

Triangular cooperation – Bridging South-South and North-South Cooperation?¹

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1. Introduction

“When I think about triangular cooperation, I feel like a puppy: big eyes, high hopes and expectations for the big bone!²” remarked a participant of an international workshop in Istanbul in November 2010, which brought together practitioners of triangular cooperation projects from different parts of the world. But what is the big bone actually about? How can the increased interest in triangular cooperation be explained? Does this have implications for North-South and South-South cooperation? And which novelties does it bring to the partnership between the North and the South? In a polycentric world order cooperation modalities between traditional and non-traditional partners are changing. Triangular cooperation (TriCo) is one of these new cooperation modalities. Expectations for triangular cooperation as a new mode of delivering aid and overcoming shortcomings of North-South and South-South cooperation by also leaving aside neo-colonial connotations are very high.

Triangular cooperation is not a completely new phenomenon, but has existed for decades embedded in bilateral, regional and global programmes (e.g. Brazil–Japan–Third Countries in the 1970’s, see Honda 2012) or Germany–China–Mali in the 1980’s). A strong increase of trilateral cooperation initiatives can be observed since the 2000s and now this cooperation modality is deeply rooted in the UN, OECD DAC, international donors’ as well as new development partners’ discourses. While there is no agreed international definition of trilateral or triangular cooperation³ it can be understood as “a partnership between DAC donors and providers of South-South cooperation to implement development cooperation projects in beneficiary countries. All three partners make specific and complementary contributions that create measurable value added for the beneficiary country” (Langendorf 2012: 25-26). In an ideal case principles and modalities of South-South Cooperation (SSC) and North-South Cooperation (NSC) are combined and all three partners jointly learn in projects without one partner taking the lead and dominating the others.

This paper endeavors to address a research gap on empirical evidence on triangular cooperation combined with a mapping and critical assessment of current theoretical approaches to the topic. The aforementioned questions will be answered in three steps. First, the so-called rise of the Global South (e.g. new development partners) and triangular cooperation will be embedded in theories of

¹ This paper is largely based on my PhD dissertation and draws on various consultancies conducted for the Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) in Eschborn (and Istanbul), South Africa, Mexico and Brazil from 2010 - 2014. Some parts of the paper have already been or will be published either as studies, in book projects or in internal reports for GIZ.

² Conference “Three is a Lucky Number! The Different Perspectives on Triangular Cooperation in Practice”, organized by former GTZ (GIZ) with the aim of bringing together practitioners of different triangular cooperation projects worldwide from November 3rd – 4th 2010 in Istanbul.

³ The two terms will be used synonymously in this paper.

international relations and development studies. It will be assessed how current mainstream theories are apt to explain the changes we see in international development cooperation and which ones provide satisfactory answers. South-South and North-South Cooperation will be juxtaposed in a second step. It will be argued that both are extremely diverse and the often claimed juxtaposition of homogenous SSC and NSC might serve geo-political, discursive purposes, but are far from reality. By looking deeper into the structures, guiding principles and modalities of cooperation, points of divergence and convergence will be assessed. I will draw on the results of a study prepared for the Mexican International Cooperation Agency (AMEXCID) and the Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ), in which I compared eleven new development partners' cooperation patterns and agency development (see Piefer 2014a). From this a typology of three groups of countries was developed and will serve as basis for further elaborations. In a third step, the various aspects of the bridging function of triangular cooperation will be examined. Emphasis will be put on the initiation possibilities, interests and roles of the different partners involved, their processes of arriving at joint principles and project implementation plans as well as on the role of the third country in TriCo. Cases from Brazil, South Africa and India will feed in empirical evidence. Some concluding remarks will point to international lessons learned and recommendations for triangular cooperation and more generally for cooperation between the North and the South in a polycentric world order.

Methodologically, this paper is located at the junction of academic and practice oriented research. The empirical data was gathered in around 200 qualitative interviews in Bangkok, Beijing, Brussels, Brasilia, Eschborn, Istanbul, Johannesburg, Mexico City, New Delhi, Pretoria, Rio de Janeiro and São Paulo from February 2012 – July 2014. These have been conducted within the scope of my PhD research, the VolkswagenStiftung funded research project “Challenges of European External Energy Governance with Emerging Powers: Meeting Tiger, Dragon, Lion and Jaguar” and consultancies for GIZ in Eschborn & Istanbul (February – December 2010), Mexico (June – December 2013), South Africa (July-September 2013 and January – August 2014), and Brazil (December - April 2014). A lack of academic research and in-depth empirical studies can be witnessed⁴, so that the interview data serves as main basis for analysis. The aim of this paper is to contrast different views and perceptions and to come up with an encompassing, balanced analysis. Research conducted on Brazil and South Africa is at the focus of this paper. In order to embed it in an international context and to provide a basis for deducing conclusions, research results on other new development partners is also used without elaborating an in-depth analysis here. The latter would be beyond the scope of this paper.

2. Theoretical Framework

Nederveen Pieterse (2009:3) points to a core problem when stating that “*the relationship between theory and practice is uneven: theory tends to lag behind practice, behind innovations on the ground, and practice tends to lag behind theory (since policy makers and activists lack time for reflection)*”. Especially in development thinking, the theoretical debate is often stuck in traditional patterns of Western hegemony over the less developed peripheries. Development theories and international relations theories alike do not take sufficient account of changing power relations. In (development) practice this has already become common sense. For instance, it is undeniable that

⁴ For very good analyses of the topic, see e.g. McEwan/ Mawdsley 2012, Mawdsley 2012, de la Fontaine 2013, Müller/ de la Fontaine/ Sondermann 2014, Chaturvedi/ Fues/ Sidiropoulos 2012, Abdenur/ Moura Estevão Marques Da Fonseca 2013, Cabral 2014.

“(re)emerging development actors [...] and recipient (or ‘partner’) countries are playing an increasingly significant role in setting agendas, challenging current aid orthodoxies, and re-articulating development cooperation relationships between and within the ‘North’ and ‘South’. [...] New forums are being established within which global aid policy and norms are being renegotiated, challenging the former dominance of the Development Assistance Committee (DAC) of the OECD. [...] In the last five years or so the mainstream official development community – DAC bilaterals and multilaterals – has moved rapidly from neglecting the non-DAC development partners to a far more serious recognition of their potential power and influence” (McEwan/ Mawdsley 2012: 1186).

To address the aims of this paper, it is necessary to distinguish two levels of theoretical approaches:

- 1) The inter-action of states, of the North and the South, of “traditional” and “emerging donors” as well as the structures of the international development cooperation system call for an international relations perspective.
- 2) Differing understandings of development in the North and the South, the contents, instruments and practices of development cooperation call for additional inputs from development theories.

Bearing in mind that development is multidimensional and that development problems require a combination of analytical perspectives in the following, a brief overview of mainstream approaches to IR and development theories will be given in order to shed light on their explanations of the changing global power configurations in the field of international development cooperation, the rise of new development partners and triangular cooperation. This serves as a mapping exercise and shall point to different explanatory factors as well as shortcomings of the respective approaches.

2.1 Perspectives from International Relations⁵

In international relations geo-political shifts from bipolarity (East-West/ Russia-USA) over unipolarity (US hegemony) to multipolarity (many global powers in the East and West, North and South) in the 21st century can be observed. Against this background, geopolitics, power relations and normative orientations are also changing in the field of development cooperation. From a neo-realistic perspective (Waltz 1990), the new configurations are moving towards a balance of power in an anarchic system. States as unitary actors promote their strategic foreign policy interests through development aid (not necessarily development cooperation) in order to enhance power and influence in other world regions. Cooperation on development issues would mainly serve self-interests in order to achieve relative gains on the international level. Certainly, it is inevitable to analyze the power aspects of North-South as well as South-South cooperation. Altruism, normative-morally motivated rhetoric of development cooperation exists for both NSC and SSC, but after all one has to agree that these are used strategically in most cases. In this light, triangular cooperation could also be analyzed in view of maximizing power of the two donor countries. This might already point to one crucial point in triangular cooperation: the role of the third country. Is TriCo merely about power plays between two greater powers to the alleged benefit or also the detriment of a third country?

One core assumption of liberalist international relations approaches is the interdependence between states (Keohane/Nye 1977). International institutions and regimes are platforms for cooperation

⁵ For a brief overview, see e.g. Mawdsley 2012: 22-27.

between states to advance interests and goals of “like-minded” countries, i.e. pooling resources with other states in order to achieve strategic goals. In the last years, some regime theoretical approaches to the international aid system have evolved and looked at changing power relations in institutions – mainly the OECD DAC – through the rise of new development partners (Ashoff/ Klingebiel 2014, Tatge 2009). Yet, powerful states decide what constitutes a ‘desirable’ world order (Mawdsley 2012: 25). Triangular cooperation is not necessarily an instrument to tackle interdependencies or to cooperate in international institutions and regimes. It can promote cooperation in many ways, or may even be read in the light of the classical definition of international regimes as “*principles, norms, rules and decision-making procedures around which actor expectations converge in a given issue area*” (Krasner 1983). All of these are given in triangular cooperation. Could it then be regarded as a ‘mini-regime’?

