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## ARTICLE

# THE EVOLUTION OF SOUTH-SOUTH COOPERATION: STRENGTHENING OF THE TERRITORIAL AGENDA AND THE OUTCOMES FOR RURAL DEVELOPMENT

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# THE EVOLUTION OF SOUTH-SOUTH COOPERATION: STRENGTHENING OF THE TERRITORIAL AGENDA AND THE OUTCOMES FOR RURAL DEVELOPMENT

*Giovanni Damião<sup>1</sup>*

## PROLOGUE

In 2017 the Semear Internacional<sup>2</sup> Program and the International Relations program of the Jorge Amado University Center established a partnership for the development of joint knowledge management initiatives, focused on South-South Cooperation. The first approach was achieved with the participation of a student from the program in the first Exchange of Experiences between Brazil and Mozambique, at the end of that year, with field visits in Piauí and Bahia. This article, therefore, is the result of the author's experience during a week with government technicians associated with rural development, experts from international organizations, farmers and rural producers of the Brazilian semi-arid region. Therefore, the partnership between the Semear Internacional Program and UNIJORGE seeks to provide international relations students with concrete experiences and, in addition, produce academic and knowledge management content for the program, contributing to the dissemination of knowledge on a large scale, with special focus on the regions of Latin America, Caribbean and Africa.

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<sup>2</sup> The Semear Internacional Program is a project resulting from a donation from the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), executed by the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA). It is a knowledge management program in semi-arid areas of Northeast Brazil, whose objective is to facilitate access to knowledge, innovations and best practices that can be adopted and replicated by the rural population to improve their living conditions and promote the sustainable and equitable development of the region.

## RESUMO

Desde a Conferência de Bandung, os países do Sul se organizam de forma estruturada para alcançar melhores níveis de desenvolvimento. O presente artigo busca apresentar a evolução e as recentes tendências da Cooperação Sul-Sul, apresentando como as dinâmicas históricas conduziram a Organização das Nações Unidas (ONU) e suas agências a adotarem uma abordagem territorial, com um forte apelo de mobilização dos atores locais. Aliado a isso, apontar o aumento da autonomia dos atores, que conseguem cada vez mais dialogar e conduzir iniciativas de cooperação fora da esfera formal do governo central. Este artigo visa, também, apresentar o desenvolvimento rural, a agricultura e segurança alimentar como fatores essenciais ao desenvolvimento, que desde 1978, com o BAPA (*Buenos Aires Plan of Action*), é uma das principais linhas temáticas trabalhadas quando se trata da agenda de desenvolvimento do sul. Junto a isso, os desafios apresentados frente à priorização das dinâmicas de mercado ante o desenvolvimento social, e como algumas das agências multilaterais têm trabalhado no sentido de promover a facilitação da cooperação sul-sul e empoderamento das minorias, no alcance da governança como estratégia de desenvolvimento endógeno e localizado. O texto foi construído a partir de pesquisa documental, principalmente com resoluções das Nações Unidas, e bibliográfica com textos presentes em livros de história das relações internacionais e artigos de Cooperação Sul-Sul.

Palavras-chave: Cooperação Sul-Sul, desenvolvimento, território, rural.

## ABSTRACT

Since the Bandung Conference in 1955, the countries of the South have organized themselves in a structured way to achieve better levels of development. This article aims to present the evolution and recent trends of South-South Cooperation, showing how the historical dynamics have led the United Nations and its agencies to adopt a territorial approach, with a strong appeal to mobilize local actors. Allied to this, the increase of the independence of the actors that, with autonomy, manage to dialogue and conduct initiatives of

cooperation outside the formal sphere of the central government. This article also aims to present rural development, agriculture and food security as essential factors for the development that since 1978, with BAPA (Buenos Aires Plan of Action), is one of the main thematic lines presented when it comes to the development of the southern agenda. Alongside this, the challenges presented by the prioritization of market dynamics in the face of social development, and how some of the multilateral agencies have worked to promote the facilitation of South-South cooperation and empowerment of minorities, in the achievement of governance as a strategy for endogenous and localized development. The text was written from documental, derived of United nation's resolutions, and bibliographic research with books of international relation's history and South-South Cooperation articles.

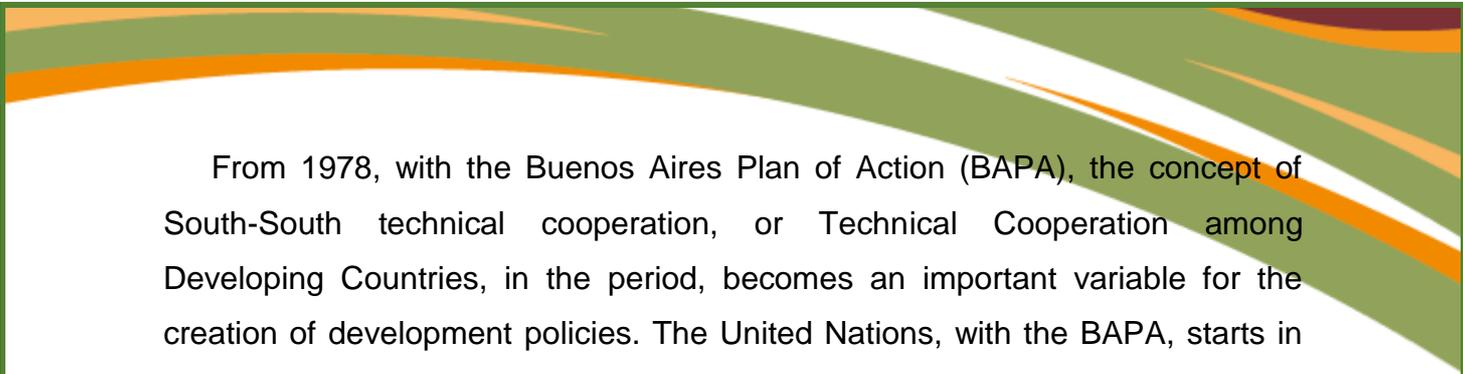
Key words: South-South Cooperation, development, territory, rural.

