and Vietnam to Buddhist pilgrimage centres in Sikkim, Nepal, Bhutan and Arunachal Pradesh, even beyond to Gaya and Lumbini.

Some potential interventions may be in terms of:

- Formalizing the existing riverine transport system between Nagaland and Myanmar
- Setting up a strong financial services hub in Moreh (Manipur) to facilitate formal trade between Manipur and Myanmar;
- Facilitating flow of construction materials from Assam and Meghalaya to Bangladesh;
- Creating south-south value chains in pine apple, orange, ginger and other fruits and spices involving Nepal, Sikkim, Bhutan, Assam, Meghalaya and Bangladesh;
- Creating a strong network of Micro-finance Institutions with partners from across the countries under consideration joining the same;
- Setting up facilities in north eastern states to serve as hubs for medical and educational tourism, utilizing the strong tradition of English medium educational facilities available in the north-eastern states;
- Creating an eco-tourism/responsible tourism chain involving the larger geographical region under consideration of the proposed consultaion.

North East India being rich in natural resources and having evolved a number of practices geared towards their sustainable management through community participation, experiences gathered in this region can help provide development cooperation in related areas in many Southern countries around the world. For instance, the knowledge base available in the arena of traditional and folk medicinal system, organic farming and natural resource harnessing and disaster management in fact could provide some newer instruments of development assistance among the recipient countries. Successful interventions by CSOs in promoting economically, socially and ecologically sustainable livelihood will be of interest to our partner countries in SSC. A session on such achievements will

help showcase some such interventions. Several successful interventions through community-led financial inclusion models – involving women’s self-help groups – are also a hallmark of this region, which also is intended to be discussed at length. Cooperation in capacity building is a hallmark of India’s support to Southern countries. Successful experiences in natural resource management and access to financial services thus may be one of our focus areas for the Guwahati consultation. These will also promote the implementation of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in the North-East.

Connectivity and Physical Infrastructure

The connectivity challenge for the North-East has three dimensions:-

- Connectivity between the North-East and the rest of the country;
- Connectivity within the North-East, linking North-Eastern states with one another; and
- Cross-border connectivity with neighbouring countries.

These different dimensions of connectivity need to be pursued simultaneously.

One of the key developmental bottlenecks in the North-East is that of infrastructure. The recent improvement in road connectivity has been beneficial for the region however; still a lot needs to be done. The region is connected to rest of India only through a 22 km – wide Siliguri Corridor located in Darjeeling district. Problem of road connectivity gets compounded due to lack of connectivity with neighbouring countries. For example, distance between Agartala and Kolkata through the Siliguri corridor is three times than through Bangladesh. The North-East region has about 2600 km of railway lines, concentrated mainly in the states of Assam and Tripura. Rest of the states are deprived of rail connectivity mainly due to inhospitable terrain which renders rail construction a difficult and an expensive proposition. Similar issues are there with air and waterways as well.

Steps to improve infrastructure connectivity at intra-regional level and at bilateral and multilateral have taken place. BBIN initiative has identified connectivity as the priority, including electrical grids, shared access to road, rail, air and port infrastructure and ease of travel.

Similarly the Trilateral Highway and Kaladan Multimodal project are projects for connectivity with Myanmar and South-East Asia. In a recent bilateral initiative, India has decided to provide 100MW of electricity to Bangladesh through Palatana Project in Udaipur, Tripura in exchange for Bangladesh leasing 10 gigabit per second (GBPS) bandwidth to India. This will significantly improve the internet connectivity of the entire North Eastern states which for the first time gets access to bandwidth through the Bay of Bengal base far away from the traditional sources of Southern and western India.

Some of the key strategies for inclusive development of the North-East region can include North-East Ring Road; a 250 km road across the Barak valley, trans-Arunachal highway linking Bomdila with Patna through Thimpu, Gangtok and Kathmandu; developing waterways and ports along Brahmaputra and Barak rivers; and redevelopment of 12 non-operational regional airports (Rupsi, Shella, Tura, Khowai, Lamalpur, Kailashar, Tuiral, Tezu, Pasighat, Along, Daporizo and Ziro) along with associated infrastructures like cargo and hotel facilities. Developing integrated transport corridor and expediting the development of proposed Tetelia-Byrnihat, Silchar-Aizwal-Champai and Agartala-Akhaura railway line would go a long way in connecting the region within itself and also with rest of the country and bordering countries.

Enhancing Regional Value Chains for Job Creation

Another problematic issue plaguing the North-East is the creation of gainful employment opportunities amidst scarcity of skilled and unskilled labour force. The region suffers from the cumulative effects of dominance of subsistence agrarian economies, poor industrial base, highly limited regional market, lack of infrastructure, significant dependence on public sector employment and political insurgency. Countries located in the immediate neighbourhood and a little beyond also suffer from similar issues. Integrating economic activities in this region through local, regional and even cross country value chains that is ably supported by the evolving physical infrastructure in the region, will help bring in lasting peace and prosperity and contribute to sustainable development of the region to ensure that “no one is left behind”. Creating smart rural centres for agro development and strengthening ecological and rural tourism would have a positive role to play in creating job opportunities. Agriculture policy of each state with specific focus on restoration of important industries like tea industry needs to be taken up. Setting up of food processing hubs along with creation of post-harvest management facilities and cold chains are required to be strengthened. In order to make agriculture a profit making endeavour, multi-cropping and high value crops like black pepper and Naga chilly may be introduced. Finally, integrating them seamlessly with local value chains in other NE states and beyond that are located across the border in the neighbouring countries will enhance their ability to simultaneously tap the economies of scale and scope.

Natural Resource, Bio Diversity and Energy

The North Eastern region of the country and the neighbourhood countries together are rich in biodiversity and share an almost identical ecological landscape, thanks to its location around the Himalayas. In spite of rich endowment of natural resources, the region has lagged behind the rest of the country in terms of various developmental outcomes. Creating and securitising the natural assets of the region is important. Promotion of green businesses to take advantage of the region's biodiversity is needed to be developed as an important strategy for sustainable development in this region. Landscape scale conservation efforts that transcend international border is also a strongly felt need in this region. A few successful experiments across Kunchenjunga landscape have already been carried out at the community level. Efforts are needed to ascertain that the hydro-power potential of this region that are amenable to tapping in a sustainable manner can contribute meaningfully to the energy security of this region and beyond – to the rest of the country and even across the border.

