



Emerging development Partners in Africa

A Debate with myself...

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Origins of South-South Cooperation

- Some schools of thought point to a long history of SSC including the:
 - Bandung conference – 1950s
 - The non-aligned movement during the cold war times and other such epochs
- But we are also confronted with the idea of SSC as new – something that started recently as countries that were poor become rich
- – the story of Korea, China and others who eradicated extreme poverty in the last 5- years is told and they are referred as ‘emerging’ – while they also argue that they have historical relationships with the recipient countries
- Question that remains is if SSC is new or old?



The definitions – become more complicated

- Further more - we now are confronted with new ideas of defining with two terms being used:
 - South-South Cooperation (SSC)
 - South-South Development Cooperation (SSDC)
- The challenge of these redefinitions is generating new terms (SSDC) from a term (SSC) that is not yet clearly defined:
- Yet we also know that SSC is defined as being very many things that include - economic intergation, negotiating blocks, alliances in culture and military, humanitarian aid, technical cooperation, development financing
- SSC is indeed a much more broader and deeper and multifaceted concept...

On the question of country experiences...



- For Africa – there is a clear challenge – we have over 50 presidents – with over ‘50 sovereignties’ and hence and discussion between provider countries and Africa has to contend with this reality – how does ‘one China’ engage with ‘over 50 presidents’ from Africa?
- So while we may say there could be a Common Africa Position on some matters – but within the context of South-South Cooperation – this Common Africa Position is hard to get to.
- There are also several governance related challenges – Africa has some long-standing regimes and presidents that do not want to leave power, corruption and these issues do compromise the development of a single African position



Africa as a differentiated continent ...

- The CEO of NEPAD reminded us that Africa can be categorized in 4 blocks:
 - Countries that are undergoing structural transformation
 - Countries that are in conflict of various forms
 - Countries that are heavily aid dependent
 - Countries that are faced with extreme inequalities
- For each of these countries SSC is a different reality and hence the engagement for each of these countries will be different with the different providers that they engage with.



Identity issues from the provider side...

- Today we have providers that describe themselves as ‘BRICS’...
- This is indeed an exclusive category – that assumes an ‘us’ and ‘them’ relationship with those whose acronyms are not part of the abbreviation being the lesser partners
- SSC – need to pay attention to power relations that are created through this exclusive naming and identity politics because they do indeed influence the ways in which countries relate to each other



Africa's reality is...

- For Africa – relating to Southern providers or northern providers is not so much an ideological decision but a pragmatic stance
- Africa sometimes does not have the luxury to reject the north-south cooperation just as some of the SSC providers would want them to do
- When Africa engages in the North-South relations it is sometimes seen as a sell-out and a stooge of the North – which may be a truncated analysis since for Africa sometimes finding development finance is a matter of survival of its people and not a matter of ideological privilege



The blurred difference...

- There is also blurred difference between traditional providers and southern providers;
- In many cases the same power that the traditional providers wielded is also seen in the action of some southern providers – who use their resource power to cut deals with presidents and even sometimes include conditionalities that are not explicit;
- ... – the example of China providing infrastructure and having all the procurement done in china, or the Exim Bank in India that provides financing that is spent in India – speaks more to conditionality and not using country systems



Going forward...

- Africa will need to **reform its governance system** so that the principles of democratic ownership of development cooperation can be achieved through:
 - Rule of law
 - Elimination of rampant corruption
 - Building strong institutions and not personalities and Presidents
- Ensuring that **citizens are central in all development cooperation** processes by putting in place mechanisms that allow for their participation is crucial



Going Forward...

- **Build strong regional economies** – where countries can cede some power to the Regional Economic Communities so that the negotiation with providers from the south or the north is carried out at a level that takes into consideration the economies of scale
- Development in Africa also has to strive to be **inclusive so that development cooperation through SSC does not create or reinforce inequalities** within countries and among countries



Going Forward contd...

- The **promotion of civil society as an independent development actor** in its own right is critical and also creation of an enabling environment that allows civil society and citizen to thrive
- Where private sector is part of the development process – which is very strong in SSC – they should **adhere too principles of development that allow for transparency and accountability** .