Social-constructivist approaches assume that a country’s foreign policy agenda is not only shaped by material, but also essentially by immaterial factors such as ideas, role identities, norms, and values. Whilst actors also follow strategic interests as in rational choice approaches, these are not predefined from a social constructivist view. “Actors do not have a ‘portfolio’ of interests that they carry around independent of social context; instead, they define their interests in the process of defining situations” (Wendt 1992: 398). Identities are the basis of interests. A country’s identity (namely its own perception and how it is perceived by others) as well as envisaged roles and the internalization of (international) norms (Wendt 1999) are essential factors that significantly influence foreign policy behavior. If a decision to cooperate trilaterally is seen as appropriate to the identity of an actor, cooperation is highly probable (Knodt/ Piefer (2012: 34). In the particular cases of Brazil and India, but also other new development partners, there is a dichotomy between great power aspiration identity and the identity of a developing country of the South (Hurrell 2006: 19). Thus, a characteristic that all new development partners share is that of a dual identity of being a “donor” and “recipient” of development cooperation at the same time. For triangular cooperation the aspect of normative convergence or divergence is essential and will be discussed in section 3.

Post-colonial studies refer to the strong eurocentrism (or better Westcentrism to also include the US) in current mainstream international relations theories and overall social and political theory. Global power hierarchies seem to be stuck in post-World War II configurations of a modern West and a traditional South. While many social science theories originate in Europe and the West, this should not necessarily mean that no theorizing is done in other world regions. Orientalism by Edward Said (1978) is a foundational text for post-colonial discussion of the colonial, patronizing Western perceptions of the “Orient” and other world regions. Today, many recipients of development cooperation still criticize the paternalistic behavior of donor agencies in their countries. Post-colonial studies argue for the recognition and inclusion of various cultural components and academic histories of the Middle East, Asia, Latin America and Africa. It is necessary to deconstruct the discourse about self and other and arrive at an inclusive approach to international relations. Post-colonial discourses, science and knowledge should be included in theory development and the analysis of international relations and development (Grovoqui 2007). New norms and a different kind of universalism based on deliberation and contestation of diverse political actors are aimed at to overcome Western hegemony. Six (2009) provides an insightful analysis of the changing development principles and practices from a post-colonial perspective and discusses different meanings of development. The re-negotiation of norms and principles of development cooperation is

at the core of triangular cooperation. In order to successfully implement projects jointly, all three partners from the North and the South need to agree on a common set of principles, envisaged results and implementation procedures. However, one should guard against completely dismissing Westcentric principles and procedures; rather, a common denominator should be envisaged, as the case studies in section 3 will illustrate.

2.2 Perspectives from Development Theories

At the intersection between international relations and development theories is World Systems Theory (Wallerstein 1974), which moves the focus away from nation states and towards the structures of the international economic system and the division of labor in a capitalist global system. In separating the world in core, semi-periphery and periphery countries, exploitation of the periphery and semi-periphery is analyzed. Foreign aid and development cooperation is one instrument to maintain dependencies, as is also discussed in dependency theory (Frank 1979, Cardoso 1979, Amin 1972). Critiques of North-South cooperation often draw arguments from this strand of thinking when calling for an end of aid (e.g. Moyo 2009). Taking the classification of the three world regions, we could identify our three partners for triangular cooperation: one country from the core (OECD DAC partner), one country from the semi-periphery (new development partner) and one country from the periphery (beneficiary country). Yet, in world systems theory one would assume that the OECD DAC partner is engaging in this modality of cooperation in order to exploit the other two partners. Whilst in practice one partner might always gain more from TriCo than the others, one would not engage in triangular cooperation if there wasn't a certain shared interest in working in this kind of partnership. Many strands of world systems and dependency theories have problems explaining equal partnerships between the core and the periphery. This is a common denominator of all international relations theories. Beyond immediate power or geo-political and strategic interests, engaging in partnerships to enhance trust, come up with innovative new ideas and build international networks is not adequately addressed.

To analyze triangular cooperation, it does not suffice to only look at the relations and inter-actions between states, but it is essential to also look at the contents of cooperation. The key question for development theories has always been the eradication of poverty and the "best" way to achieve development. However, differing interpretations of development have existed over time as the following overview illustrates.

Table 1: Meanings of development over time

Period	Perspectives	Meanings of development
1800s	Classical political economy	Remedy for progress, catching up
1870 >	Latecomers	Industrialization, catching-up
1850 >	Colonial economics	Resource management, trusteeship
1940 >	Development economics	Economic growth – industrialization
1950 >	Modernization theory	Growth, political and social modernization
1960 >	Dependency theory	Accumulation – national, autocentric
1970 >	Alternative development	Human flourishing
1980 >	Human development	Capacitation, enlargement of people's choices
1980 >	Neoliberalism	Economic growth – structural reform, deregulation, liberalization, privatization
1990 >	Post-development	Authoritarian engineering, disaster
2000	Millennium Development Goals	Structural reforms

Source: Nederveen Pieterse (2010: 7)

Development theories from modernization theory (Rostow 1960) over dependency theory (Frank 1979, Cardoso 1979, Amin 1972) towards alternative approaches of development (Sen 2000) and post-development (Ziai 2007) towards the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and currently the post-2015 agenda of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) have all illustrated that understandings of development are dependent on trends in the discourse of the time, region (North or South) and focus on the economy or the state as the main actors. Modernization theory as one of the first serious development theories has been criticized strongly for its focus on the Western model of industrialization and modernization as the panacea for development issues in all other world regions. It has almost become mainstream development thinking that cultural aspects, traditional systems and various understanding of 'modernities' (Bhargava 2001) need to be incorporated in successful development approaches.

Alternative approaches to development, such as the human security paradigm or Amartya Sen's "Development as Freedom" as well as the discussions on MDGs and SDGs have provided important contributions and provoked debates on future paths to development. Yet, I would not regard them in the same line of theoretical work as other development or international relations theories. Post-development in its sharp critique of the Eurocentric term 'development', culture imperialistic economization of the world and the de-valuation of traditional ways of living and traditional knowledge, calls for a revitalization of traditionalism and the end of development (Ziai 2014). For the case of analyzing triangular cooperation, this might be too harsh in its essential critique of development. All three partners in TriCo would follow the same goal of a certain kind of development in the envisaged project. This may relate to and include traditional knowledge and practices, but Western experiences as well.

Discussions around differing paths to development along the Chinese economic focus or the Western governance approach are still at the core of discourses around NSC and SSC. It is unlikely that an encompassing understanding, which is shared in all world regions, will be found in the near future. Nederveen Pieterse (2010: 191) attempts it by claiming: "*This means redefining development as a collective learning experience. This includes learning about different understandings of improvement, as a collective inquiry into what constitutes the good life and sensible ways of getting there. Learning is open-ended. This also makes sense as a point about development methodology, in action and inquiry*". Learning is a theme of growing salience in the development discourse and thus could be shared by various actors. Yet, it is also a very blurry category and can easily be criticized.

"Beyond aid" (Janus/ Klingebiel/ Paulo 2013, 2014) has become a buzzword in attempting to look at development cooperation that reaches beyond formats of aid. In a dynamic context, the four dimensions of beyond aid include: finance, knowledge, regulation and actors. Yet, this again says little about the type of relationships, forms and contents of cooperation between the North and the South. This focus seems a bit shortsighted, when looking at the changes in development cooperation. The mindsets, instruments of cooperation and knowledge exchanges taking place need to be adapted to new formats of international cooperation, such as triangular cooperation, networks or other new modes of cooperation.

New partnerships are emerging which challenge current mainstream theorizing. Development thinking often remains stuck in traditional patterns of hegemony of the North over the South as the

excessive use of the terms donors, recipients and aid illustrate. This mapping of various theoretical approaches and their explanatory power for the topic of bridging NSC and SSC through triangular cooperation was not meant to provide answers from a theoretical perspective or to come up with a model to analyze the changes we are currently witnessing. Rather, it was an attempt of pointing towards shortcomings and the need to re-think international relations in a polycentric world order. Triangular cooperation as a modality of delivering aid is not significant enough to provoke a major theoretical shift, but it is a phenomenon that is receiving increasing international attention from a practitioner's perspective, which can hardly be explained theoretically. The empirical work in this paper can be considered as fieldwork in theory in looking at how from the empirical ground a new paradigm for theories of international relations and/ or development studies can be formed. In the following, bits and pieces from the theories introduced above will be taken up in order to illustrate potentials and pitfalls of different approaches. Yet, the quest for understanding and explaining new forms of cooperation between the North and the South remains a question for discussion.

