

Workshop “Prospects for Triangular Cooperation in the G20”

12 April 2018. San Martín Palace, Buenos Aires

Triangular cooperation has been emerging as an important modality in development cooperation. The forthcoming United Nations General Assembly meeting on *South-South Cooperation* being organized in Buenos Aires, 2019, BAPA+40 will involve considerable deliberation on the issues of triangular cooperation. A workshop was held on April 12, 2018 at Buenos Aires to look into the Prospects for Triangular Cooperation in the G20. We produce below the workshop report as received from the organizers.

SUMMARY

On April 12 2018, the Workshop on “*Perspectives for Triangular Cooperation in the G20*” gathered more than 100 representatives of Member States, International Organizations, Think-Tanks and Civil Society Organizations in Buenos Aires. The event was convened by the Argentine G20 Presidency and jointly organized by the General Directorate of International Cooperation of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Worship, and the General Directorate of Cooperation and International Finance of the Ministry of Social Development.

The Workshop was held as a side event of the first meeting of the G20 Development Working Group (DWG), and brought together some of the most important global actors in the field, demonstrating that Triangular Cooperation is an area of common interest with potential to become an entry point for increasing collaboration among G20 members, International Organizations and partner countries.

The Workshop not only located the dialogue around this modality of cooperation in the G20, but also put forward the substantive role that this global forum can play by linking demands of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, with the capacities and experiences in Triangular Cooperation within the Group. Specific attention was paid to the priority areas addressed by the DWG in the framework of the G20 Action Plan on the 2030 Agenda. Participants agreed on the importance of promoting a G20 dialogue on Triangular Cooperation and further leveraging the DWG to advance this discussion, and explore ways to develop or scale-up joint initiatives.

KEY MESSAGES

Triangular Cooperation

- Contributes as a promising instrument to the evolving international cooperation landscape, featuring adequate flexibility to accommodate the growing diversity of actors, resources and instruments.
- Mobilizes and integrates resources and capacities from different development partners.
- Offers a framework to address some of the most pressing global challenges, such as food security, education and human resources development, decent work, sustainable habitat and public health, among many others.
- Has great potential in terms of knowledge sharing and contributing to a consensual approach in tackling development challenges.
- Fosters inclusive global governance by promoting integration between political dialogue and capacity-building.
- Can help localize the Sustainable Development Goals by making use of complementary strengths of multiple stakeholders, including civil society, academic institutions, local authorities, women and youth, as well as private sector.
- Can bring an added value to bilateral cooperation by mobilizing additional resources, bundling experiences and combining affordable and context-based development solutions from Southern partners with the strengths of traditional ones, including management capacity and country presence.
- Requires deepening the ongoing processes of mapping, guidelines implementation and impact assessment, with a view to scaling up initiatives, enhance effectiveness and ensure sustainability.
- Offers opportunities for the G20's DWG to fulfill its mandate, notably in contributing to the implementation of the G20 Action Plan on the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.
- Benefits from the G20 role as a unique platform for mutual learning, partnership building, mainstreaming and coordination among development partners, and from gathered experiences to take forward the debate on the future of international cooperation.

SUMMARY OF DISCUSSION

Defining Triangular Cooperation

Triangular Cooperation (TC) is a modality that favours horizontal schemes between partners at various stages of development, in areas of common interest. It involves a wide diversity of actors and institutional frameworks, providing for a practitioners perspective both in terms of policy formulation and practices on the ground.

It combines the vision of North-South Cooperation and South-South Cooperation, and builds on Southern partners' experience and knowledge and of what can deliver more effectively in their development context. TC also favours integration between political dialogue and capacity building, which is necessary to reach concrete and sustainable results. It goes beyond "one size fits all" solutions, and helps bringing all parties together to take an active participation in the decision making process.

At the same time, TC, as collective action mechanism, can have a catalytic effect on development and in the provision of global public goods, since it already addresses some of the most pressing global challenges, such as food security, education and human resources development, decent work, sustainable habitat and public health, among many others. Finally, TC meets the conditions to become a unique platform for understanding the transformations that international cooperation requires in the new global context.

Fostering common criteria in Triangular Cooperation

Participants placed emphasis in the guiding principles outlined below:

Flexibility: TC can take different implementation arrangements (South-North-South; South-South-South, South-International Organization-South). This leaves a window open to multiple possibilities: a partnership among several developing countries or between two developing countries and a developed one, or among several developing countries and regional or multilateral organizations, including civil society and private sector organizations.

Demand driven: TC is established in a voluntarily way through the explicit request of the recipient partner.

Alignment with national development strategies: Triangular partnerships work as a nexus where partners share common goals within their respective cooperation strategy, developed hand in hand with the host government. This reinforces countries autonomy to analyze its own development challenges and to pursue context-based solutions to expand local capacities.

Horizontality and shared governance: TC relationships that are not vertical and are established voluntarily without conditions or impositions of any kind. In this modality,

partners jointly participate in all the stages of the cooperation cycle and decisions are made by consensus. This can be formalized through memorandums of understanding, strategic frameworks or elaboration of guidelines and operational manuals.

Sustainability: TC's involvement of Southern partners with longstanding bilateral cooperation bonds and also of International Organizations with capillary presence on the ground allows for partnerships to continue beyond the duration of the activity. These strengths can serve as a key plank in leaving installed capacities in the recipient partner and in carrying out a systematic and long term follow-up.

Multi-stakeholder approach: Inclusive partnerships play an increasing role in TC. Participation of civil society, academic institutions, local authorities, women and youth, as well as private sector is essential to increase ownership, sustainability and impact of development cooperation actions.

Trust-building: Transparency and accountability are key to maintain trust within a triangular partnership. Both processes and management structure must be accountable.

Multiplier effect: TC encourages synergies and avoids duplication. It allows for peer-learning among all stakeholders, while partnerships with IO's favour a global perspective.

Challenges and opportunities for Triangular Cooperation in the G20 DWG

Participants emphasized that the G20 can both enable and benefit from Triangular Cooperation. As a global forum that conveys developed and developing countries, it has the potential to become an inclusive platform for sharing experiences and knowledge through this modality of cooperation. At the same time, TC offers opportunities for the G20's DWG to fulfill its mandate, notably in the contributing to the implementation of the G20 Action Plan on the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The following are some of the areas for further work that were singled out in the Workshop:

- Expand contact networks and establish consultation mechanisms to determine possible matching of sustainable development demands and existing capacities.
- Exploit synergies among South-South and Triangular Cooperation database platforms (Ibero-American Program to Strengthen South-South Cooperation, SSMart for Sustainable Development Goals, Global Partnership Initiative on Effective Triangular Cooperation, African Peer Review Mechanism and New Partnership for Africa's Development, among others)
- Push forward trilateral schemes that reach out to non-G20 members.
- Promote G20 DWG as a brokerage agent to foster peer-to-peer learning on Triangular Cooperation that draws on Members experience.