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

Since the Bandung Conference<sup>3</sup> (1955), Third-Worldism has become a major political category, and accordingly international co-operation has acquired new forms. From the cold war to the American hegemony, International Cooperation patterns have varied, starting initially from a North-South sphere to a gradual increase in the autonomy of developing countries (South-South) in the conduction of their own cooperation agendas. However, with the rise of Neoliberalism, changes have led developing countries to a gradual process of adaptation of their institutional structures to the new political and economic frameworks that emerged with the intensification of globalization movements and market demands. In this context, cooperation patterns have changed, and the proposal of sharing experiences is seen by developing countries and international organizations as a trend for reversal of the historical cycles of stagnation of socioeconomic growth.

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<sup>3</sup> The first Conference took place in the framework of the United Nations, in the city of Bandung (Indonesia) and was conducted and conceived by developing countries, by then known as third world countries, which sought to advance their development agendas to the detriment of the need of alignment to the United States or the Soviet Union, during the Cold War.



From 1978, with the Buenos Aires Plan of Action (BAPA), the concept of South-South technical cooperation, or Technical Cooperation among Developing Countries, in the period, becomes an important variable for the creation of development policies. The United Nations, with the BAPA, starts in its path an exploration on the vast field of South-South cooperation, and over the years presents a series of documents and resolutions that seek to mature the significance of South-South cooperation, to make it an effective way in development processes. The patterns for this kind of cooperation underwent much variation, the inclusion of multilateral actors and developed countries formed the so-called triangular cooperation, or trilateral cooperation, and the development localization processes led to the creation of territorially built projects, with a high level of participation of local actors and minorities<sup>4</sup>, with an emphasis on the role of women, who still face a historic challenge to fully participate in the integrated development process.

In this context, the role of agriculture and of the development of rural communities as recurring theme in South-South and triangular cooperation should be highlighted. Since the BAPA, considering these factors is crucial and some challenges are observed in the conduct of South-South cooperation strategies, especially with the emergence of States such as Brazil, which in its foreign policy, quite influential and focused on establishing closer ties with Africa, adopted an ambiguous behavior in the conduct of South-South cooperation. The country adopted the territorialization models and at the same time improved its relations with other countries, giving preferential attention to alliances with African States. Accordingly, it acted dubiously both on the fronts of social development and in promoting agribusiness for transnationalization of national companies, which, as a consequence, did not generate the expected effects with regard to the development of capacity and creation of structures to facilitate the consolidation of governance. However, the process of developing the South policies also presupposed intensifying the autonomy of subnational actors, which, overall, provided greater freedom for the existence of dialogue among the actors and the possibility of facilitating this process in the procedures

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<sup>4</sup> The inclusion of local actors stems from the creation of territorial policies aimed at facilitating the management of development initiatives. Thus, these subnational and civil society actors started to be included in the dynamics of territory management, as in the 2009 Brazilian policy, territories of citizenship.

of multilateral agencies, such as the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), which provides clear examples of the opening of dialogue channels for dissemination and consolidation of best practices.

## **2. DEVELOPMENT**

The development of the South agenda was a process that acquired major forms in the second half of the 20th century. The first forms of international cooperation for development stemmed from the post-World War II, respectively with the Marshall plan and Colombo plan (SARAIVA, 2007). These initiatives had highly political nature and, in a context of increased East-West polarization, contributed to consolidate the international cooperation agenda through international organizations, in the period, with the creation of the Organization for European Economic Co-operation (OEEC) in the late 1940s, and its subsequent evolution to the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) in the early 1960s.

From 1955, with the Bandung Conference, the South is presented to the world as a very well defined political category. The rise of the Cold War and the bipolarity of the system were factors that converged all political units to an alignment, whether to the United States or the Soviet Union. And this meeting presented to the world a great novelty: the perception that the then current subordinate condition of many States meant that they could not, by themselves, make decisions about their own development. This idea was derived from the very political-economic structure of the system, which naturally undermined the possibilities of action, if such actions were not taken under the "umbrella" of one of the powers (SARAIVA, 2007). This led to what came to be known as non-aligned movement, and the coinage of the expression Third-Worldism. In this context, the political South developed a joint awareness of its place in the system, of the major inconsistencies among the countries that were part of it, but, above all, of the similarities derived from the histories fragmented by politics (processes of colonization, wars, genocides, etc.), the low levels of human development, and high efforts without major results. Thus, the meeting in Bandung, in a Cold War environment, presents the importance of cooperation among South States as element of strengthening and targeting of decision-

making in regions that suffer from the problems, so together, through mutual support, they could solve them.

Although Bandung had an important role in the development of political awareness by Third World countries, the starting point of the South-South cooperation is in framework of the United Nations already in the 1970s. Bandung had raised awareness about the role of countries in the political periphery and presented possible conditions for the establishment of cooperation founded on culture and on bonds of affinity to generate positive economic and social effects. However, the Conference that presented structurally the South-South cooperation as an important and necessary tool originated from the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) initiative. The Buenos Aires Conference, in 1978, was the first meeting on the subject, and its main product was the BAPA (Buenos Aires Plan of Action), final document that addressed the idea of South-South cooperation as Technical Cooperation among Developing Countries. In this context, the main purposes of this form of cooperation would be achieved by:

Overcoming attitudinal barriers, increasing developing countries' confidence in each other's technical capabilities and enhancing the process of harmonization of their interests so as to take fully into account, within the context of the fundamental concept of solidarity, their specific sub-regional, regional and interregional characteristics, particularly by identifying priorities in such fields as transport and communications, employment, development and exchange of human resources, as well as agriculture and industry. (UN, 1978)<sup>5</sup>

Globally, the BAPA established that the United Nations and all associated structures, whether funds, programs, commissions, or specialized agencies, should work strongly as promoters and catalysts of the TCDC. It was founded on the idea that establishing this form of cooperation should increase the efforts of the political units aiming at complementarity at national, sub-