3. Structures, Norms and Principles of North – South and South – South Cooperation: Divergence or Convergence?

In development cooperation there is an alleged divide between North-South– i.e. traditional partner - and South-South cooperation– i.e. new development partners. Both the North and the South have a long history of working in the field of development cooperation, e.g. first Indian assistance was to war torn Europe after the Second World War (Chaturvedi 2012). They have different experiences and different rhetorics which nourish varying perspectives. The challenge now is how these different approaches - that are informed by local contexts of the North and the South - can be clustered towards finding a common ground for cooperation. The Northern cooperation partners ask what is new about SSC and why it is *per se* more horizontal. Yet, emphasis should rather be put on how NSC and SSC could complement each other, e.g. in triangular cooperation. The Southern cooperation partners construct SSC as more horizontal, partnership oriented and different to NSC.

There is a limit to deconstructing old paradigms and here the question should rather be which lessons could be learned from both SSC and NSC – in terms of best practices as well as failures and critique. Thus, Abdenur and Moura Estevão Marques Da Fonseca (2013) point to the research gap of the North's role in South-South Cooperation and growing questioning of the normative dimension of Northern aid, which are increasingly being contested by Southern providers. The South African authors Amanda Lucey and Alexander O'Riordan (2014: 3) address this issue by emphasizing that *“South Africa should guard against dismissing northern approaches as being fundamentally different, and should rather use them for insights and lessons that could be drawn from them”*.

With global power shifts and new actors in development cooperation, the Paris principles of NSC have been criticized as a Western agenda and being donor driven (Tortora 2011). From a regime theoretical perspective, one could argue that the traditional North-South cooperation regime is challenged by an emerging South-South cooperation regime. The following table gives a very first brief glimpse of the North-South Cooperation Principles defined in the OECD DAC Paris Declaration (2005) and South-South Cooperation Principles.

Table 2: North-South and South-South Cooperation Principles at a Glance

Paris Declaration (2005)	South-South Cooperation Principles
Ownership: Developing countries set their own strategies for poverty reduction, improve their institutions and tackle corruption.	Demand driven cooperation
Alignment: <i>Donor countries align behind these objectives and use local systems.</i>	National ownership and independence
Harmonization: <i>Donor countries coordinate, simplify procedures and share information to avoid duplication.</i>	Equality
Managing for Results: <i>Developing countries and donors shift focus to development results and results get measured.</i>	Non-conditionality
Mutual accountability: <i>Donors and partners are accountable for development results.</i>	Non-interference in domestic affairs
	Mutual benefit
	Respect for national sovereignty

Source: Own compilation based on: OECD DAC Paris Declaration (2005), United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation (2014).

3.1 Reference Point for North-South Cooperation: OECD DAC Aid Effectiveness Debate

The implementation of the Paris Principles poses several challenges for international cooperation partners. It is necessary to put cooperation with partner countries on a basis that respects the countries' lead in determining their development paths. Practical experience has shown that the signature of an official project document by a high ranking official is a necessary, but not a sufficient condition to achieve the required ownership for its implementation. In this context it is not a solution to expect finding a certain form of external intervention that is neutral to the political processes in the partner country (Piefer 2014b). Rather, a deeper understanding of these processes that go beyond the common arguments on the political economy is actually needed:

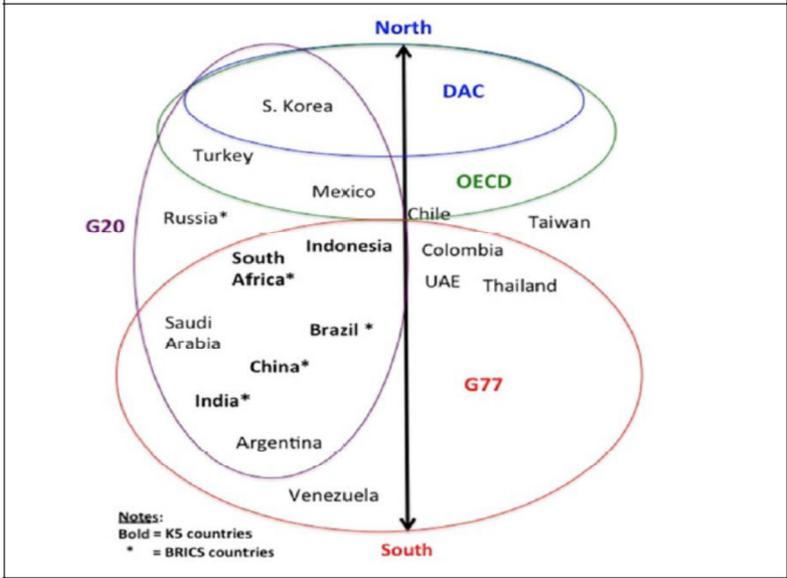
“While it is now something of an established truism to stress that politics matters for development, and that better frameworks for political and political economy analysis are needed to understand local political realities, the point needs to be noted again. However, if the international community increasingly acknowledges and seriously believes that politics matters, what is far more important than restating this refrain is how the international community can engage with these realities to support the emergence of and success of development leaderships and coalitions in the local political processes that drive institutional and policy formation in developing countries” (Leftwich/ Wheeler 2011: 7).

A need for traditional cooperation agencies and new development partners to understand each other, to discuss, meet and cooperate on an equal footing is essential. Often, the alleged gap between South-South and North-South Cooperation may not be as huge as expected (Tortora 2011). Taking the example of the two principles of ‘demand-driven’ (SSC) and ‘ownership’ (NSC), it can be noted that both put emphasis on the partner country leading the cooperation process. Most new development partners envision the partner country to voice a demand for cooperation which is aligned to its national development plan. One could argue that demand-driven mainly focusses on the way that project ideas/ developmental needs are put forward (usually in the form of a letter of request), while ownership is multi-faceted throughout the process. A project can be within the agreed cooperation areas between an OECD-DAC country and a developing country and thus not

initiated through a request from the beneficiary country, but within the strategic planning of both countries. Ownership may also be thought a step further by incorporating the whole project from the idea, to the process, implementation and the results, according to the cooperation capacities of the partner country. Yet, it is highly unlikely that the beneficiary country of development cooperation projects asserts active ownership in all phases of a project. Realistically, in practice, the two principles will follow very similar assumptions.

The principle of results-based management poses the question as to which level, results are desirable and how these could be measured. It distinguishes output and impact levels. The dilemma is that outputs can be easily measured, yet, this says little about the effect of the measures taken. For both SSC and NSC this dilemma remains and currently different methods of measuring results outside an OECD-DAC framework are being discussed. Evidence on comparing results of SSC and NSC in the same partner country is still scarce and there is need for deeper investigation. Besharati attempts to classify countries according to their position in the aid effectiveness debate, which may shed light on likely configurations for trilateral partnerships.

Figure 1: Emerging Economies in the Aid Effectiveness Debate



Source: Besharati (2013b: 30)

3.2 South – South Cooperation: Case Studies – Towards a Classification of New Development Partners⁶

In many countries very interesting, complex and high-performing structures are evolving around creating development partnerships, which are enriching the plurality of the international development cooperation architecture and will be decisive for the future path of international cooperation. Newly established international cooperation agencies are currently in an open and interesting learning process, which follows other rules than that of traditional donors under other conditions and circumstances. Traditional donors started their development cooperation activities under a post-colonial heading of solidarity and altruistic motivations combined with political (and

⁶ This is a short summary of some chapters of the study “Experiences of Middle-Income Countries in International Development Cooperation” prepared for AMEXCID and GIZ. For full study see: Piefer 2014a.

economic) interests and have since then headed towards more partnership oriented approaches and strong emphasis on ownership of partner countries. New development partners are taking a different path by starting on strong partnership orientation with ownership being enhanced through demand driven projects combined with the notion of South-South solidarity and economic and foreign policy interests. This combines theoretical aspects from such diverse theories as (neo-) realism, when it comes to explaining the strategic foreign policy interest in development cooperation with post-colonial and constructivist approaches of de-constructing established institutional mechanisms and creating a new agency based on the individual identity of the respective countries. A brief summary of two case studies from Brazil and South Africa will allow further exemplary insights into the current developments of two new development partners.

3.2.1 Case Study Brazil

Brazil aims at positioning itself as leader of the South and follows other new development partners' approaches of carving out its own development cooperation model, rather than adapting Western approaches in a post-colonial reading of solidarity among Southern nations. Yet, although the BRICS evolved to be an important cooperation forum, Brazil distances itself from e.g. Chinese modes of cooperation and rather follows a way between the Western and the Asian 'realpolitik' model, drawing from both and combining it with specific Brazilian experiences. Brazil has a long history of very diverse South-South cooperation based on its own development experiences and technological expertise. Brazilian success stories, such as the "Bolsa Familia" or "Programa Fome Zero" as well as its policies and actions fighting HIV/ AIDS or its expertise in the agricultural and energy sector sparked many countries worldwide to ask for Brazilian support in their own development.

