
Brazilian Cooperation in Education Sector

A Snap Shot



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The Open University of Brazil (UAB), project, in partnership with Universidade Pedagógica (UP) and Universidade Eduardo Mondlane (UEM) of Mozambique, began in 2010 and aims to train professionals in the areas of basic education and public management. Four courses are offered in distance mode (Pedagogy, Mathematics, Biology and Public Administration) by the respective Brazilian universities...

The Brazilian South-South Cooperation (SSC) operates in many fields, but mainly in health, agriculture and educational sectors. The Brazilian Cooperation Agency (ABC - Agência Brasileira de Cooperação), of Minister of Foreign Affairs (MRE - Ministério das Relações Exteriores), plays a coordination role in the technical South-South cooperation projects. However, Brazilian cooperation is not centralized. Big number of organizations, as well as many different actors, promote the Brazilian South-South Cooperation. Therefore, the low degree of institutionalisation and lack of a regulatory framework of international cooperation results in a diffuse performance (Leite, 2013). In this sense, several instances are involved, not only at a federal level, but also at a local level, such as government, universities, health institutions, private sector, think tanks and research centers.

As previously mentioned, education is one of the main fields of Brazilian SSC action and the efforts cover the following sectors: scholarship; structuring of higher education; teacher training; professional education; youth and adult literacy, special education; curriculum building and management; school lunch; distance education, Portuguese language teaching; and education in interface with other areas, as such as health, sports, environment and science.

According to the latest report by the Brazilian Cooperation for International Development of the Institute of Applied Economic Research - Cobradi / IPEA (2011-2013), the international cooperation projects promoted by the Brazilian government involving education mobilized an important volume of resources between 2005 and 2013: the annual expenses of this period resulted in a total of 476,222,210 (USD) in educational cooperation;

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420,490,779 (USD) in science technology cooperation; and 565,92,743 (USD) in technical cooperation¹.

There are few studies focused on Brazilian cooperation in the area of education. An important article recently published, in April 2016, by Carlos Milani, Francisco da Conceição and Timóteo M'Bunde under the title "*South-South Cooperation in Education and Brazil-PALOP Relations*" brings many contributions to the theme outlining a profile of this modality.

First, it points out the diversity of actors involved in cooperation including the public and private sectors:

In summary, the Brazilian CID / ED is very diversified in terms of design and implementation actors, involving the Brazilian Cooperation Agency (technical cooperation), the Ministry of Education (scholarship program, international exchange programs and technical cooperation), but also SENAI (vocational education) and, to a much lesser extent, some NGOs (non-formal education). This modality of CID counts mainly with public funds and partnerships with private companies and industries (as in the case of SENAI) (Milani et al, 2016: 20).

In addition, the author points out that the central focus of Brazilian international cooperation in the area of education is in higher education with state policies reaching the mark of 97 per cent of government spending on educational cooperation. This reflects the Brazilian strategy to train elites in the partner countries. In the case of Latin American countries, investment is higher in postgraduate studies, while

in the African continent it is higher in undergraduate programs, reflecting local demands.

An important factor to be analysed is language as a tool of integration that is strongly present in Brazilian cooperation with the CPLP (Community of Portuguese Speaking Countries) member countries which, in addition to Portugal and Brazil, include the PALOPs (African Portuguese Speaking Countries): Angola, Mozambique, Cape Verde, Sao Tome and Principe, Guinea and Guinea-Bissau) and Timor-Leste.

Among them, the PALOP's are the main targets of Brazilian cooperation. These relations are really strong due the common colonial past shared by Brazilian and African countries, mainly in the context of slaving in the Portuguese colonies. Milani *et al.* (2016) point out that exchange of higher education students is one of the main educational projects and that, between 2000 and 2013, the undergraduate students from PALOPs corresponded to 66.2 per cent of the total of 7.676 foreign students in under Brazil government scholarship program. In addition, they highlight the founding of UNILAB (Federal University of International Integration of Afro-Brazilian Lusophone) in 2010 as emblematic in this movement of approximation.

One of the most important Brazilian South-South Cooperation projects in the African region is the Brazilian Open University (UAB - Universidade Aberta do Brasil), an educational project between Brazil and Mozambique. The diplomatic relations between Brazil and Mozambique were established in 1975, the year of

Mozambican independence, and the first cooperation agreements between the two countries were signed in 2001.² However, only from 2003 an increase in education projects has been observed.

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The courses are distributed in three branches in the cities of Maputo, Beira and Lichinga serving an average of 600 students (Presti, 2013). This is one of the largest Brazilian cooperation projects in the area of education in Mozambique, classified by the Brazilian Cooperation Agency as a “structuring project” defined by the “creation and structuring of institutions for the training of countries that demand cooperation”³. In 2016 occurred the graduation of the first class and, unfortunately, the project was interrupted due the Brazilian political crisis.

Endnotes

- ¹ COBRADI/IPEA - Cooperação Brasileira para o Desenvolvimento Internacional 2011-2013. Available: http://www.ipea.gov.br/portal/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=28542&Itemid=406 Access: November 22, 2017.
- ² MRE - Ministério das Relações Exteriores. Available: http://maputo.itamaraty.gov.br/pt-br/relacoes_brasil-mocambique.xml Access: November 22, 2017.
- ³ ABC - Agência Brasileira de Cooperação - Ministério das Relações Exteriores (ABC/MRE). Available: <http://www.abc.gov.br/Gestao/ProjetosEstruturantes> Access: November 22, 2017.

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