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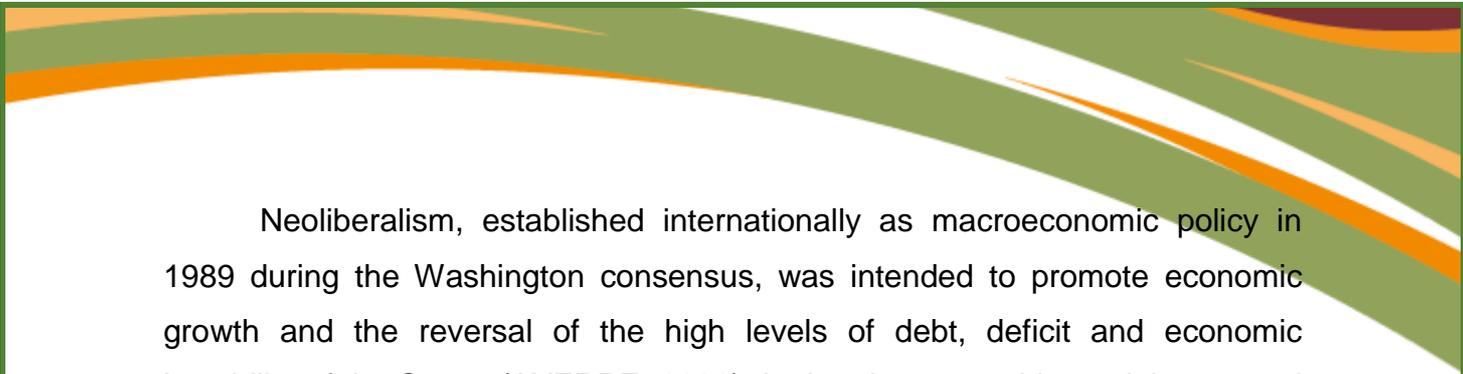
regional, regional and interregional levels, a model that emphasized the importance of dialogue and coordination between the political structures in the process of sharing experiences and best practices. The BAPA, also, was the first to determine the action guidelines on the process of exchanging knowledge, skills, resources and technologies, aiming to achieve better conditions in levels of life and development of populations.

However, from the 1980s and 1990s, the traditional patterns of International South-South Cooperation acquire new forms with the recrudescence of the economic policy of developed States. Neoliberalism as a political category derived from the intensification of the globalization process, opening of markets and reduction in the State included the private actors into the sphere of those that are part of the development agenda for the South. The State, in this context, should be a promoter of basic conditions to ensure the protection of the market, through a series of social and political reforms. According to Boaventura de Sousa Santos (2002), with the advent of globalization, the State undertakes the effort of regulating itself for deregulation, in order to institutionalize the reduction of its control over economic flows in favor of private enterprise. Therefore, the development advocated by the United Nations and international organizations, such as the World Bank, established that it was necessary to use the private sector to obtain gains for developing countries and share the experiences of deregulation among countries of the South. As a result of this new trend, in 1995 the United Nations released the document that came to be known as *New Directions For Technical Cooperation Among Developing Countries*, and it was based on the assumption that in the new era of free market the old structures should undergo reforms and act to facilitate the integration of the private sector into the economy:

Some regions in the developing world, such as Latin America and the Caribbean, have developed expertise in dealing with the financial and economic programs of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank and have also managed the transition from a government-led development effort to an increased reliance on the private sector in the context of a free market economy. Consequently, they are in an ideal position to provide assistance to the CIS countries on the basis of innovative TCDC arrangements (UN, 1995)<sup>6</sup>.

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Neoliberalism, established internationally as macroeconomic policy in 1989 during the Washington consensus, was intended to promote economic growth and the reversal of the high levels of debt, deficit and economic instability of the States (AYERBE, 2002). In the short term this model managed to balance the balance of payments of many countries, but did not generate material effects in terms of social development. On the contrary, the 1990s was characterized by the rise in underdevelopment in countries of the South. In Africa, some States still underwent struggles for independence and civil wars, as in the case of Rwanda (as in the apex of the genocide in 1994) and Angola (with extension of the Civil war until 2002), both with overt armed conflict that inhibited any sort of action directed to ensuring the protection of the basic needs of the population. Latin America suffered the consequences from the massive adoption of the ideology of neoliberalism. According to Brieger (apud. BOLTVINIK, 2002), between 1994 and 1996 in Mexico the percentage of extremely poor people greatly increased from 40% to 55% of the population; in 1989 there were 79 million Mexicans, of which 55.9 million were poor, whereas in 1999 the population was about 100 million people, of which 73 million were poor (BRIEGER apud. BOLTVINIK, 2002). Mexico's case exemplifies very well a pattern that was repeated in Latin America as a whole, and that was crucial to rethink the sustainability of economic gains in disassociation with development, and its respective impact on society.

The new guidelines of the TCDC, proposed by the 1995 document, did not have the expected effect. The sense of autonomy and empowerment of society was relegated to the background in relation to the facilitation of the action of the market. In the 1990s, many of the regional integration initiatives in the Third World – MERCOSUR, ASEAN, etc. – sought to promote the association of the States to strengthen the intraregional market and prepare it to

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dialogue with the overt dynamics of international trade, model known as open regionalism (SOUZA SILVA; COSTA, 2013).

The main differences between the "North" and "South" are underpinned by the logic of the International Division of Labor, which determines, from the perspective of Northern States, the southern axis as producer of primary inputs, with very low added value, such as agricultural commodities, and extremely cheap workforce, always hostage of market fluctuations and of the deterioration of the terms of trade. These ideas were already part of the studies of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) since the 1950s, and were basic assumptions that strengthened the processes of regionalism and regionalization that were intensified from the second half of the 20th century in the region. However, this subordinate and dependent condition showed no prospect of significant changes at the turn to the 21st century. The productive patterns repeated and the developing countries continued to have their economies supported on agricultural and extractive matrices.

In 2001, the United Nations High-Level Committee on TCDC presents in its report important topics about the history and prospects of development of the South. The advent of the 21st century brings new trends and talks about South-South cooperation, until then still known as Technical Cooperation among Developing Countries (TCDC). The new century is characterized by the use of a strategy known as *multi-stakeholder*, which establishes the integration of a variety of actors from all sectors to work together in the pursuit of development. It is no longer a policy directed by the State, as it had been until the mid-1970s, nor actions deliberated by the market. Despite the exponential rise in the levels of economic liberalization, the 1990s was also a decisive period for the rise of NGOs (LINDGREN, 2001), which together with the other actors initiated processes of joint mobilization to act in the development of the South. The report also highlighted the eradication of hunger and poverty, supported also by the Millennium Development Goals, and by the BAPA since 1978. This theme acquires greater relevance in the period, and the United Nations agencies responsible for food safety and nutrition strengthen their institutional structures of South-South cooperation.

