

SSC and the 2030 Agenda: Adopting and adapting the LNOB approach¹

The people-centered logic of differentiation presented by the 2030 Agenda assumed that no one should be left behind. The idea of Leaving No One Behind (LNOB) challenges the conventional growth-based development wisdom while intends to orient policy decisions to tackle the sustainable development agenda across its 17 goals and 169 targets. By considering deprivation and social exclusion in its multiple forms, LNOB is an outstanding starting point for making South-South Cooperation (SSC) work for the most deprived and vulnerable. LNOB helps redirect SSC focus and efforts to improve the conditions of people at risk and under the poverty line; to support other countries increase minimum living standards; and to help them close inequality gaps.

SSC stands out due to its remarkable advances in sharing knowledge and low-cost technical innovations to promote development. Those projects are the ones with the highest positive impacts for the most deprived people of developing countries, as economic growth and significant infrastructure investments are not necessarily compatible with improving living standards of vulnerable populations. The three suggested cases, from Argentina, Brazil, and Mexico (see boxes below), are exceptional examples of tackling inequality in its multiple forms. Besides raising capacity of institutions from the South, contemplating SDG 17 (17.9), all three projects approach intersecting inequalities, by addressing questions of health, gender, and education, further contributing to the achievement of SDGs 3 (3.d), 5 (5.5 and 5.c), and 4 (4.7 and 4.c). In this sense, SSC impacts towards the 2030 Agenda implementation could be scaled-up if South-South Cooperation Partners (SSCP) adopt a comprehensive LNOB-oriented approach.

However, SSC needs to update its vocabulary and conceptual toolkit to prove itself a better way out to applying LNOB. To rethink SSCP actual contribution, one should consider that ‘the South’ is not a homogeneous entity particularly with regards to development needs. SSC still lacks a set of stable and shared principles that would help address national heterogeneity and social complexity. Besides, in many cases, SSCP adopts a growth-based development rationale, which may increase inequalities instead of tackling their root causes.

Adopting and adapting the LNOB approach to SSC is not an easy task. It requires an exercise of self-reflection and active dialogue among SSCP. Indeed, there are at least six principles that would require a more in-depth consideration from SSCP. They are: Respect for National Sovereignty; Non-Conditionality; Self-Reliance; Horizontality; Multi-Stakeholder Partnerships; and Mutual Benefits. From this starting point, one should consider the problematic reconciliation between the principle of respect for national sovereignty and its corollaries, non-intervention and non-interference, and the LNOB approach. To discuss the difficulties in coinciding LNOB target groups with partner’s development plans and priorities, an LNOB-oriented SSC project must entail a dialogue among SSCP to align development cooperation projects, national development plans and an analysis of the potential impacts upon those left behind. Hence, one should raise the question of how (and in what conditions) SSCP should translate their principles into a set of practices which, from one side, would prevent the deepening of inequalities; and, from the other, would help promote inclusive development processes.

¹ Prepared by Camila Santos, Alexandra Teixeira, Camila Jardim, and Paulo Esteves.



■ Case 1

Capacity Building for the Promotion of Organ Donation



Partners: The Argentinian Central National Institute Unique Coordinator of Ablation and Implant (INCUCAI) and the Paraguayan National Institute of Ablation and Transplantation (INAT)

Objectives: Based on an agreement between the agencies responsible for coordinating organ transplants in Argentina and Paraguay, a series of training projects and programmes related to planning and development of research activities and records was designed, aiming to promote institutional strengthening in the areas of the regulation and supervision of transplant activity.

Outcomes: Specialists from both countries worked, during 2008 and 2009, on the development of a system designed to streamline and make more transparent the connection between patients and donors. Thus, during the second half of 2009, there was a series of training courses on transplants' information management in Asunción.

Source: Ministry of foreign Affairs, international trade and Worship. South-South and Triangular Cooperation of Argentina. Journal nr. 10 – 2010. Special Bicentenary Edition.

■ Case 2

'Sello De Equidad De Género'

Partners: AMEXCID, Mexican National Institute of Women (INMUJERES), the Honduran Normalization Organization (OHN), the National Institute for Women (INAM) of Honduras, with the support of UN Women – Mexico.

Objectives: To develop capacities at different levels in Honduras; to establish a certification system for management systems through internships, courses, and seminars, to enable both public and private companies to integrate gender equality conditions in their work.

Outcomes: Approval of the Gender Equality Standard for companies and civil society organizations in Honduras. The guidelines were discussed internationally among 72 institutions, and companies agreed with the Honduran Institute of Normalization. This project also contributed to improve human resources capacity and to design new tools and certification criteria.

Source: Amexcid. Evaluación de los programas de cooperación técnica y científica México-Honduras. 2011-2015.

■ Case 3

Institutional Strengthening of Benin's Vocational and Technological Education in the areas of Agroecology and Cooperation

Partners: Brazilian Cooperation Agency (ABC), Federal Institute of Bahia (IFBA), Federal Institute of Brasília (IFB), Ministry of Secondary Education and Vocational Training of Benin (MESFTP), Lycée Agricole Medji Sekou (LAMS).

Objectives: Train Cotonou teachers on how cooperativism and family farming can go hand in hand with sustainability and respect for the environment.

Outcomes: The project continues to be monitored by Brazilian experts, who returned to Benin in 2018. One of the missions' objectives was to contribute to the improvement of the safety system of the incubator and to carry out training in boiler operation and maintenance, while the other focused on equipment training. Currently, LAMS continues to train students and teach cooperativism and processing. Another important aspect reported was that there is interest in applying good practice in other high schools. Benin's Government intends to set up incubators in the country's technical high schools, regardless of the area.

Source: MRE; ABC. Cooperação Técnica Brasil África. Parcerias de sucesso inspiram o desenvolvimento africano/ Ministério das Relações Exteriores, Brasília, Agência Brasileira de Cooperação. 2018.