Education, Health and Tourism

Among the social sectors health care sector is one area which has a vast scope of improvement and the benefits could be enjoyed both by the Indian citizens as well as by the citizens of the neighbouring countries. At the moment the favoured destination for medical treatment for Myanmar nationals are Bangkok and Singapore, where the treatments are expensive as compared to India. India has adopted NABH (National Accreditation Board for Hospitals & Healthcare Providers) program to improve the quality to international standard for attracting more foreigner medical tourists. However, there are no NABH hospitals in NE India. Medical tourists from Bangladesh, Nepal and Bhutan do travel to different Indian metro cities. North-East can be made an important centre for medical tourism for the neighbouring countries with cities like Guwahati, Dibrugarh, Silchar, Imphal and Agartala as Health Tourism Hubs. Now with a better e-connectivity owing to 10 GBPS bandwidth, a pan North-East e-network can be set up in lines of pan African e-network which provides tele medicine facility.

Traditionally, a critical reason attributed to the outmigration of the youth in North-East apart for employment opportunities has been education. However, the education infrastructure has improved steadily in the recent past. Infrastructure development of Central Institutions like the eight central universities, IITs, NITs, IIM and several other institutions in the NER has triggered a chain of cascading effects in form of construction of staff quarters, academic buildings, library buildings, administrative buildings and purchase of lab equipments, books, etc. These projects are in various stages of implementation.

The important Central Sector Institutions in the North East Region are Indian Institute of Technology (IIT), Guwahati; North Eastern Regional Institute of Science and Technology (NERIST), Itanagar; National Institute of Technology (NIT), Silchar; Regional Centres of Indira Gandhi National Open Universities (IGNOU); Central Universities of Assam, Tezpur, Mizoram, Nagaland, Manipur, Sikkim, Arunachal Pradesh and Meghalaya; and North Eastern Hill University (NEHU). The private sector, too, has shown interest in strengthening the higher education of the region. Universities like Don Bosco, Guwahati; Shilong Medical College, Shilong; Manipal Institute in Sikkim, Indian Institute of Information Technology and Advanced Studies and Kaziranga University in Assam. North-Eastern Knowledge Foundation is about to start a university which intends to invest INR 100 Crores with subsequent investment of another INR 300 Crores over the next few years. The campus, on 50 acres, hopes to attract students from Bangladesh, Bhutan and Nepal.

The potential of linking the South East Asian countries with the North Eastern part of India through creating and sustaining an attractive tourism circuit that makes use of the unique features of this region in terms of Bio-diversity, religious practices (Buddhism), Adventure sports, Music etc. cannot be overemphasized as well. .

Capacity Building

The government and private run educational institutions can also empanel various programmes under the Development Partnership Administration's Indian Technical Economic Cooperation (ITEC) programmes meant for students from the developing countries. Participants from the neighbouring countries, at the moment, take part in ITEC programmes in the educational and training institutions which are spread across India. Other initiatives may include creation of knowledge hubs across the region with each hub concentrating on specific area of education. In order to develop the technical literacy of the region, North-East Technical University and Industrial Training Institutes (ITIs) can be set up.

Thus, India's domestic development narrative and challenges for the North-East of India has a strong correspondence towards India's Foreign Policy with the countries neighbouring these states.

Objectives

The consultation is planned with the objective of evolving a dialogue among various stakeholders on issues associated with Indian development cooperation policy and DoNER's vision about development in the North East. This consultation series is designed to provide an opportunity to discuss scope, objectives and modalities in the realm of development process of North East states and beyond. The idea is to explore possibility to enhance people-to-people contact beyond the national boundary and situating north-Eastern states as an effective hub for creating regional value chain from an Act East perspective.

FIDC along with the partner organizations, will explore ways of evolving mechanisms for strengthening communication across various actors. The key objectives may be summarised as follows:

- There are several actors that play an important role in the policy formulation. They include CSOs, academia, entrepreneurs including in farming, 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.
- Explore possibility to enhance people-to-people contact beyond the national boundary and situating north-Eastern states as an effective hub for creating regional value chain from an Act East perspective.

Agenda

Effort shall be made 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 generated 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:

- How to develop quality, reliable, sustainable and resilient infrastructure, including regional and transborder infrastructure, to support economic development and human well-being?
- How to promote development-oriented policies that support productive activities, decent job creation, entrepreneurship, creativity and innovation, and encourage the formalization and growth of micro-small and medium sized enterprises via creation of effective regional value chains, including financial services?
- How to manage forest and water sustainably, restore degraded lands and successfully combat desertification, revive degraded natural habitats and end biodiversity loss?
- How to enhance regional and international cooperation to facilitate access to clean energy, including renewable energy, energy efficiency, and advanced and cleaner fossil-fuel technology?
- How to ensure that all girls and boys get equitable and quality primary and secondary education leading to relevant and effective learning outcomes?
- How to ensure equitable access to quality curative and preventive health facilities to the residents of this region?
- How to enhance regional and international support for implementing effective and targeted capacity-building to support national plans to implement all the Sustainable Development Goals, including through South-South cooperation.

Intended Outcomes

- The consultation intends to initiate a dialogue with Non-State stakeholders on a regional level and to facilitate subsequent dialogue at cross national level.

- Identifying both the domestic partners and institutions and CSOs in the immediate neighbouring countries
- Exploring various crucial areas of transfer of cooperative ventures across the border under the broad parameters of India's development cooperation matrices and analysing regional value chain for economic development of the region.
- Publication of an updated version of the *Profile of Indian Voluntary Organizations* that was prepared in 2013.
- An enhanced understanding on development cooperation and its operational components.
- Compilation of CSO success stories.