Brazilian development cooperation is characterized by a strong institutional fragmentation and a plurality of actors, which is due to the fact that there is neither a legal basis for development cooperation, nor a budget allocated to aid activities (Cabral/ Weinstock 2010). The Brazilian Constitution only foresees the Brazilian budget to be spent for the development of Brazil. It excludes the transfer of material, financial or other means to third countries. Thus, Brazilian aid is largely *ad hoc*, and legally usually based on bilateral cooperation agreements, which have been ratified by the Parliament or on initiatives based on decrees by the President. Generally, the Presidency plays the most important role and different Presidents from Fernando Henrique Cardoso, over Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva to current President Dilma Rousseff have formed development cooperation according to their political aims and governance styles. Besides the Presidency, the Ministry of External Relations (MRE)/ Itamaraty is a key player for Brazil's foreign and aid policies. Within the last years, most ministries have internationalized their activities and created special departments for international cooperation.

The Brazilian Agency for Cooperation (Agência Brasileira de Cooperação – ABC), a department within the Itamaraty, is responsible for the coordination of Brazilian development cooperation. In most cases, ABC does not implement projects but is rather acting on the political steering level. Line ministries, government agencies or other specialized institutions are implementing partners. Under former President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva and ABC Director Marco Farani the scale and scope of projects as well as the budget increased tremendously under the rhetoric of "*diplomacia solidaria*". Dana de la Fontaine (2013) also observes that the promotion of South-South Cooperation in Brazil

could be seen as a de-ideologization of prior 'Third-World Ideology', especially under Cardoso. Brazil is actively promoting its own economic and trade interests and follows the idea of benefiting from increased development in its partner countries, especially in Latin America and the Caribbean. However, current President Dilma Rousseff attributes less importance to foreign policy and cooperation with other world regions than her predecessor Lula (Interviews in Brazil, December 2013). Combined with the change of ABC directors to Ambassador Fernando Abreu, this political shift has led to some changes, such as budget cuts and a stronger political orientation on domestic issues. Furthermore, during the African Union Summit in Ethiopia in summer 2013, President Dilma Rousseff announced a reform of ABC and voiced the possibility to organize it under the Ministry for Development, Industry and Commerce (Ministério do Desenvolvimento, Indústria e Comércio Exterior – MDIC). Until the writing of this paper unclarity about the details of this reform persisted and it is likely that the issue will only be taken up again after the elections in October 2014.

Unlike in development agencies of OECD DAC partners, ABC does not have genuine development cooperation staff. Technical experts are usually "borrowed" from other line ministries and thus, also paid by other ministries (in the so-called "*horas técnicas*") and only granted leave from their positions for the duration of certain project missions. Furthermore, a characteristic of ABC is that it has a special implementation agreement with UNDP. Brazil pays 90% of the funds and UNDP calculates its contribution and overheads with 10%. Thus, the implementation capacities of UNDP, as a major international aid provider, are being used in order to deliver Brazilian aid and ABC staff sometimes has short term consultant contracts with UNDP. Cabral and Weinstock (2010: 9) estimate the UNDP hired staff to make up appr. 50%, the diplomatic Itamaraty staff 40% and appointees of the Director to be around 8%. Also, they estimate the permanence of an ABC employee to be 2 – 2.5 years in average, which means an extremely high turnover rate.

Brazil's motivations to engage in international development cooperation are mainly along domestic, regional and international political goals. Domestically, Brazil shows its own constituents that the implementation of successful development models in Brazil can be replicated and have a meaningful impact in other countries (Abdenur 2007). Certainly, there are still major domestic development problems within Brazil and it needs to justify spending taxpayers' money not for development within the country, but abroad, yet, there is no strong national discourse on international development cooperation thus far. It is more framed within wider foreign policy goals and a post-colonial rhetoric of solidarity. Moreover, there are strong cultural ties, e.g. with Africa due to the large African population in Brazil and its cultural proximity to Portuguese speaking African countries (PALOP) is greatly valued by the partners. Looking with a (neo-) realist lens at power aspects, the role of Brazil as regional power in Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC) is strengthened by engaging in development cooperation with neighbouring countries and other countries in LAC. Globally, Brazil is already playing a major role besides the Asian emerging powers (China and India) by using development cooperation as a means of "soft power" to enhance own interests on the global level. Yet, in comparison to China and India, Brazilian economic and business interests are not as evident. Certainly, Brazil also follows the principle of mutual benefit and its companies are strongly engaged in technical (e.g. Odebrecht in the construction sector) and financial cooperation

According to former ABC Director Farani (2010), the following six principles guide Brazilian development cooperation:

- 1) “Diplomacia solidária”: Especially under President Lula the solidarity principle gained relevance and also entered the training of new diplomats.
- 2) Demand driven approach: Brazil does not follow its own strategy of cooperation with other countries in certain sectors, but reacts to their demands for support.
- 3) Recognition of local expertise and adoption of Brazilian experiences
- 4) No imposition of conditionalities
- 5) No attachment of commercial or profit interests
- 6) Non-interference in internal affairs of partner countries: Yet, under former President Lula, Brazil has adapted this principle of the Non-Aligned Movement to a Brazilian context. Whilst, non-interference is still followed in general, Brazil now talks of the principle of “não-indiferença”/ non-indifference, which is a quite elegant maneuver around highly controversial and normative debates around non-interference vs. conditionality.

Since Brazilian development cooperation was systematically analyzed and evaluated by the Institute for Applied Economic Research (IPEA) for the first time in December 2010, most data on the volume of Brazilian development cooperation, evolution over time, distribution according to sectors, numbers of projects etc. is of 2009. The IPEA (2010) study estimates Brazilian aid in the timespan 2005-2009 to be approximately USD 1.42 billion (2.9 billion Reais). For technical cooperation it estimates numbers to be around USD 125 million from 2005-2009. Yet, all of these numbers tend to underestimate the real scale of resources deployed in technical cooperation, as they account for resources invested by ABC only and do not include the contributions of expertise (hora técnica) provided in-kind by many Brazilian cooperating institutions and other government ministries and agencies. Costa Vaz/ Inoue (2007) estimate the total technical cooperation expenditures to be ten times higher. According to an article in *The Economist* (2010) the total of Brazilian technical cooperation could be around USD 1 billion. Yet, under President Dilma Rousseff development cooperation budgets have declined significantly.

In terms of regional distribution of projects, the majority is implemented in Africa (especially the PALOP countries), followed by Latin America and the Caribbean and Asia (Cabral/ Weinstock 2010). Regarding thematic focus, Brazilian technical cooperation is mainly in the agriculture, health and education sector, which corresponds to the domestic expertise in having drafted and implemented successful development programmes, such as bolsa familia (education and nutrition) or HIV/AIDS prevention. With the expertise of international renowned agencies, such as EMBRAPA in the agriculture sector, FIOCRUZ (health) or SENAI (professional training) Brazilian technical cooperation delivers innovative and technological advanced solutions adapted to the domestic context of other developing countries. A current trend could go towards increasing projects related to energy and biofuels (Costa Vaz/ Inoue 2007).

Brazil is at an interesting crossroad at the moment. The cooperation agency ABC is well established since 1987 and has developed a creative model of engaging in technical cooperation without a legal basis. Since 2012, Brazilian development cooperation is undergoing a crisis in terms of budget cuts of up to 50% and political confusion about the future of ABC. Whilst there is little clarity on a prospective new model of ABC, it is clear that there is a strong need for reform in order to make Brazilian cooperation more effective and efficient. Great attention is given to triangular cooperation, especially with Japan and Germany.

3.2.2 Case Study South Africa

Since the peaceful transition from apartheid to one of the world's most progressive constitutional democracies, the Republic of South Africa is addressing issues of poverty, inequality and economic development internally and increasingly externally. Its own development path of a rise in income per capita by over 30 per cent since 1994, employment increasing by 4 million, access to housing, electricity, water and sanitation having doubled and the creation of a new and vibrant set of democratic institutions, offers valuable experiences for other countries on the continent.

As of now, South African development cooperation is largely fragmented, primarily reactive, uncoordinated and following *ad hoc* approach to providing assistance to the African continent (Hargovan 2012: 5). Besharati (2013a: 24) remarks "for the average South African on the street, providing aid to Africa is not always the most intuitive thing for the government to do". South Africa follows not only altruistic motivations in its engagement on the African continent – although these have played a major role in terms of the political project of an "*African Renaissance*"⁷ and solidarity among African nations. It is also a tool of soft diplomacy to promote foreign and economic policy objectives as well as pragmatic reasons, such as countering instability in the region, which results in high migration to South Africa. This is mirrored in Nelson Mandela's words of "we cannot be an island of prosperity surrounded by a sea of poverty", which was echoed again in President Zuma's State of the Nation Address in 2013 (ibid.: 25).