In 2003 is released the document that came to be known as *Revised Guidelines for the Review of Policies and Procedures Concerning Technical Cooperation Among Developing Countries*, which specified the priorities and developments of the TCDCs for the United Nations and its agencies. It highlighted the need to observe the problems in common experienced by developing countries, opening space for NGOs and private sector companies to work together with the agencies within the framework of South-South Cooperation projects. Regarding food and all chains related to it, the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) has a prominent space:

For the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), TCDC is a central tool in the delivery of its services to member States. The decentralized structure of FAO reinforces and facilitates the permeation of TCDC in practically all spheres of the organization's activities. The use of TCDC experts, intercountry consultations, training and study tours, regional and sub-regional workshops, support to regional organizations, promotion of technical cooperation networks and the dissemination of information on innovative and best practices are some of the direct means employed by the organization.<sup>7</sup>

The 2003 document also presents another trend derived from the process of the South acquiring autonomy over its development. Triangular cooperation, in the context of TCDC, is the inclusion of specialized agencies, regional banks and bilateral fostering agencies in the roster of actors of the said cooperation among developing countries. According to the IFAD report (2016) on South-South and Triangular Cooperation, this triangulation seeks to facilitate development by supporting initiatives undertaken by State entities; this support may be for the creation and/or strengthening of capacities (training, capacity building, etc.), the financing of development for the acquisition of tangible and intangible capital assets, or both, which will be used in accordance with the level of need, extent and degree of the problems identified by the national actors. According to the 2003 document (Revised Guidelines), developed

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countries should support the triangular cooperation, and this encouragement and insight cannot be purely understood as altruism and goodwill. Clear signs show that emerging economies, mainly from 2003, started to participate more actively in the global economy; thus, according to these organizations, due to the fact that emerging States are not part of a direct and equal dialogue with the North, in development initiatives, there would be the possibility of generating political imbalance in light of reduced economic barriers. Moreover, the prominence and development that some countries presented, as was the case of the Asian Tigers, could inevitably balance the power patterns southward. Aware of this, Brazil includes in its political agenda two elements of fundamental importance concerning development: the first consists in territorial planning, and the second in the promotion of its international relations.

From 2003 Brazil enters a new phase of its development. The Brazilian government understands the need to invest in social programs (SENRA, 2009), and the Lula administration had a major role in the advancement of these policies, which were clearly defined on its Multiannual Plan (2004–2007), founded on the conception that “the market cannot be the sole determinant of territorial planning, because it promotes economic concentration and, thus, foments social inequalities” (BRAZIL, 2004–2007). In this context, it is possible to establish a relation between the evolution of South-South cooperation and the maturation of the Brazilian State in its regional development policies, which, in the turn of post neoliberalism (1990s) and emergence of neo-developmentalism (from 2003), adopts a restructuring of the concept on development, reevaluating the consequences of the State-centered model, of the 1950s and 1970s, in the decision-making process. The strong action of the State until the 1970s largely generated, based on the Growth Pole Theory (PERROUX apud. SENRA, 2009), isolated islands of development in the country, without causing the forward and backward externalities as proposed by Hirschman (apud. SENRA, 2009). At the same time, as exposed above, neoliberalism did not provide effective solutions for reversal of low levels in social indicators. Due to promoting such agenda specially emphasized in the Collor de Mello and Fernando Henrique Cardoso administrations, rather than implementing the adjustments needed to recover the economy:

[In] Brazil the opposite situation has been observed, investment rate has declined from an average of 22.2% of GDP in the 1980s to 19.5% in 1990 and 18.8% between 2000 and 2003. Under neoliberal policies, Brazil's GDP has grown at rates below those observed in other countries (MIRANDA; MOREIRA et al., 2005).

Thus, among the strategies adopted in the new political period about conceiving the development of the South, arise the so-called territorial policies. In this context, the perception of development at Brazilian level advances in line with local specificities. From initiative of the Federal government, through the MDA (Ministry of Agricultural Development), in 2003 and 2008, respectively, the Rural Territories and the Territories of Citizenship programs were created. They sought to categorize in other ways the regional structure of federated states and municipalities, mainly to decentralize the excessive concentration in the main Brazilian capitals and bring development to rural areas in a widespread and effective manner. In order to accomplish this proposal, thinking about the rural territories and the issue of agriculture is essential, and also to consolidate rural development policies, specifically in the sphere of family agriculture. According to the program (2009):

The Territories of Citizenship program aims to promote economic development and universalize basic citizenship programs through a strategy of sustainable territorial development. Social participation and actions integrated between the Federal Government, states and municipalities are fundamental for the construction of this strategy. The Territory is formed by a set of municipalities with the same economic and environmental characteristic, social, cultural and geographical identity and cohesion. Larger than municipalities and smaller than states, Territories show, more clearly, the reality of social groups, economic activities, and institutions of each locality. This facilitates the planning of governmental actions for development of these regions (BRASIL, 2009).

Furthermore, it is observed that such programs aim to foster the development of local governance strategies, through the inclusion of territorial actors, from different sectors, into the process of building and structuring territoriality. Thus, within the project is created the political structure composed of local governments and civil society in the Territorial Committee, which: "defines the Territory development plan, determines needs, agrees on the action agenda, promotes integration of efforts, discusses alternatives for

development of the Territory and exercises the social control of the program" (BRASIL, 2009).