Annexures

Agenda



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Forum for Indian Development
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RIS
Research and Information System
for Developing Countries



Regional Consultations on Development Cooperation 10-11 February 2015 Symbiosis International University, Pune

I: February 10, 2015

10.00-11.00 am

Inaugural Session

Welcome Address:

Dr. S. B. Mujumdar, Chancellor, Symbiosis International University, Pune

Dr. Sachin Chaturvedi, Director General, RIS

Inaugural Address:

Mr. Kumar Tuhin, Joint Secretary (DPA-II), Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India

Keynote Address:

Mr. Sanjay Kirloskar, Chairman and Managing Director, Kirloskar Brothers Ltd

Vote of Thanks

Dr Vidya Yeravdekar, Principal Director, Symbiosis, Pune

11.00-11.30 am

Tea Break

11.30-01.00 pm

Technical Session I: Higher Education and Capacity Building

Chair: Mr. Kumar Tuhin, Joint Secretary (DPA-II), Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India

- **Dr. Veena Bhalla**, Joint Secretary, AIU
- **Dr. Vidya Yeravdekar**, Principal Director, Symbiosis, Pune
- **Mr. Aman Mittal**, Director, International Relations, Lovely Professional University
- **Prof. Vijay Gupta**, Vice Chancellor, Sharda University

1.00-2.00 pm

Lunch Break

2.00-3.30 pm

Technical Session II: Development Cooperation and Civil Society Organisation

Chair: Dr. Sachin Chaturvedi, Director General, RIS

- **Dr. Sunil Shukla**, Chief Faculty, Entrepreneurship Development Institute of India, Gujarat
- **Mr. Datta Patil**, Director General, YUVA Rural Association
- **Mr. Rakesh Mittal**, CEO, Global Financial and Management Services, Mumbai
- **Dr. N.G. Hegde**, Principal Advisor and Trustee BAIF-Development Research Foundation, Pune
- **Mr. Pradeep Lokhande**, Rural Relations, Pune

3.30-3.45 pm

Tea Break

3.45-4:45 pm

Technical Session III: Parallel Sessions on Development Cooperation

	Parallel Session I	Parallel Session II
Moderator	Jyoti Chandiramani and Kaustav Bandyopadhyay	Milndo Chakrabarti and Rakesh Mittal
Participants	Shivali Lavale, SIIS	Aparajita Biswas
	Jyotsna Singh, VANI	Ambuj Kishore, ARAVALI
	Anant Sardeshmukh, MCC	Indu Capoor, CHETNA
	Mini Bedi, DST	Swati Patel, Sewamandir
	Armene Modi, Ashta No Kai	Rashmi Saraswat, Mahila Chetna Manch
	Prabhakar Sinha, Real Medicine Foundation	Ratna Mariadoss, Bombay Urban Industrial League for Development
	Vinayak Garde, AFARM	

4.45-5:30 pm

Roundtable on Development Cooperation

Report from Parallel Sessions: Dr. Sudhir T Devare, Ram Sathe Chair Professor, SIIS, Symbiosis International University, Pune

Comments: Dr. Dileep Padgaonkar, R.K. Laxman Chair Professor, SIMC, Symbiosis International University, Pune

Day II: February 11, 2015

9.30-11.00am

Technical Session IV: Scope, Objectives and Modalities of Development

Chair: Ms. Sujata Mehta, Secretary (ER), Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India

- Dr. Sudhir T Devare, Ram Sathe Chair Professor, SIIS, Symbiosis International University, Pune
- Mr. Kaustuv K Bandyopadhyay, Director, PRIA
- Dr. Ruchita Beri, Senior Research Associate, IDSA, New Delhi
- Ms. Armene Modi, Founder, Ashta No Kai, Pune
- Mr. Nadeem Panjetan, Chief General Manager, EXIM Bank

11.00-11.30am

Tea Break

11.30-1.00 pm

Concluding Session

Welcome: Dr. Vidya Yeravdekar, Principal Director, Symbiosis, Pune

- **Conference Report:** Dr. Jyoti Chandiramani, Dean, Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, Symbiosis International University, Pune
- **Special Remarks:** Dr. Kingshuk Chatterjee, Assistant Professor, University of Calcutta
- **Closing Remarks:** Ms. Sujata Mehta, Secretary (ER), Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India
- **Vote of Thanks:** Prof. Sachin Chaturvedi, Director General, RIS, New Delhi

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Agenda



The banner features logos at the top: the Government of India emblem, the University of Calcutta seal, the FIDC logo (Forum for Indian Development Cooperation), and the RIS logo (Research and Information System for Developing Countries). The main title 'Regional Consultation on Development Cooperation' is in large yellow font. Below it, the dates '23-24 March 2015' and the venue 'Institute of Foreign Policy Studies, University of Calcutta, Kolkata' are listed. The background is a dark green map of India with 'FIDC' repeated in a light green pattern.

Ministry of External Affairs
Development Partnership Administration
Government of India

University of Calcutta

FIDC
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Cooperation

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Regional Consultation on Development Cooperation

23-24 March 2015
Institute of Foreign Policy Studies, University of Calcutta, Kolkata

Day I: Monday, March 23, 2015

10:30-11:30

Inaugural Session

Welcome Address: Prof. Suranjan Das, Vice Chancellor, University of Calcutta

Inaugural Address: Shri Partha Chatterjee, Minister-In Charge, Department of Higher Education, Government of West Bengal, Kolkata

Special Remark: Mr. Alok K. Sinha, JS (DPA I) MEA, Government of India

Vote of Thanks: Prof. Sachin Chaturvedi, DG, RIS

11:30-12:00

Tea Break

12:30-13:30

Technical Session I: Panel Discussion on 'What is South-South Cooperation'

Chair: Mr. Kumar Tuhin, JS (DPA II), MEA, Government of India

- **Theoretical Perspective:** Prof. Radharaman Chakrabarti, University of Calcutta, Kolkata
- **Development Compact and SSC:** Dr. Milindo Chakrabarti, Visiting Fellow RIS, Professor Sharda University, New Delhi

- **CSOs and SSC:** Dr. Kaustav Bandyopadhyay, Participatory Research in Asia, New Delhi
- **Global Processes and SSC:** Mr. Amitabh Behar, National Foundation for India (NFI), New Delhi

Open Discussion

13:30-14:30

Lunch Break

14:30-15:30

Technical Session II: Development Cooperation and Civil Society Organisation

Chair: Dr. Gulshan Sachdeva, School of International Studies, JNU, Delhi

Presentation by CSO:

- Mr. SP Gon Choudhury, Member, Planning Board, Government of Tripura and Chairman Ashden, India, Kolkata
- Amb. Amitava Tripathi, Hand-in-Hand, Chennai
- Prof. SB Roy, Indian Institute of Bio-Social Research and Development, Kolkata
- Mr. Sauparno Chatterjee, Pradan, New Delhi
- Ms. Debika Goswami, SM Sehgal Foundation, New Delhi

Open Discussion

15:30-15:45

Tea Break

15:45-16:15

Special Session I: Emerging Ideas on South-South Cooperation.