This thought is also taken up in most South African policy strategies, which have a strong focus on African regional development. The South African Medium Term Strategic Framework (2009-2014 Planning Document, The Presidency⁸) provides a guideline for planning and resource allocation across all spheres of government. It outlines South Africa's present and future developmental partnerships, within the framework of pursuing foreign policy objectives, and includes the following areas of strategic focus: continued prioritization of the African Continent; improving political and economic integration of the South African Development Community (SADC) ; strengthening South-South Relations; strengthening relations with Strategic formations of the North; strengthening Political and Economic Relations; and Participate in the Global System of Governance.

No accurate numbers for the total amount of South African development cooperation are available. Also, it depends if transfers within the Southern African Customs Union (SACU) are included in the calculation, which would make numbers higher than the estimated USD 100 million for the fiscal year 2011/2012 (Smith/ Fordelone/ Zimmermann 2010: 5). Furthermore, much cooperation is provided in kind as contributions of staff from line Departments, which is not accounted for in monetary terms. More recent studies estimated South African development co-operation to be 0.7% to 1% of the country's GNI, making South Africa a top-performing country in ODA compared with most traditional cooperation partners. With the creation of SADPA greater clarity and transparency of development funding is expected.

⁷ The concept of the African Renaissance, first articulated by Cheikh Anta Diop in a series of essays beginning in 1946, has been popularized by the South African President Thabo Mbeki, during his tenure. It is a concept, that African people and nations overcome the current challenges confronting the continent and achieve cultural, scientific and economic renewal. It continues to be a key part of the post-apartheid intellectual agenda. See also: Piefer/ Knodt (2012: 174-175)

⁸ Available at www.gov.za.

In the past, there has been no central agency coordinating the efforts of the various actors involved (ibid.). This is due to change with the official promulgation of the Southern African Development Partnership Agency (SADPA) in June 2013. The plans for SADPA to be operational have been postponed until after the elections in May 2014 and as of the writing of this paper, the SADPA personnel has not been chosen yet, so that one can only predict the timeframe for these structural changes to be implemented.

The structure of development cooperation institutions in South Africa is quite complex: National Treasury (NT) has a coordinating function in terms of managing ODA inflows and funds disbursement, the Department of International Relations and Cooperation (DIRCO) is responsible for strategy and foreign policy formulation, and other line ministries are involved in the implementation of development cooperation projects. Both NT and DIRCO are on the advisory committee for the African Renaissance Fund (ARF), which makes up the largest – yet not only – part of South African development cooperation. The committee makes recommendations, in concurrence, for the funding of specific projects and is responsible for releasing funds from the ARF (Besharati 2013a). All South African Departments are eligible to tap into the ARF for international cooperation projects in Africa. Furthermore, the Presidency and the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) play a significant role in development cooperation.

Having a closer look at the most important actors it can be noted that DIRCO will play the leading role as it represents South African interests on the international level. It is by constitution the only department that can sign international agreements between South Africa and other international partners. SADPA is organized under DIRCO and through its vast network of Embassies around the world, it provides space for potential SADPA project managers to monitor projects in different countries (ibid.: 47). Yet, the technical expertise to implement development cooperation projects does not lie in DIRCO, but rather in Treasury, the line ministries and other sectoral institutions. Due to the nature of diplomatic staff, the turnover in terms of responsibilities for development cooperation is very high, which is an obstacle to continuity and effectiveness of development cooperation. SADPA will need to take this into account in its personnel set-up (ibid.: 47-48).

Regarding implementation, mainly two models can be observed currently: First, line ministries, such as the Department of Public Service and Administration (DPSA) are implementing development cooperation projects, e.g. in Tanzania, by sending their staff as advisors and offering South African expertise. Second, sectoral institutions, universities, research institutions and civil society organizations are implementing partners for development cooperation projects. If such a specialized institution is offering e.g. trainings in other African countries, it is usually backed by a South African Department in order to have the link to government.

When drafting the policy documents and planning the institutional set-up of SADPA, the South African government followed a very pragmatic approach of exchanging experiences on organizational structures, principles, instruments and project management with various traditional and development partners, such as Norway, UK, Germany, Brazil, Mexico and others. The intention was not to invent the wheel anew, but to rather draw on existing best practices while still creating a new type of development institution and taking into account the criticisms on existing approaches by traditional donors. This is also in line with SADPA's broader vision to establish an agency suitable to

the post-Busan process of partnership between multiple actors. A critical function for SADPA is to harness the collective expertise available (locally, internationally and that of an intended developing partner) to develop strategies and programmes that serve as a catalyst for development. Catalytic initiatives could be defined as: “helping to unlock the potential of a country or region, multiply impact of projects, [they] should be replicable and up scalable⁹”.

In terms of principles applied in current (pre-SADPA) development cooperation and the discourse on South-South Cooperation vs. Paris Declaration a reflective approach of incorporating OECD DAC and South-South principles for its own development cooperation can be observed. Dependent on the circumstances, SADPA aims at considering different forms of partnerships, which opens up cooperation opportunities for various kinds of partners. The instruments used are adapted to the specific context and include bilateral, trilateral, multilateral, decentralized and multi-party approaches in financial and technical assistance (Casoo 2012: 8).

Table 3: SADPA Framework – Draft

DC POLICY AREAS	SADPA APPROACH
PRINCIPLES	Solidarity; cooperation over competition, mutual benefit, equality, national ownership, creation of viable states based on self-reliance, sustainability – Philosophy of Ubuntu
AREAS OF SUPPORT	Includes both regional priorities and individual country priorities; both DAC and Non-DAC sectors
STRATEGIC APPROACH	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Demand driven priorities – co-crafted; mainstream issues; capacity focus •People Centred Development – development of societies; benefit people •Partnerships – Co-ownership, mutual benefit ; North and South; S-S; and Non-Gov •Catalytic initiatives – quality of prog rather than quality of aid; unlock potential •Development effectiveness – national ownership, sustainability, capacity generating, Paris Declaration •Results Based Management – results orientated
IMPLEMENTATION APPROACH	A flexible framework with many different development cooperation modalities and partnerships, but with good governance elements embedded in the methodology
INSTRUMENTS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Mainly grants & technical coop. Loans, JVs & PPP's – with commercial sectors •budget, sector, programme, project, basket
ROLE OF PARTNERS	All partners must make a contribution & take responsibility for programme, and results
CONDITIONALITY	Development prog must support the partner/ region, procurement within the region; other conditionalities – to be determined on a case-by-case basis.
QUALITY ASSURANCE & M&E	Strong focus on rules for accountability, good governance, reporting and monitoring, knowledge management and evaluation (within limits); reporting to SA Parliament & public

Source: Casoo 2012: 9

Although open for other areas of cooperation based on the demand voiced by the partner country, South Africa has consistently been involved in projects geared towards: regional integration, peace, security and stability, post-conflict reconstruction, strengthening relations with Africa and the global South, promoting good governance; and humanitarian assistance (Besharati 2013a: 29). These are most likely to remain with SADPA and are mirrored in SADPA’s nine programmes proposed in the current strategic framework:

- Programme 1: Humanitarian Assistance
- Programme 2: Peacekeeping
- Programme 3: Elections Support
- Programme 4: IBSA Poverty Alleviation Fund
- Programme 5: Bilateral Partnerships

⁹ Definition given by a SAPDA official in a meeting with German partners

- Programme 6: Trilateral Partnerships
- Programme 7: Regional Partnerships
- Programme 8: Decentralised Partnerships
- Programme 9: Multilateral Partnerships

The geographic priority of South Africa's development cooperation has always been the African continent with 70% going to the SADC region (96% if SACU transfers are included). The rest goes to African post-conflict regions (e.g. DRC, Sudan, Burundi, Rwanda and Somalia), where it can draw on its own experiences with mediation and reconciliation. Countries outside the African continent are those that share ideological links and liberation struggles, e.g. Palestine and Cuba. DIRCO has indicated that some small assistance could be extended to Asia and the Caribbean, despite the overall focus being on Africa (ibid.: 29-39).

SADPA's overall aim is moving away from "traditional" modes of delivery and cooperation forms towards "multi-party partnerships", without clear donors and recipients, which always imply an unequal relationship. This should be indicative of a new phase of international development cooperation within the post-Busan process. These multi-party partnerships may result out of trilateral cooperation between two partners in development from the North and South with a beneficiary country and include further partners on each side of the triangle. Also, possibilities could be carved out for cooperation with regional organizations, the private sector, foundations, think tanks and others. South Africa is involved in an interesting process of initiating a new development agency with an ambitious vision, a robust policy framework, encompassing development cooperation strategies for the African continent and an overall pragmatic approach. Furthermore, the inclusion of the private sector, civil society and academia are envisaged from the beginning of SADPA's operations.