Brazil was not the only country that adopted this type of territoriality to foster development. The book *Beyond the City: the rural contribution to development* (2004) attests the adoption of the territorial approach in Latin America. According to the publication, the *spatial approach*, name given by the World Bank to this initiative, is present in the largest economies of the region, among them: Mexico, Brazil, Chile and Colombia (World Bank, p. 119, 2004). And, also, the roster of inclusion strategies features some of the Rome-based agencies (IFAD, FAO and the World Food Programme) of the United Nations, for example the Plan of Sovereignty Food and Nutritional Security of Paraguay, which uses the Participatory Territorial Approach as strategy for promotion and localization of development, coordinating local actors (public and private) in the development of new policies that necessarily involve agriculture. FAO, through what they call Participatory and Negotiated Territorial Development (PNTD), presents, in general terms, the main intention of the new models for promotion of social development, which is the governance idea, with diffusion in the 1990s, but with more accurate and effective forms in the 21st century:

Governance brings into play a complex set of actors and institutions, not all belonging to the sphere of government; it translates an interdependence between the powers and institutions associated with collective action. It also involves actor networks that are autonomous and based on the principle that it is possible to act without relying on the power of the State. In that regard, the definition of the critical dictionary of territory could be mentioned, which synthesizes really well other attempts of defining this concept: in its current usage, this term is an Anglicism. It designates a way of facing the issue of government that does not prioritize the art of governing or of the action conduct techniques, but rather the relations between those that govern and those that are governed, especially civil society and the State (FAO, 2013, our translation).<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> La gobernanza pone en juego un conjunto complejo de actores y de instituciones, no todos pertenecientes a la esfera del gobierno; traduce una interdependencia entre los poderes y las instituciones asociadas a la acción colectiva. Hace intervenir, además, redes autónomas de actores partiendo del principio que es posible actuar sin tener que depender del poder del Estado. Se puede citar, al respecto, la definición del diccionario crítico del territorio que sintetiza muy bien otras tentativas de enunciación de este concepto: en su utilización actual, este término es un anglicismo. Designa una manera de enfrentar la cuestión del gobierno que no da prioridad al arte de gobernar ni a las técnicas de conducción de la acción, sino a las relaciones entre los dirigentes y los dirigidos, principalmente la sociedad civil y el Estado.

Thus, in conjunction with the localization of development, mainly for strengthening rural areas, the strategy of introducing other actors in processes of cooperation for development with the intention of promoting governance can be compared to the Multi-stakeholder agenda of the United Nations. Not only due to the inclusion of civil society into the decision-making process, but also due to the greater degree of autonomy that subnational units (states and municipalities) had in that context, which enables them to independently devise cooperation strategies with multilateral and bilateral agencies, as well as provides them with an open channel for promotion of paradiplomacy and dialogue between cities. Brazil utilized well this wave of autonomy to advance its agricultural development projects, specially in the northeastern region, which has one of the highest levels of underdevelopment of the country. In 1991 the per capita income of the region was BRL 178.44, compared to BRL 459.67 in the Southeast, and, in relation to Brazil, income in the Northeast was 92% lower than the national average (RIBEIRO; PALES; RODRIGUES, p. 163, 2014). However, from 2000 to 2010 the Northeast manages to significantly reduce its levels of underdevelopment, with the northeastern income being 67% lower than the national income, with significant increase in distribution and raise in the income of classes D and E, which generated this difference of 25% more than the previous years (RIBEIRO; PALES; RODRIGUES, p. 164, 2014). It can be observed that the social policies and the granting of autonomy to local agents were factors that managed to promote tangible results. In this context, international cooperation among specialized agencies reaches a high level of diffusion, especially in this region, through the structural reforms that redefine what is understood as territoriality. Brazil, with regard to the use of cooperation strategies aimed at development, becomes a pioneering country and presents cases of great success.

The International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) has active participation in the northeastern semi-arid region and, due to the increasing territorialization of policies and decentralization of State institutionality, can dialogue directly not only with government actors in the means of financing, but also with the territories of identity (categories derived from the ideas of localization of development) according to their specific demands and the need

for action programs tailored to each context. In the state of Piauí, the Viva o Semiárido Project (PVSA) shows clearly the consolidation of these new trends of development and territorialization incorporated into the International Cooperation for Development. In 2013, the Piauí state government entered into partnership with the international agriculture promotion agency with support from the National Program for Strengthening of Agriculture (PRONAF) and granted support based on the assessment of projects and actual demands that showed the local efforts to achieve improvement of productive units of agricultural producers, cooperatives, associations and entities legally authorized.

The project was developed adopting the territorial approach, based on the assessment of the territories of development<sup>9</sup> as nuclei receiving the benefit. The use of these territories as locus of action, in the specific case of Piauí, was institutionalized with Complementary Law No. 87, of August 22, 2007, establishing eleven of them. In the PVSA, the covered territories are: Vale do Sambito, Vale do Guaribas, Vale Chapada do Itaim, Serra da Capivara, and Vale do Canindé. In general terms, the creation of this model aimed mainly at bringing development to the countryside and strengthening rural areas (RITTER, 2001). This categorization facilitates the action of international agents of promotion, which also establish social criteria for the allocation of resources and applicability of projects. The consideration of priority targets in the conduct of financing can also use the example of the PVSA, supported by IFAD, which considers as crucial for the achievement of development the emphasis on certain communities and minorities as preferential nuclei in the election of the projects supported by the state government. According to the local socio-economic and cultural characteristics of the minorities that suffer the most because of the problems, the IFAD determines in its agenda some of the categories of priority beneficiary public, some of them covered by the PVSA. These are the *quilombolas* and Afro-descendants, who received the BRL 153,111.67 financing in the Tapuio *quilombo* in the region of Queimada Nova (Vale do Guaribas); young persons and women from rural communities, very

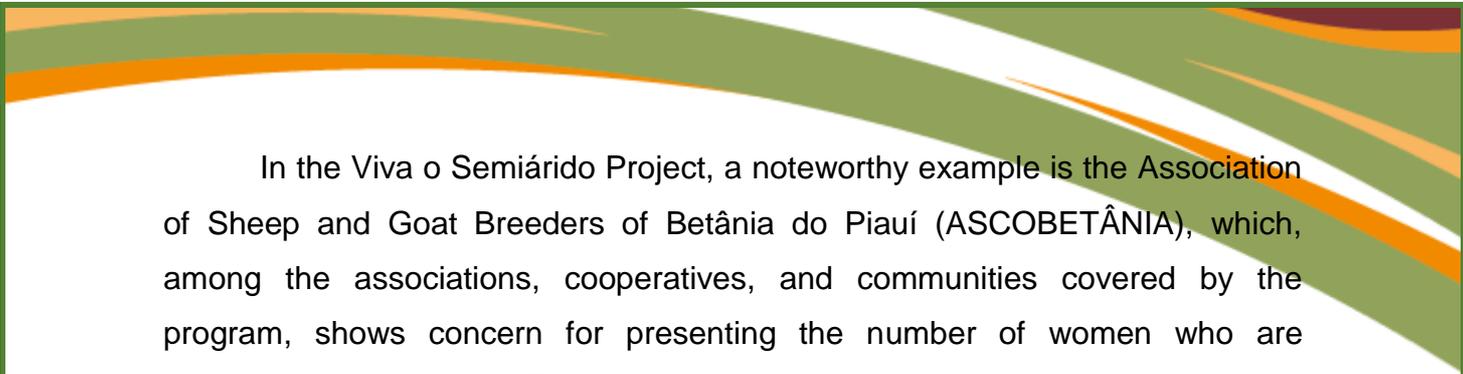
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<sup>9</sup> In Bahia and in other states this territorial division is known as territories of identity.