Chair: Dr. Ajitava Ray Chaudhuri, Jadavpur University

Different Contours of SSC: Dr. SK Mohanty, Professor, RIS

SSC: An African Perspective: Dr. Elizabeth Sidiropoulos, Chief Executive, South African Institute of International Affairs

Open Discussion

16:15-17:15

Technical Session III: Roundtable Sessions on Development Cooperation

	Roundtable Session I – Capacity Building and Training Programmes	Roundtable Session II – Field based Developmental Interventions	Roundtable Session III – Project Designing and Monitoring & Evaluation
Chair	Dr. Ajitava Ray Chaudhuri, Jadavpur University	Mr. Partha Dasgupta , Syngenta Foundation	Prof. Manmohan Agarwal, RBI Chair, Centre for Development Studies

Moderator	Mr. Chandra Shekhar Ghosh, Bandhan	Mr. Amitabh Behar, National Foundation for India (NFI)	Prof. Saikat Sinha Roy, Jadavpur University
Speakers	<p>Prof. Samir Das, University of Calcutta</p> <p>Dr. Sreeradha Datta, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad Institute of Asian Studies</p> <p>Mr. Suparno Chatterjee, Pradan</p> <p>Ms. Debika Goswami, SM Sehgal Foundation</p> <p>Dr. Arijita Dutta, University of Calcutta</p> <p>Ms. Piya Nandi, Manager CSR, njunction services ltd.</p>	<p>Dr. Kaustav Bandyopadhyay, Participatory Research in Asia</p> <p>Mr Sandip Mukherjee, Hand-in-Hand</p> <p>Dr. Bimal Pramanik, Gram Bikash Kendra</p> <p>Mr. Binoda K. Mishra, Centre for Studies in International Relations and Development</p> <p>Mr. Prabhat Kumar Mishra, Ambuja Cement</p> <p>Mr. TC James, Consultant, RIS</p>	<p>Dr. SP Pal, Former Advisor to the Planning Commission</p> <p>Dr. Milindo Chakrabarti, RIS</p> <p>Saikat Sarkar, Commercial Intelligence and Statistics</p> <p>Mr. Rakesh Mittal, Global Financial and Management Services</p> <p>Ms. Neepa Saha Sharma, Chief Co-ordinator CSR, CESC</p> <p>Dr.Sumana Chakraverty Datta, Head CSR, Arcelor Mittal India Pvt Ltd.</p>
Rapporteur	Ms. Vrinda Seksaria, RIS	Mr. Pratyush, RIS	Ms. Loohita Solanki, CU Mr. Mintu Barua, CU

17:15-18:15

Special Session Education and South-South Cooperation

Chair: Prof. Arun Bandyopadhyay, Calcutta University

- Mr. Ashok Mutum, PRATHAM, New Delhi
- Prof. Sushanta Duttagupta, Vice Chancellor, Visva Bharti University
- Ms. Devi Kar, Director, Modern High School for Girls, Kolkata
- Ms. Tina Servaia, Calcutta International School, Kolkata

Open Discussion

18:30 onwards: Reception and Dinner (Mandarin Banquet, Taj Bengal)

Day II: Tuesday, March 24, 2015

10:30-11:30

Technical Session IV: Research Methodology in South-South Cooperation

Chair: Prof. Sachin Chaturvedi, DG, RIS

Speakers

- Prof. Manmohan Agarwal, RBI Chair, Centre for Development Studies
- Prof. SK Mohanty, Professor, RIS
- Prof. Milindo Chakrabarti, Visiting Fellow RIS, Professor Sharda University, New Delhi
- Dr. Shantanu Chakrabarti, University of Calcutta, Kolkata

Open Discussion

11:30-11:45

Tea Break

11:45-13:00

Valedictory Session

Chair: Prof. Suranjan Das, Vice Chancellor, University of Calcutta

Report on Parallel Sessions: Dr. Shantanu Chakrabarti, University of Calcutta, Kolkata

Special Remarks: Dr. Gulshan Sachdeva, School of International Studies, JNU, Delhi

Vote of Thanks: Prof. Sachin Chaturvedi, DG, RIS

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Shantiniketan

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Ms. Tina Servaia
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BASIX
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Mr. Ranjan Kishore Panda
Expert on Water
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Mr. Rajib Haldar
Child in Need Initiative
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RGVN
Guwahati

Ms. Dhruba Mukhopadhyay
Pradan
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Perna
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Mr. Dhritiman Das
RGVN
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Mr. Raj Kishore Mishra
Right to Food secretariat
Bhubaneswar

Ms. Sarala Khaling
Ashoka Trust for Research in Ecology and the
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Agenda

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Forum for Indian Development Cooperation Regional Consultation

22-23 December 2015
Jaipur

Day I: December 22, 2015

10.00-11.00 am

Inaugural Session

Welcome Address:

Prof. Sachin Chaturvedi, Director General, RIS, New Delhi

Inaugural Address:

Mr. A.K. Sahu, Joint Secretary (DPA-II), Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India

Special Remark: Mr. Charanjeet Singh, Joint Secretary (MER), Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India

Keynote Address: Prof. V.S. Vyas, Professor Emeritus, Institute of Development Studies (IDS), Jaipur

Vote of Thanks: Dr. Kaustuv Bandyopadhyay, Director, PRIA Global Partnership, and Convener of FIDC Working Group on CSO Intervention