3.2.3 Towards a Classification of New Development Partners

The above two cases have illustrated two very diverse paths to establishing development cooperation agencies and engaging in SSC. It is not within the scope of this paper to give an encompassing overview of all examples, so that conclusions will be drawn from a previous study (see Piefer 2014a). Classifications of 'new partners in development' or 'emerging donors' usually take the OECD DAC as reference point as well as their history of engaging in development cooperation. Referring to the latter, some authors also talk about a "second generation" or even a "third wave" of smaller donors vs. the larger (re-)emerging donors, like China, India and Brazil (Schulz 2010). Cases of OECD DAC partner approaches could not be analyzed in detail within the scope of this study. A comparison along the aspects included in the brief case studies on Brazil and South Africa would shed further light on commonalities and differences.

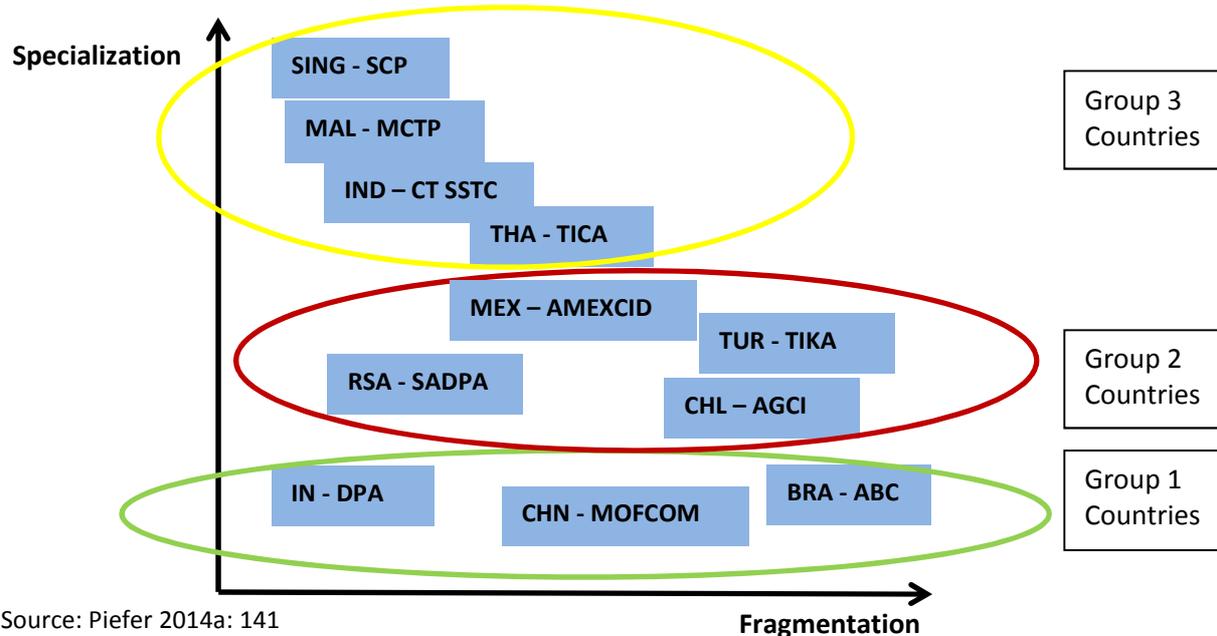
As with any attempt of classifying countries into clear-cut groups, the endeavor to do so is not easy and can always be contested. In the following, I will propose a classification deduced from the empirical findings of a study comparing eleven countries (Brazil, South Africa, India, Chile, Turkey, Mexico, China, Thailand, Malaysia, Singapore, and Indonesia) and addressing the following aspects:

- Overview of country's role, approach and strategy of development cooperation

- Cooperation patterns including budget/ disbursements for development cooperation, principles of delivering assistance, regional and sectoral focus of projects.
- Institutional set-up and organizational structures of development cooperation with special focus on the development cooperation/ partnership agencies
- Project types ranging from bi-, tri-, multilateral as well as regional and multi-party projects and project cycle management models
- Specific trends, new modes of deliver and multilateral initiatives

Along the question of agency development and institutional fragmentation as well as specialization, the rich data derived from these case studies was compared and clustered. In this regard institutional fragmentation refers to the amount of actors involved in development cooperation in the respective country. Specialization looks at the modalities of delivering aid, topics and areas of cooperation of the respective development cooperation agencies. This mapping is not meant as valuating or promoting one model over another; rather, it illustrates the spectrum of possible approaches.

Figure 2: Comparison of agencies' institutional set-up between fragmentation and specialization



Source: Piefer 2014a: 141

Group 1 countries like China, India and Brazil tend to emphasize stronger that their approach is completely different to that of traditional donors and are aiming at developing new models of cooperation. Motivations range from economic interests over foreign policy goals to solidarity among developing countries. The cases of China and India give evidence of “package deals” of loans, technical assistance and resource or other business agreements. For these countries regional stability is also at the core of their engagement in the Asian region. All three countries are strong players in their regions as well as in Africa and build on long term partnerships based on historical, ideological or linguistic (e.g. PALOP countries and Brazil) ties.

Group 2 countries like Mexico, Turkey, South Africa and Chile can serve as a bridge between different regions and interests. In the cases of Turkey and South Africa both are perceived as “big brothers” and follow a rhetoric of solidarity among brothers (and sisters) in solving developmental challenges. Whilst Turkey is an OECD member and reports its development cooperation budgets to

the DAC, South Africa is open for inputs from the OECD DAC but follows the overall vision of creating a new kind of development agency incorporating best practices from the DAC and new development partners. The rationale for development cooperation is mainly on regional stability and enhancing influence in the region. Yet, Turkey is also active in most other regions, especially in Africa, and besides engaging in humanitarian aid, Turkey also combines business interests with development cooperation on the continent. The Chilean and Mexican cases have shown orientation along successful domestic development programmes and both countries face the same challenge as Turkey - being an OECD member as well, yet, they are also looking for allies on the Latin American continent or across the Pacific. Mexico has been a key actor in the DAC external relations policy and there is strong collaboration and dialogue in many issues, as e.g. hosting the Global Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation in April 2014 demonstrates.

Group 3 countries are carving out niches for their specific input to international development. The Southeast Asian countries follow a more narrow approach of focusing solely on trainings and some very small bi- and trilateral technical assistance projects. Furthermore, they aim at building up regional knowledge hubs especially in Thailand and Indonesia.

From a constructivist view, regarding the normative orientation, it can be observed that all countries follow principles of South-South Cooperation, lay emphasis on non-conditionality, solidarity and demand driven approaches in horizontal partnerships between developing countries, rather than hierarchical donor-recipient relationship. The case of Brazil is interesting as it follows all of the above mentioned and in terms of non-interference in internal affairs has constructed the principle of “*não-indiferença*”/ non-indifference. Comparing this classification with Besharati’s mapping of country positions in the aid effectiveness debate, both come to a similar conclusion: Group 2 countries are closest in terms of normative orientation, also due to the OECD membership of Mexico, Chile and Turkey. Group 3 countries, such as Thailand and Singapore also strive for an OECD model, but hold up SSC principles as well. Group 1 countries are most cautious about their acknowledgement of OECD DAC principles and aim at shaping a new development cooperation architecture along SSC principles.

4. Triangular Cooperation as a Bridge between North-South and South-South Cooperation

Besides all alleged divides and normative divergences and differing understandings of development, partners in South-South and North-South Cooperation follow the same goal of addressing global developmental challenges and working for the benefit of a developing partner country. Thus, their approaches should not be regarded as competitive challenges, but rather as an opportunity to carve out complementarities and synergies. One modality of combining these efforts is triangular cooperation. A first question in this regard is how a project idea actually materializes into a trilateral partnership, which interest the partners have and which roles they take up.

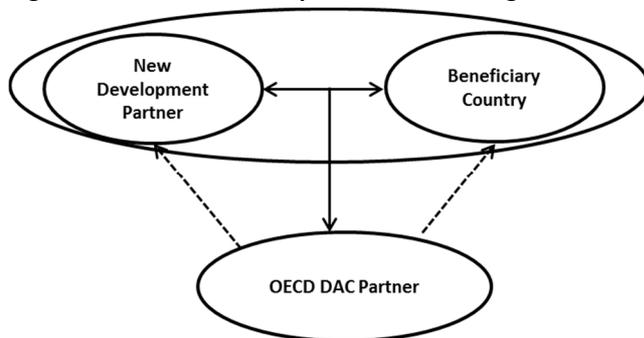
4.1 Initiation Possibilities, Interests and Roles in Triangular Cooperation

Most triangular cooperation projects follow the South-South Cooperation principle of demand-driven engagement. Thus, the project idea should be formulated and communicated to one of the two providers of cooperation and then the decision will be taken, if this issue will be addressed bilaterally or trilaterally. From the initial idea to actual implementation many steps need to be taken and various possibilities to initiate a triangular cooperation project exist. Generally, four different

possibilities of initiating new triangular cooperation projects can be empirically detected from existing international experiences.