well represented by the financing for the Association of Small Producers of the Carnaíbas community, with a high number of young persons and women who participate in productive activity centered on animal husbandry of sheep, in the municipality of Bela Vista do Piauí (Serra da Capivara). In addition to the small producers and family farmers, who have as example the producers of honey and cashew, respectively, of the COOMAPI (Mixed Cooperative of the Beekeepers of the microregion of Simplício Mendes), Casa Apis and COCAJUPI (Central of Cooperatives of Cashew Producers of the State of Piauí) – all in the region of Vale do Canindé – that represent satisfactorily examples of how alternative models of solidary economy and cooperativism can contribute to reverse the indexes of underdevelopment. Thus, one of the strategies for the introduction of the territory as a facilitating factor in development stems from the need for engagement between the actors:

One of the main characteristics of this approach is that it brings together the local government, the private sector, nonprofit organizations and local communities, encouraging them to make better use of existing resources and of the potential of the location. Local Economic and Social Development aims at improving the local economic conditions and, therefore, at achieving better quality of life. This is a "bottom-up" approach that values local, public and private actors responsible for investment and associated processes (MORAIS, apud. Amorim and Lagarde, 2013, p. 20).

According to Karl Schab, CEO of the World Economic Forum, in an interview in 2017 with the Milênio newspaper, economic development cannot be achieved without social development. Therefore, strategies for inclusion of minorities gain more strength to promote integrated initiatives that dialogue with all publics. Thus, the IFAD and the other agencies engaged in international cooperation seek not only to support the development of minorities, but, especially, to develop governance strategies so they can propose and participate in the process of construction of their own development, and consequently support the other units in the political South, in the path of South-South cooperation to follow in the same direction. As a result of the PVSA, many of the benefited cooperatives and associations are invited to include women in the decision-making process, in order to make them co-participants in the development.



In the Viva o Semiárido Project, a noteworthy example is the Association of Sheep and Goat Breeders of Betânia do Piauí (ASCOBETÂNIA), which, among the associations, cooperatives, and communities covered by the program, shows concern for presenting the number of women who are benefited by the project. The challenge faced by women to occupy the spaces is evident, because, according to data from 2017, among the 136 members of ASCOBETÂNIA, 115 are men, 9 are women, and 12 are youths. Efforts are being made to facilitate the inclusion; however, the social and cultural structures that relegate them to a secondary place are still quite present. Thus, with respect to the capacity-building process through international cooperation there is also implicitly the breaking of paradigms about development with the understanding that the actors that seek the benefit should guide their own development, and then promote the dissemination of good practices to States that share similar problems. The similarity of these problems stems mostly from the historical processes of colonial spoliation, and maintenance of social structures and disparities that are still present in many countries of the South. Then, through an existing historical relationship of subalternity, especially in the case of Portuguese-speaking countries, Brazil uses the similarity in the structures of coloniality as a factor for conducting its South-South Cooperation policy in the 21st century.

As stated above, South-South Cooperation is understood as the process of sharing knowledge, techniques, technology, skills and resources among developing countries. While triangular cooperation consists in the inclusion of developed States or multilateral agencies into the conduct of South-South Cooperation. Brazil, from 2003, increases its dialogue with developing countries, and such arrangements were fundamental to boost its strategies for promotion of partnerships among developing countries. It should be noted the formation of the IBSA – India, Brazil, and South Africa – in the same year with a character of strengthening democracy and international cooperation in different sectors along with multilateral organizations. And later in 2006 the creation of the BRICS - Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa, of a more economic and political nature, for balancing the political system and the balance of power among the States. This great integration strategy was the result of a trend

adopted by the Brazilian government of making the best use of the country's potential for leadership in a context of high international multipolarity. And this same context led Brazil to an even closer relationship with Africa to establish South-South cooperation partnerships and initiatives. The first institutionalized formal initiative occurred in 1996 with the creation of the CPLP – Community of Portuguese-speaking Countries – aiming at disseminating the language, but also an open platform for mutual support and solidarity among its members, mainly in the field of health and HIV prevention. According to data from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (2018), among its members are: Brazil, Angola, Cape Verde, Guinea Bissau, Equatorial Guinea, Mozambique, Portugal, Sao Tome and Principe and Timor-Leste.

The Brazilian South-South and Triangular Cooperation diffusion process has always been institutionally associated with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs through the Brazilian Association of Cooperation (ABC) so the autonomous foreign policy aimed at expanding the country's influence power and soft power<sup>10</sup> could be transmitted to partner countries. In many cases of support to international cooperation, Brazil preferably adopted the multilateral approach, or triangular approach, aligned with the guidelines presented by the United Nations (FREITAS; CERUQUEIRA, 2014). With respect to South-South Cooperation with African countries, Brazil used – specially in the years when ambassador Celso Amorim was the Minister of Foreign Affairs – presidential diplomacy and significant activity of government bodies in the pursuit of closer relationships among the States. According to Enara Echart Muñoz and Tássia Camila de Oliveira Carvalho (2016):

Official travels to the region [Africa] were increased (President Lula visited the continent on 34 occasions, while Fernando Henrique Cardoso went only four times) and new embassies were opened (Brazil becoming, with 38 embassies, the fourth country with greater diplomatic presence on the continent) (MUNOZ; CARVALHO, p. 1, 2016).