11.00-11.30 am

Tea Break

11.30-01.00 pm

Technical Session I – India's Development Cooperation: Perspective and Practice

Chair: Prof. Sachin Chaturvedi, Director General, RIS, New Delhi

	<p>Special Address: Mr. Pradeep S. Mehta, Secretary General, CUTS International, Jaipur</p> <p>Panel: Dr. Kaustuv Bandyopadhyay, Director, PRIA Global Partnership, and Convener of FIDC Working Group on CSO Intervention</p> <p>Mr. Ajay Mehta, President, SEVA Mandir, Udaipur</p> <p>CII Representative *</p> <p>Mr. Laxman Singh, Solar Engineer, Barefoot College, Tilonia, Rajasthan</p>
1.00-2.00 pm	Lunch
2.00-3.30 pm	<p>Technical Session II: Development Cooperation and Civil Society Organization</p> <p>Chair: Mr. Harsh Jaitli, Chief Executive Officer, Voluntary Action Network India (VANI), New Delhi</p> <p>Special Address: Mr. Gulshan Sachdeva, Professor, Centre for European Studies School of International Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi</p> <p>Panel: Mr. Manish Singh Gaur, Centre for Community Economics and Development Consultants Society (CECOEDECON), Jaipur</p> <p>Mr. Rakesh Mittal, CEO, Global Financial and Management Services, Mumbai</p> <p>Dr. Shobhita Rajagopal, Associate Professor, Institute of Development Studies, Jaipur,</p>
3.30-4.00 pm	Tea Break
4.00-5:00 pm	<p>Technical Session III: Development Cooperation and Natural Resource Management</p> <p>Chair: Dr. Indira Khurana, Policy Lead, IPE Global, Delhi</p> <p>Special Address: Ms. Priyanka Singh, Chief Executive, Seva Mandir, Udaipur</p> <p>Panel: Mr. Bhanwar Singh Chandana, Director, Astha Sansthan, Udaipur</p> <p>Mr. Dinesh Vyas, Senior Programme Coordinator, Church's Auxiliary for Social Action (CASA), Rajasthan</p> <p>Mr. Manish Tiwari, Joint Director, Shiv Charan Mathur Social Policy Research Institute, Jaipur</p>
5.00-6.00 pm	<p>Technical Session IV – CSO Intervention: Education, Health and Rural Development</p> <p>Chair: Mr. Ajay Mehta, President, SEVA Mandir, Udaipur</p>

Mr. Ambuj Kishore, Program Director, ARAVALI
 Mr. Arvind Ojha, Secretary, URMUL Rural Health,
 Research and Development Trust, Bikaner
 Dr. Jyoti Chandiramani, Director, Symbiosis
 International University, Pune
 Mr. Shree Kant Kumar, Project Director, SEWA

7.00 pm

Dinner

Day II: December 23, 2015

9.30-11.00 am

Technical Session V: Evaluation of Development Cooperation: Emerging Challenges

Chair: Mr. A.K. Sahu, Joint Secretary (DPA-II), Ministry of
 External Affairs, Government of India

Prof. Manmohan Agarwal, RBI Chair, Centre for Development
 Studies, Thiruvananthapuram, Kerala

Prof. Milindo Chakrabarti, Visiting Fellow, RIS and Professor,
 Sharda University

Mr. KB Kothari, Managing Trustee, PRATHAM

11.00-11.30am

Tea Break

11.30-12.30pm

Group Discussion: Evaluation and Sectoral Linkages
 Evaluation: Natural Resource Management

Chair: Dr. Indira Khurana, Policy Lead, IPE Global, Delhi
 Evaluation: Rural Development

Chair: Mr. Harsh Jaitli, Chief Executive Officer, Voluntary Action
 Network India (VANI), New Delhi

Evaluation: Health and Education

Chair: Prof. T.C James, RIS

12.30-01.00 pm

Valedictory Session

Welcome: Prof. Sachin Chaturvedi, Director General, RIS

Conference Report: Dr. Kaustuv Bandyopadhyay, Director, PRIA
 Global Partnership, and Convener of FIDC Working Group on
 CSO Intervention

Valedictory Address: Mr. A.K. Sahu, Joint Secretary (DPA- II),
 Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India

1:00 pm

Lunch

Participant List for FIDC Regional Consultation, Jaipur

Ms. Priyanka Singh

Chief Executive
Seva Mandir
Udaipur, Rajasthan

Mr. Chhail Bihari Sharma

Gramrajya Vikas evam Prashikshan Sansthan
Jaipur, Rajasthan

Mr. Omprakash Sharma

Secretary
Gram Chetna Kendra
Jaipur, Rajasthan

Mr. Gyan Singh Nathawat

President
Watershed Consultants Organisation
Rajasthan

Mr. Rakesh Mittal

CEO
Global Financial & Management Services
Maharashtra

Dr. Shobhita Rajagopal

Associate Professor
Institute of Development Studies
Jaipur, Rajasthan

Ms. Mamta Nayak

Jal Bhagirathi Foundation

Mr. Kuldeep Singh Tanwar

CEO
Vision India Foundation
Udaipur, Rajasthan

Mr. Rajendra Suthar

Secretary
Pali, Rajasthan

Mr. Shamshuddin

Tawri Development and Welfare Organization
Jaisalmer, Rajasthan

Mr. Jairam Gujjar

Manav Kalyan evam Vikas Sansthan
Ajmer, Rajasthan

Mr. Ram Chandra Saini

Mahila evam Paryavaran Vikas Sansthan
Jaipur, Rajasthan

Mr. Fatan Khan

Perasar Vikas Sansthan
Jaisalmer, Rajasthan

Mr. Vibhuti Joshi

Cecoedecon Swaraj
Jaipur, Rajasthan

Mr. Sharad Joshi

Centre for Community Economics and
Development Consultants Society
Jaipur, Rajasthan

Mr. Mahesh Chandra Sharma

Gramin Vikas evam Paryavaran Sanstha
Dausa, Rajasthan

Mr. Ambuj Kishore

Association for Rural Advancement through
Voluntary Action and Local Involvement
Jaipur, Rajasthan

