TRIANGULAR CO-OPERATION: PROMOTING PARTNERSHIPS TO IMPLEMENT THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

Annotated agenda

Lisbon, 19 May 2016

This annotated agenda (available for download in pdf format only) is circulated for information. The international meeting on triangular co-operation, organised by Camões – Institute for Cooperation and Language and the OECD - will provide an opportunity to share knowledge and experiences on management practices, funding mechanisms and tools to communicate the value added of triangular co-operation. It will bring together practitioners and officials from the different partners involved in triangular co-operation.

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TRIANGULAR CO-OPERATION: PROMOTING PARTNERSHIPS TO IMPLEMENT THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

With the Addis Ababa Action Agenda and the adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, all countries have committed to shaping a new global development co-operation architecture. Partnerships are at the heart of achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) with goal 17, on the means of implementation, emphasising the contribution of triangular co-operation to achieving all the other goals.

This international meeting will provide an opportunity to share knowledge and experiences on management practices, funding mechanisms and tools to communicate the value added of triangular co-operation. It will bring together practitioners and officials from the different partners involved in triangular co-operation.

8:00 – 9:00 Registration

9:00 – 9:45 Welcome

• Introduction by the host: Teresa Ribeiro, Secretary of State of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation, Portugal
• Welcoming remarks: Mario Pezzini, Acting Director, OECD Development Co-operation Directorate, and Director, OECD Development Centre
• Keynote address: Akio Hosono, Senior Research Advisor and former Director, JICA Research Institute, Japan

9:45 – 10:45 Session 1. The myths and realities of triangular co-operation: Findings from recent analyses

Moderator: François Bary, Director Expertise and Quality, LuxDev, Luxembourg

This session will provide a common basis for further discussions during the day and possible follow up, drawing on the findings from recent work and analyses. Triangular Co-operation has gained great popularity in recent years as a modality that can combine the comparative advantages of different partners by making use of complementary strengths to create synergies, learning among all partners and building relationships based on trust. At the same time, many myths have developed about triangular co-operation projects being small in scale and scope, operating only in niche areas, lacking strategic vision and operational guidelines, and generating high transaction costs. Policy makers and practitioners ask for more information about the value added of triangular co-operation as compared to bilateral or regional co-operation.

The evidence is that triangular co-operation remains a highly relevant modality. It is prominently mentioned in the 2030 Agenda and the Addis Ababa Action Agenda as a complementary modality to South-South and North-South Co-operation. More project data and evaluations are now available and point to an increase in the number of projects, their budgets and durations. There is a great variety of triangular co-operation formats and partnerships.

Guidelines, policy frameworks and strategies for triangular co-operation have been drafted by several countries and organisations. Triangular co-operation is being used strategically to share knowledge and to engage in joint learning and co-creation. This leads to greater ownership by the actors involved, scaling-up and joint implementation of activities designed to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals.

Presentations (each followed by questions and answers)

1) Myth: Triangular co-operation is scattered and small in scale and scope. It is only relevant in some niche areas.

Reality: Triangular co-operation has increased in recent years. The OECD survey of 2015 provides a database with over 350 cases of triangular co-operation showcasing great diversity in terms of scope, regions, sectors, budgets, project durations and project types.

Presentation by: Karen Jorgensen, Head of Division for Review, Evaluation and Engagement, OECD Development Co-operation Directorate

2) Myth: Triangular co-operation projects don’t follow a strategic vision and don’t have clear guidelines.

Reality: Guidelines, policy frameworks and strategies for triangular co-operation have been developed by many actors.

Presentation by: Claudia Aguilar, Executive Secretary of the Ibero-American Programme for the Strengthening of South-South Cooperation (PIFSSS)
3) Myth: There is no clear value added of triangular co-operation in comparison to bilateral or regional co-operation.

Reality: Knowledge sharing, joint learning and co-creation are facilitated in triangular co-operation.

Presentation by: Carlos Watson, Team Leader, South-South Cooperation Team, Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO)

General discussion

10:45 – 11:15 COFFEE BREAK


In this session, participants will work in three groups to discuss what turns some critical elements of triangular co-operation into success factors. Participants will rotate groups after 40 minutes to discuss the next factor. In the end, all participants will have discussed and exchanged experiences on the three success factors. Inputs will be provided to start the discussions and a rapporteur will summarise and present the main results after lunch.