However, during the Lula administration Brazil followed two directions of activity with regard to agriculture. On the one hand, it largely strengthened the

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<sup>10</sup> Soft power is the actors' capacity to make use of culture (music, sport, religion, movies, etc.) to influence the behavior of other actors.

rural development process and created programs to grant credit and guarantees to small farmers. On the other hand, it strengthened the agribusiness and the promotion of landowner production of agricultural commodities. Advancement of the agribusiness agenda was very present in the Brazilian economy, and was one of the factors that guided the State government action through its foreign policy on Africa. Accordingly, South-South Cooperation advanced to promote the internationalization of major companies that exported agricultural commodities. According to Enara Echart and Tássia Camila (2016), authors who consistently address this characteristic of transnationalization of Brazilian companies: "among the ten most transnationalized companies, there are three operating in the food sector (JBS-Friboi, Marfrig Alimentos, and Minerva Foods)." This political behavior of the country in relation to a proposal for solidarity and mutual support ended up leading to actions that were much more focused on the market dynamics, rather than necessarily on the process of empowerment and capacity-building.

Founded on the neoliberal premise, the State, in this context, not only acts to facilitate the market dynamics in its own national territory, but also promotes in the process of a development initiative (in this case, through South-South Cooperation) the transnationalization of models that do not stimulate the development of locations, by the very nature of fragmentation that the agribusiness causes in environments where it is installed. The contradiction of the Brazilian government action in South-South Cooperation also consists in the export to African countries of some social programs, even if the aspect of business expansion has a more determining dimension, especially concerning Brazil's cooperation with countries such as Mozambique and Ghana.

Brazilian agricultural initiatives in Mozambique, as in Ghana, are structured around social protection, technology transfer and export of Brazilian agribusiness products. They involve both bilateral transfers associated with export of Brazilian machinery and trilateral programs with western donors associated with technology transfer, which is often articulated within a framework of SSC [*South-South Cooperation*]. In March 2015, Brazil and Mozambique signed a Cooperation and Investment Facilitation Agreement (ACFI) with the aim of "strengthening the internationalization of Brazilian companies by giving investors greater security". This indicates the commitment of the Brazilian government to support Brazilian private sector

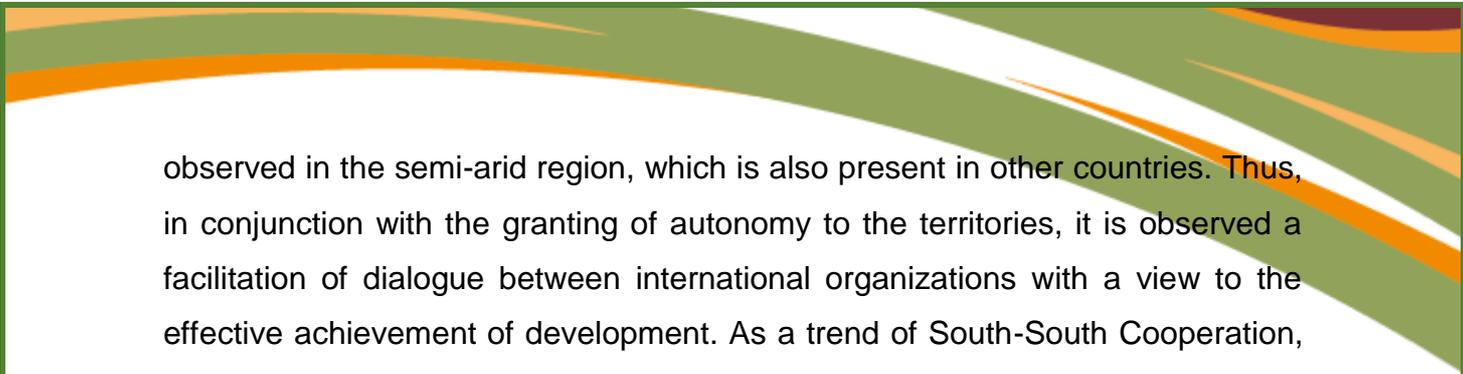
investment in Mozambique (AMANOR; CHICAVA, p. 20, 2016).<sup>11</sup>

However, outside the formal and governmental spheres, the cases of success regarding the promotion of agricultural development, food security and strengthening the economy of local communities become good examples of practices that can be replicated for countries of the South. One of the benefits brought by the territorial autonomy approach consists in the capacity of subnational and local units to advance in skill-sharing and capacity-building agendas without including the federal government into the decision-making process. In this context, multilateral agencies can play an important role in channeling good practices and dialogue among the local units of the different States so as to replicate the gains in countries with similar contexts. The Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA) is an example of international organization that progressively established dialogue with the South-South and triangular cooperation. Initially it was a technical organization, with a view to promoting better management of agricultural production with emphasis on the process of export and food trade, but which in the 21st century arises as a platform for execution and implementation of programs of multilateral promotion agencies.

Through the partnership between the IFAD and the IICA is created the SEMEAR Internacional program, which, in the context of agricultural development and food security, is concerned, as a priority, with identifying and facilitating the exchange of experiences and good practices in projects supported by the IFAD in Brazil, based on the context of life of the northeastern semi-arid region. It is expected to generate knowledge sharing among the regions of Africa and South America that experience problems similar to those

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<sup>11</sup> Brazilian agricultural initiatives in Mozambique, as in Ghana, are structured around social protection, technology transfer and export of Brazilian agribusiness products. They involve both bilateral transfers associated with export of Brazilian machinery and trilateral programs with western donors associated with technology transfer, which is often articulated within a framework of SSC [*South-South Cooperation*]. In March 2015, Brazil and Mozambique signed a Cooperation and Investment Facilitation Agreement (ACFI) with the aim of “strengthening the internationalization of Brazilian companies by giving investors greater security”. This indicates the commitment of the Brazilian government to support Brazilian private sector investment in Mozambique.



observed in the semi-arid region, which is also present in other countries. Thus, in conjunction with the granting of autonomy to the territories, it is observed a facilitation of dialogue between international organizations with a view to the effective achievement of development. As a trend of South-South Cooperation, it is observed the need to establish more dialogue between localities, nationally and internationally, so directly they manage to establish together networks for sharing of good practices. This trend, followed by the Semear Internacional program, is presented in the latest United Nations document on South-South and Triangular Cooperation of 2016, *Framework of operational guidelines on United Nations support to South-South and triangular cooperation*, featuring the roles to be played by the organizations that deal with South-South and Triangular Cooperation. These roles include: convocation and advocacy, to facilitate the meeting of the parties; knowledge broker, as a facilitator of knowledge and disseminator of good practices; builder of partnerships, through the creation of arrangements that facilitate the development of relationships between the actors involved; and, finally, monitor and analyst of progress after the implementation of cooperation initiatives (UN, 2016).

