Evaluating the Impact of South-South Cooperation (SSC)

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Context of SSC evaluation

• During the past 15 years SSC has grown significantly in volume of resources, geographical reach and diversity of approaches

• Concurrently, demands for monitoring and evaluation (M&E) are increasingly being made by citizens, taxpayers and civil society of all partners in SSC endeavors

• SSC evaluation is clearly distinct from that carried out by DAC/OECD members
  – **Principles**: mutual benefits, horizontality, non-conditionality, demand-driven SSC
  – **Nature of SSC**: technical SSC is difficult to measure & undermines use of quantitative evaluation methods
  – **Resources**: scarce SSC resources should not be employed in M&E
Challenges of SSC evaluation

• Distinction between SSDC and profit-driven initiatives is oftentimes blurred
  – Partly reflects principle of mutual benefits
  – Reflects lack of common or minimally agreed conceptual framework
  – Increases objectives, drivers and complexity of SSC
  – Brazilian agricultural SSC combines humanitarian, agribusiness FDI & concessional credit

• Fragmented institutional structure of SSDC
  – Quality of information
  – Lack of unified / centralized M&E, accountability mechanisms

• Brazilian structuring SSC
  – Aims at strengthening local capacities and institutions, mostly governmental, universities and research agencies, in order to increase their autonomy over the development process

• Significance of multilateral & regional channels in Brazil’s SSDC
  – Different organizations employ different M&E and accounting procedures, instruments and frameworks
The ABC approach to M&E

- M&E is project-based
- Monitoring should be carried out through the continuous collection and analysis of data
- ...and should occur concomitantly with the implementation stage in order to avoid problems and deviations
- Evaluation framework presents 5 dimensions:
  - design and planning;
  - performance;
  - effectiveness;
  - efficiency; and
  - sustainability
- 3 monitoring instruments: reports, missions, Monitoring Committee
Brazilian SSDC Evaluation: Empirical Findings (1)

• Lack of an unified M&E system
  – M&E is still incipient in Brazil
  – Brazilian executing agencies and even multilateral organizations do not have a specific M&E policy for SSC/TrC
  – These agencies make reference to the ABC manual, but it still only represents a benchmark for procedural aspects of M&E and does not assume the status of a legal or institutional framework
  – There is little agreement on what should be evaluated, by whom and for what purpose
  – Consensus exists, however, on the necessity to face bottlenecks and improve M&E system(s)
Brazilian SSDC Evaluation: Empirical Findings (2)

• Challenges to evaluating Brazil’s technical cooperation

1) Monitoring usually does not impact projects during their execution, because of the difficulty in relocating resources within pre-approved budget items

2) Lessons learned lack systematization and there are no mechanisms to build institutional memory
   - lack of feedback loop from one project to another

3) It is difficult to quantify previous Research & Development (R&D) investments or the impact of technology transfers, skills, know-how and training that are meant to strengthen capacities for the purpose of cost-benefit analysis

4) The impact of structuring cooperation transcends the time scope of single projects
Evaluation of Brazil’s triangular cooperation (TrC) has specific challenges:

1) Lack of technical and financial information standardization delivered by IOs
2) Lack of an evaluation framework for assessing the role of country offices operating as SSC facilitators
3) Traditional donor countries have to meet the requirements of their M&E systems, while TrC advocates for flexible and case by case negotiated M&E procedures
4) Different fiscal calendars can make financial monitoring and planning less harmonized
Brazilian SSDC M&E and general SSC principles

• Appreciation of partnership and horizontality: negotiated evaluations and participatory approaches proposed under the Monitoring Committee

• Promotion of non-interference, local ownership and autonomy by means of structuring SSDC and inter-institutional dimension of evaluation
Thank you!

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