➢ Critical factor 1: partnership arrangements and resourcing

Partnerships in triangular co-operation projects are a critical factor that is a challenge and an achievement at the same time. Finding the right partnership arrangement requires time and resources, especially in the first stages of the project. Once achieved, high transaction costs might be compensated for because the creation of stable partnership arrangements allows for efficient management of resources later on. Sharing financial and in-kind contributions among partners leads to strong ownership for the project. Partnership arrangements need to be underpinned with good communication and information flows. Openness about each partner’s interests, benefits and strategic objectives facilitates the identification of effective management mechanisms. In this session, participants will discuss how the three roles of facilitator, pivotal partner and beneficiary in triangular co-operation projects can be arranged and resourced to bring benefits for all partners involved.

Chair: Martin Rivero, Director of the Social Cohesion and South-South Co-operation Area, Ibero-American Secretariat (SEGIB)

Input to the group discussion: Daniel Rosado Mendez, Deputy Director for Policy Formulation, Mexican Agency for International Development Cooperation (AMEXCID), Mexico

Rapporteur of the group: Eudy Mabuza, Deputy Director, Development Partnerships, Department of Science and Technology, South Africa

Questions for discussion:

• How do the three roles of facilitator, pivotal partner and beneficiary play out in practice?
• How can good communication and information flows be ensured?
• How can costs and in-kind contributions be shared between partners?
• If required, how can additional funding be obtained?

➢ Critical factor 2: implementation and operational guidelines

Once a triangular co-operation project is agreed, its implementation needs to be planned and formalised by all partners. In some cases, this follows overall operational guidelines for triangular co-operation, in others, processes, steering structures and responsibilities need to be defined. Elements of efficient project management may be good communication flows, transparency, effective conflict management and trust among all partners. Monitoring of agreed activities can lead to potential adjustments in the project implementation. In this session, participants will discuss how operational guidelines are put into practice and which factors are crucial for successful implementation of triangular co-operation projects.

Chair: Madara Silina, Senior Desk Officer, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Latvia

Input to the group discussion: Khalid Cherki, High Commission for Water, Forests and Combating Desertification, Morocco

Rapporteur of the group: Wófsi Yuri de Souza, Co-ordinator General of Technical Co-operation, Brazilian Co-operation Agency (ABC), Brazil

Questions for discussion:

• How can project implementation plans best be worked out jointly?
• How can ownership of all three partners - facilitator, pivotal partner and beneficiary - be ensured?
• Which components of a project need to be done together and where is a division of labour more efficient?
• How can lean, but effective, steering structures be created on all levels of the triangular co-operation activity?

- Critical factor 3: capturing and communicating the value added of triangular co-operation

The value added of triangular co-operation is often described as working in horizontal partnerships, building trust, learning among all partners, strengthening networks, and increasing intercultural understanding. These aspects feature prominently in debates on the qualitative dimensions of triangular co-operation; however, it is rarely captured in other analyses, such as evaluations. Triangular co-operation project documents focus mostly on achieving development objectives and impacts in the beneficiary countries, which justifies the development intervention. At the same time, this kind of measurement says little about the other aspects of triangular co-operation. In this session, participants will discuss how the value added of triangular co-operation can be captured and transformed into convincing arguments.

Chair: Paula Lopes, Head of Division for Multilateral Affairs, Camões—Institute for Co-operation and Language, Portugal

Input to the group discussion: Njie Thomas Kinge, Director of North-South Cooperation and Multilateral Organisations, Technical Coordinator of the National Development Effectiveness Task Force, Ministry of Economy, Planning and Regional Development, Cameroon (TBC)

Rapporteur of the group: Ulrich Müller, Senior Policy Advisor, German Agency for International Co-operation (GIZ), Germany

Questions for discussion:
- How can the value added of triangular co-operation be captured through evaluations?
- How can triangular co-operation projects be evaluated jointly?
- How do evaluation results feed back into the systems of the organisations involved?
- How can triangular co-operation projects be scaled up? Which role could the private sector, civil society, development banks and academia play?
- How can the value added of triangular co-operation be transformed into convincing arguments that can be communicated to policy makers, potential new partners and the general public?