In the first case, the new development partner and the beneficiary country have already engaged in this kind or a similar project and ask the OECD DAC partner to join. The value added of having an OECD DAC partner on board, can be seen in the additional funding for projects of the new development partner. Largely, the understanding of triangular cooperation is that of funding South-South cooperation. This approach has been followed by the Japanese International Cooperation Agency (JICA) for many years and is one possible model of triangular cooperation. It is up to the new development partner to decide on a case by case basis, if engagement in this kind of cooperation suits the individual project design best. Yet, having the aforementioned definition of TriCo in mind, ideally, an OECD DAC partner should also contribute through other means than only financially.

Figure 3: South-South Cooperation as Starting Point



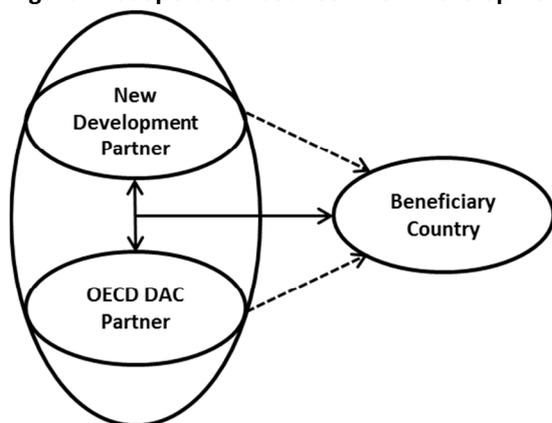
Source: own visualization, based on: Langendorf/ Lázaro 2012: 62

In a second case, the new development partner and the OECD DAC partner are already engaging in a project and extend their experiences to a beneficiary country, which has asked for support in the same or a similar topic. In this constellation, it is interesting to discuss possible motivations of the OECD DAC partner. For many international cooperation partners, triangular cooperation is a way to maintain cooperation with a new development partner despite phasing out bilateral development cooperation (see Ashoff 2010). Thus, from the perspective of some OECD DAC partners, interest in triangular cooperation with a new development partner is twofold: First, putting relations with the new development partner on a new partnership oriented footing in times of phasing-out bilateral development cooperation. Second, strengthening the new development partner's capacities to deliver effective development cooperation is part of many international cooperation partners' approaches.

The new development partner can also serve as hub of experts on certain topics, so that cooperation can be more efficient, cost effective and adapted to the respective continent's development context, than the services of their Northern colleagues. Thus, one respondent in South Africa (January 2014) called it a "relationship model". As such, the relationship between the two providers of cooperation is at the core for many OECD DAC partners. This runs the risk of losing the development results and aims in the third partner country out of sight. Both aspects need to be balanced in order to satisfy all partners' interests, demands and needs.

There might be a perception that the OECD DAC partner could become too dominant in triangular cooperation, if it is given more responsibilities in project implementation. Experiences of “donors” coming to developing countries and behaving in a paternalistic manner and as if they knew how to solve all the problems seem to have left deep impressions, especially on the African continent, as the discussions e.g. of James Shikwati or Dambisa Moyo (2009) in their critique of the “aid industry” illustrate. In these cases new development partners call for the OECD DAC partner to follow a more progressive approach and trust in their capacities to deliver effective projects and for minimal involvement in project implementation. Yet, it also needs to be acknowledged that the structures and networks of OECD DAC partners, e.g. country offices or Embassies, in the third country were beneficial for the projects.

Figure 4: Cooperation between New Development Partner and OECD DAC Partner as Starting Point

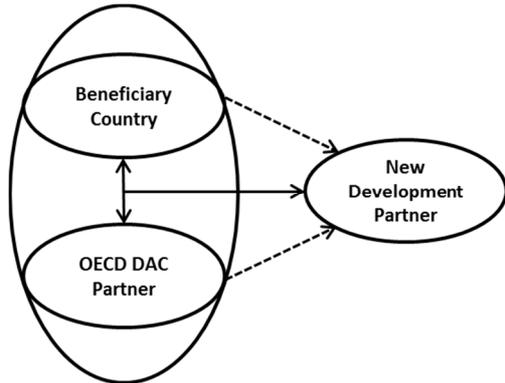


Source: own visualization, based on: Langendorf/ Lázaro 2012: 64

A third case can be that the new development partner joins an existing bilateral cooperation between a beneficiary country and an OECD DAC partner. An advantage of having another partner on board of triangular cooperation projects was seen by some respondents in the possibility to dilute perceptions of one of the cooperation partners having the potential to impose its ideas on the continent. By using the umbrella of another cooperation partner, the new development or the OECD DAC partner’s approaches may be perceived differently. At times the engagement of new development partners is viewed sceptically as a means to enhance the new cooperation provider’s strategic power or its access to scarce resources in third countries. If the OECD DAC partner has already established a good reputation and trustful relations with the beneficiary country, its cooperation with a new development partner will most likely be viewed in more a positive light. Also, we can think of a “double umbrella function” because it can often be observed that both partners span an umbrella over the other cooperation provider. Whenever the umbrella function is used, it is important to clarify the scope of the umbrella. It is not in the interest of a triangular cooperation to promote mere economic and resource interests of one of the partners. Thus, this balancing act needs to be handled with great diplomatic and role sensitivity (Piefer/ Knodt 2012: 173-174).

Furthermore, the beneficiary country is interested in replicating successful development models, programmes, reforms etc. from the new development partner. Thus, the cooperation with an OECD DAC partner can serve as starting point to incorporate specific expertise of the new development partner in order to achieve tailor-made solutions for the developmental context of the beneficiary country.

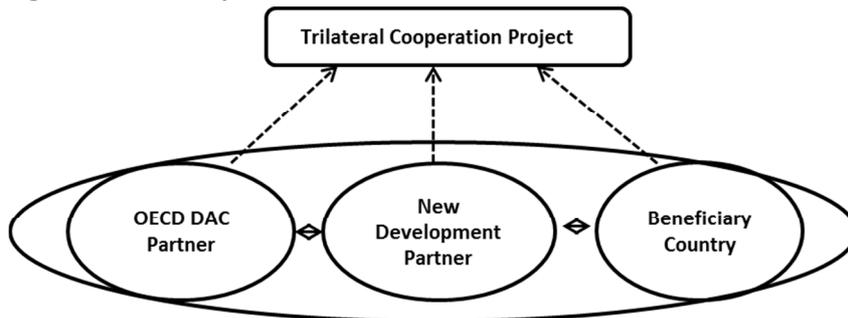
Figure 5: North-South Cooperation as Starting Point



Source: own visualization, based on: Langendorf/ Lázaro 2012: 62:67

In a fourth case, project initiation follows a more bottom-up dynamic. On a technical level, three experts from a beneficiary country, a new development partner and an OECD DAC country might meet at an event and exchange experiences and ideas on a certain topic. From this initial coincidental meeting, concrete project ideas arise and with high-level political backing from all three sides, a joint trilateral cooperation project is initiated.

Figure 6: Bottom-Up Initiation



Source: own visualization

Having assessed these aspects from a more general and abstract level, concrete cases from Brazil and South Africa will be analyzed in the following section based on the general elaborations of Brazilian and South African development cooperation in section 3.

4.2 Triangular Cooperation Cases from Brazil

It is noteworthy that in 2010 about one fifth of Brazilian technical cooperation projects were delivered in the mode of triangular cooperation. In 2010, ABC managed 88 such initiatives across 27 countries (Cabral/ Weinstock 2010). Among the beneficiaries are Latin America and the Caribbean as well as the PALOP countries in Africa and Timor Leste. A wide range of bilateral and multilateral donor agencies cooperate trilaterally with Brazil. These are usually governed through Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs). In the German case this MoU was further extended by agreeing on a planning document, which laid out more specific procedures on the operational level. The agreed principles for triangular cooperation between Brazil and Germany are: “a) ownership of the third country for the overall process; b) joint action (planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation)

of the Parties [Brazil and Germany] and the third country; and c) result orientation¹⁰. These principles seem neither strongly influenced by SSC nor NSC; rather, they are based on on-the-ground-implementation. None of them are highly contested by one of the partners and the additional documents underline the strong role of the third country.

Through trilateral cooperation, Brazil also aims at uplifting the partnership with traditional donors to a more equal level. As partners, emphasis is laid on jointly implementing projects and sharing all costs and responsibilities. In some cases the Brazilian financial contribution is 70% of the project costs. Having started with smaller isolated TriCo activities, in the long run these are gradually giving way to larger and better structured projects with long-term timeframes ('projetos estruturantes') in order to enhance scope and impact of Brazilian triangular cooperation (Cabral/ Weinstock 2010: 12).