Especially among actors such as Brazil and African countries, the use of development tools such as South-South Cooperation can foster a high degree of interdependence, but with that also generate even more vulnerabilities for the receivers, if the implementation of cooperation is not aimed at development. The same document shows the need to promote partnership between equals, to not establish conditionality in the cooperative process, to facilitate the achievement of mutual benefits and, in this context, to strengthen the opening to the multi-stakeholder approach that integrates the various actors in the development of cooperation projects and actions (UN, 2016). These guidelines had already been presented in the Nairobi Outcome Document (2010), but are still much up to date concerning what is expected in terms of development up to 2030.

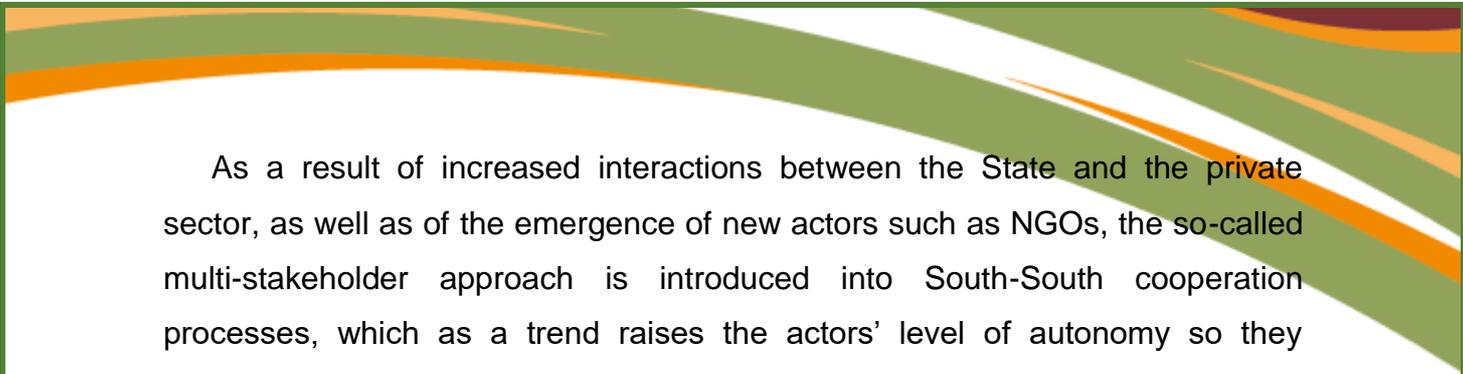
Considering the political and institutional transformations that occurred from the turn to the 21st century, South-South and triangular cooperation, today, has reached a sui generis level of maturity founded on the conception that development is not the result of processes without context of the reality, of

the peoples, of the actors and of the environmental conditions that are presented. It is especially worth noting the further development of the territorial approach as significant trend whose main purpose is to strengthen the ideals of governance, especially in the context of social minorities. A process that, in order to achieve a higher level of effectiveness, must necessarily take into consideration the agenda of agriculture and rural development as key elements to promote better conditions of life and work and, hence, contribute to emancipate the South in relation to the historical structures of underdevelopment.

### **3. CONCLUSION**

The development of the South-South Cooperation agenda stems from the maturation and consolidation of southern countries. Progressively, from 1955, with the Bandung Conference, cooperation patterns have changed, ranging from a more State-centered sphere, until the 1970s, and subsequently to a trend toward the incorporation of the private initiative from the 1990s. These movements were represented in the main documents and resolutions of the United Nations on the subject, which still today determine the action guidelines of its multilateral agencies, funds, programs, and conferences.

Within the United Nations framework, the BAPA (1978) was a primordial document to guide what is understood as South-South Cooperation, and the characteristics derived therefrom. It presented the idea that countries of the political South must align to achieve the reversal of levels of underdevelopment through skill-sharing, capacity-building, resource allocation, and technology. Thus, it is possible to create a network among these countries with a view to facilitating international dialogue and solidarity. Within the BAPA framework, emerge the issues of agriculture and rural development, in conjunction with food safety, as fundamental topic to be introduced as an important point to be worked in the cooperation process, and, from 1990, the specialized agencies that deal with this sphere began to participate more actively in the Technical Cooperation Among Developing Countries (TCDC).



As a result of increased interactions between the State and the private sector, as well as of the emergence of new actors such as NGOs, the so-called multi-stakeholder approach is introduced into South-South cooperation processes, which as a trend raises the actors' level of autonomy so they establish dialogue and together specifically propose development initiatives contextualized to the different localities. These localities, from the 21st century, come to be valued, transforming the national strategies, in local development processes, founded on the premise that local actors, with an emphasis on minorities, should participate actively in the development process by determining their own demands.

Brazil advanced aligned with the territorialization guidelines, initially with the Territórios Rurais program (2003) and subsequently Territórios da Cidadania, which aimed primarily at reaching rural communities, seeking to bring development to the countryside. However, to the same extent, Brazil was not very consistent with regard to strengthening agriculture in the international South-South cooperation processes. The preference for African countries as a priority locus of governmental coordination on cooperation led the direction of capacity-building to be deviated, with the main interest shifting from the expansion of agricultural markets and transnational frontier to production of commodities.

However, it is observed that as a result of the process of making the actors autonomous, the State ceases to influence directly on partnership building and coordination of the dialogue among the South units. And, thus, multilateral agencies play an important role of facilitating, coordinating the dialogue and monitoring the evolution of cooperation, aiming to promote effectiveness in the sharing of knowledge, technologies, and good practices with the objective of fostering capacity-building.

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