Mr. A. R. Sharma

Awareness Training and Motivation for Action
Jaipur, Rajasthan

Mr. Bhanwar Singh Chandana

Co-Ordinating Director
Udaipur, Rajasthan

Mr. Arun Jindal

Society for Sustainable Development
Kaarauli, Rajasthan

Mr. Dinesh Chandra Vyas

CASA India
Rajasthan

Mr. Arvind Ohja

Urmul Rural Health Research & Development
Trust
Bikaner, Rajasthan

Mr. Satish Kumar

Director
Centre for Dalit Rights
Jaipur, Rajasthan

Mr. Nanulal Prajapati

Rajasthan Mahila Kalyan Mandal Sanstha
Vishwamitra Ashram
Ajmer, Rajasthan

Mr. Madan Nagda

Chief Functionary
Gandhi Manav Kalyan Society
Udaipur, Rajasthan

Mr. Rakesh Kumar Kaushik

Senior Program Officer
Rajasthan Mahila Kalyan Mandal Sanstha
Ajmer, Rajasthan

Mr. M.D. Sharma

Chairman
Manav Kalyan ave Vikas Sansthan
Rajasthan

Mr. Ram Kishore Prajapat

Seceretary
Gramothan Sansthan Nagar
Rajasthan

Mr. R.C. Saini

Mahila evam Paryavaran Vikas Sansthan
Jaipur,

Mr. Atma Ram Sharma

Secretary
Awareness Training and Motivation for Action
Jaipur,

Ms. Kanupriy Harish

Executive Director
Jal Bhagirathi Foundation
Jaipur, Rajasthan

Agenda



9.00- 9.30 am	: Registration
9.30-10.15 am	: Inaugural Session <i>Welcome Address:</i> : Prof. Sachin Chaturvedi, DG, RIS <i>Inaugural Address:</i> Mr. A.K. Sahu, Joint Secretary DPA, Ministry of External Affairs, Govt. of India : <i>Keynote Address:</i> 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 <i>Chair:</i> Prof. Sachin Chaturvedi, DG, RIS <i>Panelists:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comm. R.S. Vasan, Director, Centre for China Studies • Prof. Milindo Chakrabarti, Visiting Fellow, RIS. <i>Open Session</i>
12.00 noon-1.15 pm	: Technical Session II: Development Cooperation and Civil Society Organisation <i>Chair:</i> 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

Parallel Session I (Agriculture)

Chair/Moderator: Dr. P. G. Chengappa
National Professor of ICAR, Institute
for Social and Economic Change

Floor Participation

Parallel Session II (Fisheries & Aquaculture)

Chair/Moderator: Dr. Y. S. Yadava
Director, BoBP

Floor Participation

3.30-3.45 pm	:	Tea Break
3.45 – 4.15 pm	:	Wrapping -up

Participant List for FIDC Regional Consultation, Chennai

Commodore R.S. Vasan

Director
Centre for China Studies
Chennai

Ms. Shashanka Bhide

MIDS

Mr. G. H. Manuel

Madurai, Tamil Nadu

Dr. R. Jayaraman

Director
Coastal Aquaculture Authority Chennai, Tamil Nadu

Dr. K. Panchaksharam

Secretary/CEO
South India Producer Associations
Chennai

Mr. Sandip Mookerjee

Dy. CEO
Hand in Hand India
Kancheepuram, Tamil Nadu

Mr. J. Vincent Jain

Association of Deep Sea Going artisanal fisherman
Kanyakumari District
Tamil Nadu

Mr. Rajdeep Mukherjee

Bay of Bengal Programme
Chennai

Mr. M. Vijaybhaskar

MIDS

Mr. Yugraj Singh Yadava

Bay of Bengal Programme IGO

Chennai
Mr. Ramya Rajagopalan
International Collective in Support of Fishworkers
Chennai

Ms. Jill Carr Harris
IGINP Madurai, Tamil Nadu

Mr. Ajit Menon
Madras Institute of Development Studies

Prof. P.G. Chengappa
Institute for Social and Economic Change
Bangalore

Mr. Kaustuv Kanti Bandyopadhyay
PRIA
New Delhi

Ms. Bhavani
MS Swaminathan Research Foundation

Mr. A.K. Sahu
Joint Secretary
Ministry of External Affairs, GoI

Ms. Divita Shandilya
Documentation & Research Officer
Voluntary Action Network India
New Delhi

Dr. K. Sivasubramaniyan
Associate Professor
MIPS
Chennai

Dr. S. Velvizhi
M.S. Swaminathan Research Foundation
Tamil Nadu

From RIS

Prof. Sachin Chaturvedi
Prof. T.C. James
Prof. Milindo Chakrabarti
Mr. Pratyush

Agenda



RIS
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Ministry of External Affairs
Government of India

FIDC

FORUM FOR
INDIAN DEVELOPMENT
COOPERATION
भारतीय विकास सहयोग मंच



Regional Consultation on “Development of North East India and India’s Act East Policy: A Quest for Synergy”

24-25 October 2017
Guwahati, Assam

Day I: October 24, 2017	
09.00-10.00 am	Inaugural Session
	<p><i>Welcome Address:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prof. Sachin Chaturvedi, Director General, RIS • Dr Amiya Sharma, Executive Director, Rashtriya GraminVikas Nidhi (RGVN) Society, Guwahati <p><i>Keynote Address:</i> Mr Naveen Verma, Secretary, Ministry of DoNER</p> <p><i>Special Remarks:</i> Mr Alok Dimri, Joint Secretary (MER), MEA</p> <p><i>Vote of Thanks:</i> Prof. Milindo Chakrabarti, Visiting Fellow, RIS</p>
10.00-10.30 am	Tea Break
10.30-12.00 noon	Technical Session I: Synergy between North-East and Act-East Policies – the Rationale
<p>The possibility of synergies between the developmental activities planned for the North Eastern Region of India and India’s initiatives of development cooperation with the countries in the immediate neighbourhood like Myanmar, Nepal, Bangladesh and Bhutan is intense. India’s engagement with countries beyond immediate neighbourhood – Cambodia, Laos PDR and Vietnam has also been increasing rapidly. Expectedly, the mutual benefit accruing to India from such development cooperation activities will</p>	<p><i>Chair:</i> Ambassador S.T. Devare, Chairman, Research Advisory Council, RIS</p> <p><i>Speakers:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mr Alok Amitabh Dimri, Joint Secretary (MER), Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India • Prof. Sachin Chaturvedi, Director General, RIS • Mr V. Vualnam, Chief Vigilance Officer, National Textiles Corporation • Mr S.N. Pradhan, Joint Secretary, Ministry of DoNER <p><i>Q&A Session</i></p>

