



WORKSHOP ON TRIANGULAR COOPERATION

OPPORTUNITY FOR SHARED RESPONSIBILITY IN AFRICA

TUNIS, 4-5 FEBRUARY 2009

1. Introduction

The Heiligendamm Dialogue Process (HDP) Support Unit and the African Development Bank (AfDB) jointly organised a workshop on triangular cooperation in Tunis on 4-5 February 2009.

The purpose of the workshop was to improve understanding of effective triangular cooperation through an exchange of experiences and lessons learned and to explore the potential of triangular cooperation as a concrete deliverable of the HDP for the Concluding Report to be delivered at the Italian G8 Summit. The workshop also aimed to identify working principles for effective triangular cooperation based on concrete examples, and to identify concrete sectors and modalities where G5 and G8 engagement with Africa would be particularly relevant.

This was an important first opportunity for the HDP partners to discuss with African institutions such as the African Union (AU), the AfDB, the UN ECA and the Infrastructure Consortium for Africa (ICA) and on that basis, make recommendations to the HDP Working Group on Development in preparation for the La Maddalena G8 Summit which attaches importance to a dialogue between the G8, G5 and Africa. It was organised at an important juncture - at the tail end of the AU Annual Summit, and in the midst of a major international financial and economic crisis which affects all countries.

The workshop was organised into four sessions: (i) Introduction and stocktaking; (ii) Sharing experiences and lessons learned; (iii) Identifying key sectors, modalities and mechanisms; and (iv) Building common ground.

2. Triangular cooperation - Principles and practices

The interventions showed that there is a wide range of ongoing activities and experiences on triangular cooperation. Triangular cooperation is not a new concept and several HDP partner countries are already engaged in such cooperation. They were therefore in a position to exchange many valuable

experiences in a wide range of sectors where lessons can be drawn, including education, health, construction, financial sector, infrastructure, oil and gas, etc.

Participants discussed lessons learned and identified factors for success. These include African ownership and leadership, aligning support with partner country priorities and strategies and accountability. Many participants highlighted the potential added value of triangular cooperation and the possibility for win-win outcomes. It was stated that coordination would be critical for successful triangular cooperation in light of the greater number of actors involved in planning and implementation. The possibility of transactions costs was raised on a number of occasions but there was no conclusive view on this though many participants felt that triangular cooperation could be cost effective and ultimately lower such costs. In this context, the AU indicated that a specific platform for triangular cooperation might help the coordination process and thereby reduce transactions costs.

On the basis of this discussion, we developed a paper containing working principles which are attached as an annex to this summary.

3. Sectors and modalities

3.1 Infrastructure

The AU Commission underlined that infrastructure development is seen by AU leaders as a key challenge for the coming years. Strengthened infrastructure is critical in order to address the energy crisis but also to promote regional integration and economic growth with a view to reducing poverty more effectively. They underscored that the AU leaders expect to see tangible progress on the ground, taking into account that there are projects ready for implementation (quick win projects) while some other projects need further preparation. Against this backdrop, they welcomed the opportunity provided by this workshop of G8 and G5 countries to discuss triangular cooperation and stressed that infrastructure is a sector suitable for triangular cooperation.

The AU Commission reported that the recent AU Summit adopted the Programme for Infrastructure Development in Africa (PIDA). This programme builds on and integrates all existing infrastructure initiatives in Africa and has become the new Pan-African reference programme for infrastructure development.

The AU Summit also put in place a decision making structure for PIDA in order to enhance progress in this field: The Steering Committee is chaired by the African Union (AU) Commission and supported by a Technical Committee composed of AUC, NEPAD, ECA, Panel of Experts, and Project Management Team in the African Development Bank (AfDB).

Participants agreed on the importance of infrastructure and the need to build on existing African institutional mechanisms, such as the AU, AfDB and UN ECA, in

order to create synergies and to strengthen African ownership. The ICA was also mentioned as having an important coordination role. In addition, participants emphasised that capacity development is crucial at the national, regional and continental level.

3.2 Agriculture and rural development

Agriculture was presented by the AU Commission as another priority sector in light of its importance contribution to growth and employment in Africa, and against the background of a major food crisis and climate change. The AU Commission underscored the importance of taking a comprehensive approach which includes safeguards against post harvest losses and rural infrastructure development for improved market access. Water management was also highlighted as a key issue in improving agricultural productivity in Africa.

Participants shared the view that we should build on Africa's core framework, "Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP)". In the context of G8 and G5 engagement with Africa, participants supported the AU Commission in the crucial role that agriculture plays.

4. Common ground

The participants indicated that they welcomed the opportunity provided by the workshop to share experiences on the wide range of activities in the area of triangular cooperation and to learn about the emerging priorities in Africa such as on infrastructure and agriculture. The participants felt that the working principles reflected well the discussions on lessons learned. They emphasised the need to continue the dialogue with a view to achieving concrete results on the ground.

ANNEX

The following points emerged from the discussions in session 1 and 2 on experiences and lessons learned on triangular cooperation:

- (1) Ownership and leadership.** Partnerships must be demand-driven and homegrown. African partners should identify their development priority needs in order to guide G8- and G5 dialogue partners in their support to potential areas of joint intervention.
- (2) Alignment with African national or regional priorities, policies and strategies.** An effective and meaningful contribution of HDP dialogue partners to African development will only materialize if it is aligned with and integrated into the national level strategies and regional priorities of the continent. In addition, the joint contribution should complement other development partners' activities.
- (3) Harness and support existing African development efforts.** In other words, triangular cooperation will make maximum use of - and strengthen - existing national, regional or Pan-African mechanisms for cooperation as well as project preparation and implementation. This involves several actors which underlines the importance of effective coordination.
- (4) Focus on concrete development results in African countries.** Triangular cooperation is not an end in itself but requires pragmatism and should focus action and resources on the achievement of relevant development results. This includes ensuring an effective accountability system as well as monitoring and evaluation processes which can measure the impact of the triangular cooperation effort.
- (5) Realizing an added value to the development of African countries.** An effective trilateral cooperation should create synergies among the different actors. These synergies realized through triangular cooperation should improve the quality of our development cooperation with Africa and may provide a complement and be additional to bilateral cooperation in reaching certain development objectives.
- (6) Pan-African initiatives and regional integration as basis for economic development.** Support to African initiatives that have a continental dimension and pay special attention to cross country - rather than a one country approach - may have a special relevance for effective development. The African Union has a special role to play here.
- (7) Harnessing each others' potential.** As assistance providers both G5- and G8 dialogue partners have each acquired unique and complementary experiences in certain fields which culminate in win-win-win solutions.

Identifying and realizing complementarities will make triangular development cooperation a particularly effective instrument for African development.

- (8) Learning from each other**, particularly G5- and G8-countries. Triangular cooperation provides an opportunity for exchange and learning among all participating actors. The knowledge management and information sharing aspect of triangular cooperation should thus find its way into the design of any triangular cooperation agreement, particularly if it is in the context of the HDP.
- (9) Cooperation frameworks or specific agreements** spelling out roles and responsibilities of all actors are an important element of any successful partnership, perhaps especially in a triangular relationship. This working principle will help to clarify objectives, results, contributions and the work processes among the actors and to agree on their different roles in the context of any triangular cooperation effort.
- (10) Capacity development is critical for sustainable development.** Successful cooperation requires a long term commitment and capacity development at all levels – individual, national and institutional.