13:15 – 14:15  **LUNCH**

14:15 – 15:15  **Session 3. Presentation by focus session rapporteurs and discussion on turning critical elements into success factors**

Moderator: Marianella Feoli Peña, Executive Director, Fundecooparición, Costa Rica

The rapporteur from each of the three groups will present the main findings. Ideally, the working group rapporteurs can propose actions and messages synthesising points made during the three discussions. Better understanding of processes in triangular co-operation will be achieved in this discussion.

Rapporteurs:
- Eudy Mabuza, Deputy Director, Development Partnerships, Department of Science and Technology, South Africa
- Wôfsi Yuri de Souza, Co-ordinator General of Technical Co-operation, Brazilian Co-operation Agency (ABC), Brazil
- Ulrich Müller, Senior Policy Advisor, German Agency for International Co-operation (GIZ), Germany

Comments: Ricardo Herrera, Executive Director, Chilean International Development Co-operation Agency (AGCID)

Question for discussion:
- How can the three critical factors for triangular co-operation discussed be turned into success factors?

15:15 – 15:45  **COFFEE BREAK**

15:45 – 17:15  **Session 4: Agreement on actions and messages to promote triangular co-operation**

Moderator: Jennifer Adams, Deputy Assistant Administrator in the Bureau for Global Health, USAID

The conclusions and key messages of this international meeting can be brought to other relevant fora, notably the...
second high-level meeting of the Global Partnership for Effective Development Co-operation in Nairobi in November 2016, with a view to encouraging debate and joint action on triangular co-operation. Compiling project experiences, good practices and lessons learned will provide the basis for these messages and actions. Identifying and discussing success factors, e.g. partnership arrangements and resourcing, implementation and operational guidelines, as well as capturing and communicating the value added of triangular co-operation, is a good first step towards systematically compiling cases and extracting messages for policy makers.

A second step might be pulling triangular co-operation out of its “niche” and including it in the normal toolkit of providers of development co-operation. Participants are encouraged to discuss which tools and messages are needed to promote triangular co-operation domestically and internationally. As agreed in Busan in 2011, scaling-up of triangular co-operation and involving stakeholders, e.g. from the private sector, civil society, academia, private foundations or regional development banks, may be a third step. Recent analyses have shown that triangular co-operation projects are increasing in terms of scale and scope. Additional funding may also be needed to underpin this trend and strengthen the modality.

Questions for discussion:

- Which concrete actions can we derive from the identification of success factors?
- How can the vast experience of triangular co-operation be compiled and the key lessons extracted so that these can be communicated to promote triangular co-operation and highlight its value added?
- What is needed to scale up triangular co-operation and how can this be achieved?
- How can additional funding for triangular co-operation be obtained?
- Which tools do we need to promote triangular co-operation successfully, both domestically and internationally? How can triangular co-operation be included in the “normal toolkit” of all providers?
- Which messages do we want to take beyond this meeting, including to the second high-level meeting of the Global Partnership in Nairobi in November 2016?

Discussants:

- Denis Nkala, Regional Co-ordinator United Nations Office for South-South Co-operation (UNOSSC)
- Victor S. Hardjono, Deputy Director, Directorate of Technical Cooperation, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Indonesia
- Rina Garay, General Director for Development Cooperation, Ministry of External Relations, El Salvador
- Anwar Mussa, Debt and Aid Management Officer, Ministry of Finance, Malawi (TBC)

Possible outcomes:

- Agreement to develop messages and tools to communicate the value added of triangular co-operation to national policy makers and the international community, e.g. at the second high-level meeting of the Global Partnership in November 2016.
- Agreement to conduct further analytical work on the three roles in triangular co-operation, on management mechanisms, measuring in-kind contributions, and on new sources of funding for triangular co-operation projects (e.g. from regional development banks).
- Agreement to explore how evaluation methodologies can be applied to capture the value added of triangular co-operation.
- Agreement to provide data to the DAC and other statistical systems to enable tracking of triangular co-operation.
- Assessment of the extent to which existing platforms on triangular co-operation could perform a matchmaking role for proposed projects and activities with e.g. the private sector, civil society, regional development banks, foundations and academia.

17:15 – 17:30  Session 5: Wrap-up and Closing remarks

- Karen Jorgensen, Head of Division for Review, Evaluation and Engagement, OECD Development Co-operation Directorate
- Ana Paula Laborinho, President of Camões – Institute for Co-operation and Language, Portugal

Followed by a “Porto de Honra” – a reception with the Portuguese speciality of Porto wine hosted by Portugal