spill over in a more than proportionate manner to the North-Eastern states of India. For such an effort to fructify, it is necessary that a clear convergence between India's Act East Policy and North Eastern Region Vision 2020 is established. Such a convergence can be achieved only when a thorough ground level one on one mapping of interventions both within the North-Eastern region and the countries in the neighbourhood is carried out. The proposed consultation will attempt to develop the future roadmap of such possible synergies that goes beyond the international border India enjoys with its neighbours.	
12.00-1.00 pm	Lunch
1.00-2.30 pm	Technical Session II: Border Trade: Current Status and Future Prospects
The states of North-East of India share 5,400 kilometres of international border (about 98 per cent of its entire border area) with China (southern Tibet) in the north, Myanmar in the east, Bangladesh in the southwest, Bhutan to the northwest and Nepal in the west. Cambodia, Lao PDR and Vietnam who do not have immediate national borders with any of the North-Eastern states but, have promising linkages with the region, may also be suitably covered. This makes the region including Tripura a major station for border trade. Steps have been taken to build physical infrastructure to facilitate trade along with creation of institutional infrastructure. Creation of border haats to encourage people to people connect along with trading of goods have also taken place. This session will direct the initiatives forward with discussion on existing and prospective measures.	<p>Chair: Prof. N.S. Siddharthan, Hon. Professor of Economics, Madras School of Economics and Hon. Director, Forum for Global Knowledge Sharing</p> <p>Speakers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dr Prabir De, Professor and Coordinator, ASEAN-India Centre (AIC) at RIS, New Delhi • Prof. Gurudas Das, Department of Humanities, National Institute of Technology, Silchar • MsAnnu Darin, Dy. Commissioner, Office of the Commissioner, Central Excise & Service Tax, Guwahati • Dr Ch Priyaranjan Singh, Department of Economics, Manipur University • Dr P. K. Anand, Visiting Fellow, RIS <p>Q&A Session</p>
2.30-3.00 pm	Tea Break
3.00-4:30 pm	Technical Session III: Developing Regional Value Chains
Value creation in a sustained manner is possible through creation of business opportunities for entrepreneurs of the region is the need of the day. A major area where sufficient attention may help achieve a win-win partnership is to develop primary and secondary sectors of economic activities through enhancing regional value chains involving efforts in trade, agriculture, horticulture-floriculture and SMEs.	<p>Chair: Dr S. C. Srivastava, Professor, Rural Development and Agricultural Production, North-Eastern Hill University (NEHU)</p>

<p>The conceptual idea of Technical Session II on Regional Value Chain is to introduce the concept of regional value chain; followed by the issues and policy perspectives in regional value chain specific to North East of India; and ultimately the successful and failed interventions in the North East India and its possible expansion in the neighbouring countries in this regard.</p>	<p>Speakers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prof. Milindo Chakrabarti, Visiting Fellow, RIS • Dr Yogesh Gokhale, Adjunct Faculty, The Energy and Resources Institute (TERI), New Delhi • Mr Anabil Goswami, Co-founder, Arohan Foods, Guwahati • Dr Jayanta Choudhury, Tripura Central University • Dr Kanak Haloi, Professor & Head, National Institute of Rural Development & Panchayati Raj (NIRDPR), Guwahati <p>Q&A Session</p>
4.30-5.00 pm	Tea Break
5.00 – 6.00 pm	Technical Session IV Natural Resources, Water and Energy
<p>North East India being rich in natural resources and one of the important global biodiversity hotspots, the session will focus on the status and role of natural resources in contributing to the sustainable development and energy security of this region and beyond its international boundaries through improved people to people contact.</p>	<p>Chair: Dr Amiya Sharma, Executive Director, Rashtriya GraminVikas Nidhi (RGVN) Society, Guwahati</p> <p>Speakers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dr Tapas Kumar Giri, Associate Professor, Rajiv Gandhi Indian Institute of Management, Shillong • Dr Abhinandan Saikia, Assistant Professor, Centre for Ecology, Environment and Sustainable Development , Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Guwahati • Mr Barun Barpujari, RGVN Society <p>Q&A Session</p>
7.00 pm	Dinner
Day II: October 25, 2017	
9.00-10.30am	Technical Session V: Education, Health and Tourism
<p>Among the social sectors health care sector is one area which has a vast scope of improvement and the benefits could be enjoyed by the citizens residing in this region as well as by the citizens of the neighbouring countries. Additionally, a critical reason attributed to the outmigration of the youth in North-East apart for employment opportunities has been education. Further, the potential of linking the South East Asian countries with the North Eastern part of India through creating and sustaining an attractive tourism circuit that makes use of the unique features of this region in terms of Bio-diversity, religious practices (Buddhism), Adventure sports, Music etc. cannot be overemphasized as well. This session will cover these issues in an incisive manner.</p>	<p>Chair: Prof. Pulin B. Nayak, Former Director, Delhi School of Economics</p> <p>Speakers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Smt. Mamta Shankar, Economic Advisor, Ministry of DONER • Dr Kh. Palin, Founder and Head, Shijah Hospitals, Imphal • Prof. T. C. James, Visiting Fellow, RIS • Shri Manoj Kumar Das, Director, Indian Institute of Entrepreneurship, Guwahati • Dr J.V. Madhusudan, Professor, Department of Education, North Eastern Hill University <p>Q&A Session</p>

10.30 – 11.00 am	Tea Break
11.00-12.00 noon	Technical Session VI: Connectivity and Physical Infrastructure
<p>Keeping in mind that the connectivity challenge for the North-East involves that between the North-East and the rest of the country; within the North-East, linking North-Eastern states with one another; and cross-border connectivity with neighbouring countries, the final session in the consultation will touch upon the issues involving development of high quality, reliable, sustainable and resilient infrastructure, including regional and transborder ones to support economic development and human well-being. The session will cover different modes – rail, road, river, air necessary to support some important sectoral domains like trade, manufacturing – large, medium, small and artisanal, agriculture & allied activities and tourism.</p>	<p>Chair: Mr P. K. Barua, M.D., Assam Gas Company Limited, (Rtd.)</p> <p>Speakers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mr Alok Bora, EXIM Bank • Mr Pratim Bose, Hindu Business Line <p>Q&A Session</p>
12. 00 – 1.00 pm	Valedictory Session
	<p>Chair: Prof. Braj Behari Kumar, Chairman, Indian Council of Social Science Research (ICSSR)</p> <p>Welcome: Dr Kh. Palin, Founder and Head, Shijah Hospitals, Imphal</p> <p>Conference Report: Prof. Milindo Chakrabarti, Visiting Fellow, RIS</p> <p>Special Remarks:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mr Seshadri Chari, Member, Governing Council, RIS and Strategic and Foreign Policy Analyst and Journalist <p>Valedictory Address: Prof. Braj Behari Kumar, Chairman, Indian Council of Social Science Research (ICSSR)</p> <p>Concluding Remarks: Prof. Sachin Chaturvedi, Director General, RIS</p> <p>Vote of Thanks: Ms Dhriti Gogoi, RGVN Society</p>
1.00 – 2.00 pm	Lunch & Departure

List of Participants

- **Ambassador S.T. Devare**, Chairman, Research Advisory Council, RIS
- **Prof. N.S. Siddharthan**, Hon. Professor of Economics, Madras School of Economics and Hon. Director, Forum for Global Knowledge Sharing
- **Prof. Pulin B. Nayak**, Former Director, Delhi School of Economics
- **Mr Seshadri Chari**, Member, Governing Council, RIS and Strategic and Foreign Policy Analyst and Journalist
- **Prof. Braj Behari Kumar**, Chairman, Indian Council of Social Science Research (ICSSR)
- **Prof. Sachin Chaturvedi**, Director General, RIS
- **Prof. Milindo Chakrabarti**, Visiting Fellow, RIS
- **Prof. T. C. James**, Visiting Fellow, RIS
- **Dr Prabir De**, Professor and Coordinator, ASEAN-India Centre (AIC) at RIS, New Delhi
- **Dr P. K. Anand**, Visiting Fellow, RIS
- **Mr Pranay Sinha**, RIS
- **Mr Naveen Verma**, Secretary, Ministry of DoNER
- **Mr S.N. Pradhan**, Joint Secretary, Ministry of DoNER
- **Smt. Mamta Shankar**, Economic Advisor, Ministry of DONER
- **Mr V. Vualnam**, Chief Vigilance Officer, National Textiles Corporation
- **Mr Alok Amitabh Dimri**, Joint Secretary (MER), Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India
- **Dr. Amiya Sharma**, Executive Director, Rashtriya GraminVikas Nidhi (RGVN) Society, Guwahati
- **Ms. Dhriti Gogoi**, RGVN Society
- **Ms. Mrinalinee Khanikar**, RGVN Society
- **Ms. Jaya Rani Das**, RGVN Society
- **Mr. Hanan Ashrafi Haque**, RGVN Society
- **Mr. Jolly Changmai Kalita**, RGVN Society
- **Ms. Indrani Sharma**, RGVN Society
- **Mr. Barun Barpurjari**, RGVN Society
- **Dr. (Ms.) Chitra Kalita**, RGVN Society
- **Ms. Rachna Yadav**, RGVN Society
- **Mr. Gyanasree Borthakur**, RGVN Society
- **D Dr. Kh. Palin**, Founder and Head, Shijah Hospitals, Imphal
- **Mr. Pratim Bose**, Kolkata Bureau Chief, Hindu Business Line

- **Mr. Alok Bora**, EXIM Bank
- **Mr. P. K. Barua**, M.D., Assam Gas Company Limited, (Rtd.)
- **Dr. J.V. Madhusudan**, Professor, Department of Education, North Eastern Hill University
- **Shri Manoj Kumar Das**, Director, Indian Institute of Entrepreneurship, Guwahati
- **Dr Abhinandan Saikia**, Assistant Professor, Centre for Ecology, Environment and Sustainable Development, Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Guwahati
- **Prof. Kalpana Sarathy**, Tata Institute of Social Science, Guwahati
- **Mr. Vikas Bagde**, Tata Institute of Social Science, Guwahati
- **Dr Tapas Kumar Giri**, Associate Professor, Rajiv Gandhi Indian Institute of Management, Shillong
- **Dr. Kanak Haloi**, Professor & Head, National Institute of Rural Development & Panchayati Raj (NIRDPR), Guwahati
- **Dr S. C. Srivastava**, Professor, Rural Development and Agricultural Production, North-Eastern Hill University (NEHU)
- **Dr. Jayanta Choudhury**, Tripura Central University
- **Mr. Anabil Goswami**, Co-founder, Arohan Foods, Guwahati
- **Dr. Yogesh Gokhale**, Adjunct Faculty, The Energy and Resources Institute (TERI), New Delhi
- **Dr Ch Priyoranjan Singh**, Department of Economics, Manipur University
- **Ms. Annu Darin**, Dy. Commissioner, Office of the Commissioner, Central Excise & Service Tax, Guwahati
- **Prof. Gurudas Das**, Department of Humanities, National Institute of Technology, Silchar
- **Mr. V. Vualnam**, Chief Vigilance Officer, National Textiles Corporation
- **Mr. Akshay Jyoti Sarma**, OKD Institute of Social Change & Development
- **Ms. Saswati Choudhury**, OKD Institute of Social Change & Development
- **Mr. H. K. Hajong**, MERLP
- **Mr. Bhaskar J Kashyap**, Research Assistant, RIS

Research and Information System for Developing Countries (RIS) is a New Delhi-based autonomous policy research institute that specialises in issues related to international economic development, trade, investment and technology. RIS is envisioned as a forum for fostering effective policy dialogue and capacity-building among developing countries on global and regional economic issues.

The focus of the work programme of RIS is to promote South-South Cooperation and collaborate with developing countries in multilateral negotiations in various forums. RIS is engaged across inter-governmental processes of several regional economic cooperation initiatives. Through its intensive network of think tanks, RIS seeks to strengthen policy coherence on international economic issues and the development partnership canvas.

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विकासशील देशों की अनुसंधान एवं सूचना प्रणाली

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