Example 1: Disaster risk management between Brazil – Mozambique - Germany

The Trilateral Cooperation project on disaster risk management provides Brazilian and German technology to measure the water levels in rivers in Mozambique. Whilst Germany has developed high technological solutions, Brazilian experts have contributed their knowledge and adapted them to the climatic conditions of Mozambique. What both cooperation providers have not taken into account is that the measurements are to be transmitted via internet. This poses problems in the Mozambican context due to power cuts and no consistent availability of internet connections. Then, the Mozambican experts came up with the idea to adapt the technology in a way for the results to be transmitted via the cell phone network, a solution that works well in the African country's context. Thus, this project is an example of solutions only being found through contributions of all three partners. It would have not been possible by only working with one cooperation provider and the Mozambican experts, as each brought in specific, complementary experiences and expertise (Müller/Piefer 2015).

This seems like an ideal example to illustrate the value added of joint learning and coming up with solutions adapted to the specific context of the third country. Many respondents in Brasilia and Maputo have also emphasized the advantage of cultural proximity between Brazil and Mozambique. Although, many Brazilian partners at times seemed to have underestimated the importance of adapting solutions to the specific Mozambican context, they were open and willing to learn together with their Mozambican and German partners. For the Mozambican side, the aspect of a shared language was regarded as especially important.

Example 2: Brazil – Mozambique – European Union Triangular Cooperation on Biofuels

Although triangular cooperation in the biofuels sector has been controversial and heavily debated in the EU, a first project between Mozambique, Brazil and the EU had been planned in this sector. Brazil is aiming for its second generation biofuels to be certified according to EU standards in order to have better market access opportunities not only in Europe, but also in Africa and Asia. Reluctance to the full certification process can be observed from the EU side, so that Brazil now aims for an equivalence agreement (Interviews, Brasilia, December 2013). The latest Joint Action Plan (2012-2014), reiterated at the EU-Brazil Summit in 2013, both countries envisage joint trilateral cooperation projects in the bioenergy sector in Africa. A first feasibility study has been conducted for cooperation

¹⁰ Principles were defined in the Brazilian-German Memorandum of Understanding (MoU), signed in August 2010.

with Mozambique, but the project was put on ice due to EU concerns in terms of biofuels standards. Furthermore, the EU side criticized that the feasibility study was conducted under the lens of private sector interests. It was financed by Brazil and jointly conducted by the Getulio Vargas Foundation and Vale, one of the largest Brazilian private companies aiming at expanding its investments and projects on the African continent. Thus, for Brazil the value added of cooperating with the EU was to implicitly have its biofuels standards certified. If the EU accepts Brazilian standards in a joint project with Mozambique, this opens more doors to the African and maybe in the long run to the Asian market as well (see Knodt/Müller/Piefer 2015). The latest EU-Brazil Summit Declaration from February 2014 illustrates this by mentioning only the trilateral initiatives with EU member states: “We expressed our support for Brazil’s South-South development co-operation model and recognized the achievements of the trilateral co-operation initiatives developed between EU members and Brazil in benefit of developing countries” (Council of the European Union 2014: 10).

This is an interesting example of normative divergence between the two “donors” in this planned triangular cooperation. Before even entering the phase of negotiating the principles of cooperation in joint TriCo projects, a clash could be witnessed. Apparently, the European Union had underestimated this issue and planned the normative negotiation process to run vice versa: First, by cooperating with Brazil, the EU aimed for Brazilian development cooperation principles to be stronger aligned to OECD DAC principles. Second, in the biofuels sector the EU aimed for Brazil to accept and take up its biofuels sustainability standards, rather than implicitly agreeing to the Brazilian standards in joint projects. Generally, “the debate is infused by a discourse, that by juxtaposing ‘North’ versus ‘South’ and ‘traditional’ versus ‘emerging’ players, places Brazil and the EU on opposing sides” (Cabral 2014:5). Although, Brazil is one of the EU’s closest partners in terms of shared norms and values, in the debate around triangular cooperation, they seem to have difficulties overcoming normative divergences. It seems in this case, that the third country, Mozambique, is rather a play-ball between two greater powers. The strategies and interests of the EU and Brazil are at the center of this TriCo and the role of the third country would certainly need to be enhanced.

4.3 Triangular Cooperation Cases from South Africa

As mentioned above, trilateral cooperation is one of the nine programmes proposed within SADPA’s strategic framework. It is already an important component of South African development cooperation and TriCo projects are currently implemented with GIZ, DFID, Canada and USAID in several African countries (e.g. Tanzania, Kenya, DRC, Rwanda, South Sudan) and African regional bodies (e.g. the African Ombudsman Research Centre). In this regard Sidiropoulos (2008:6) states,

“the country seems to be increasingly involved in trilateral assistance. Partly because South Africa has insufficient resources to meet all the requests it receives. But also because ‘old donors’ want to use South Africa as a vehicle for providing assistance in countries where their presence would be politically unwelcome. However, South Africa has to balance its involvement in trilateral assistance with the desire to remain, in the eyes of other African countries, politically independent”.

After having made experiences with the first TriCo projects in the last five years, South Africa is currently aiming at moving from this “experimenting” phase – as it was called by one interview partner (Pretoria, July 2013) – towards a more strategic mode of cooperation. SADPA is in the process of drafting TriCo policy framework, which could serve as template for engagement with

different traditional donors in third countries. According to the respective agencies'/countries' requirements this template could be adapted. By following this approach South Africa shows strategic vision and ownership in pursuing triangular cooperation projects and will be one of the first countries worldwide to have policy framework on trilateral cooperation.

Example 3: South Africa – Canada – Burundi, Rwanda & South Sudan: Reducing transaction costs through triangular cooperation

The often claimed high transaction costs of triangular cooperation might result from the observation that in many cases not enough time is given for the establishment of partnerships and a joint cooperation basis. Projects might need a bit longer to actually kick-off and catalyse something, so that they are costly in the beginning. But if managed and driven well, the value added and the partnerships created outweigh the higher costs. A Canadian example illustrates this: Former Canadian CIDA runs a triangular cooperation project with South Africa and their motivation to do so is quite different than what is often heard from other donors. By working with the same South African partner on the issue of public administration, the project design and approach are used for cooperation with three different African countries (Rwanda, Burundi and South Sudan). All of them are represented in the steering committee and instead of having three different projects; costs are saved by having one central structure with country specific adaptations and a local regional coordinator in Burundi (Piefer 2014a: 146).

Throughout the history of this TriCo, learning processes among all three partners have been eminent. Being familiar with the African continent and post-conflict situations, South Africa had also underestimated the challenges of working in South Sudan. As a highly volatile conflict ridden country which is in the process of establishing stable government structures, South Sudan is a quite unpredictable partner country. Respondents from South Africa and Canada stated that the constant changes of personnel influenced measures implemented within the scope of the triangular cooperation greatly. Furthermore, one could not count on basic infrastructure, such as reliable provision with energy or internet connections. The initial project implementation plan included elements of e-learning which proved to be difficult to implement under the given conditions. Additionally, the outbreak of crises at times brought the TriCo to a standstill in South Sudan, so that it could only be implemented in the other two countries.

Example 4: South Africa's Vision from Trilateral towards Multi-Party Partnerships Illustrated along a Case from India

Among other sectors, India implements Trilateral Cooperation projects in the energy field. One of these projects is implemented by The Energy and Resources Institute (TERI) - an independent research institution, which provides consultancy for the government and implements projects on their behalf. A network of partners was initially created with support from Norway and several institutions in Kenya. The "Solar Transitions" project was very successful and when DFID approached India wanting to work on energy issues in Africa, the same network of partners was taken and enhanced to the UK, further African as well as European partners. Private companies are involved in providing technological expertise and equipment. Instead of creating a new triangular cooperation project with DFID, the existing one with Norway was extended to a multi-party partnership project. The Indian approach to triangular cooperation was very pragmatic, emphasising that it is important

to build up stronger networks of multiple partners, rather than proliferating projects and partners in a scattered manner (Interviews in New Delhi, September 2013).

This triangular cooperation project is an example of great ownership of the new development partner and of involvement of the private sector and a civil society organization as implementation agency. Many authors claim that India and China are not involved in triangular cooperation projects, which does not reflect reality. For instance, China engages in trilateral partnerships with DFID, USAID, Australia, New Zealand and Switzerland (Li 2013). Generally, the Chinese government signals to be open for projects with other donors and countries, but some have been reluctant to engage in joint projects due to political considerations. This is mainly due to the assumption that when cooperating with China, the Chinese model and principles might seem to be endorsed by the traditional donor as well. Yet, this neglects the benefits of learning and managing projects jointly with China in third countries. By having to agree on common standards joint learning processes about the respective others' project management and principles of development cooperation.

4.4 Reflections on Triangular Cooperation in Practice – Topics for further Discussion and Research

An interview partner in South Africa (July 2014) remarked: *“if we see it [triangular cooperation] as an opportunity, do we give it enough love?”* Triangular cooperation projects often address very specific issues that are not embedded in the larger context of national development strategies of the third “beneficiary” country. Of course this varies from country to country and project to project, but largely, project experiences point to the need of establishing this cooperation modality on equal terms with bilateral or regional cooperation. Thus far, it was not given “enough love” in terms of funding, personnel and thematic areas.

The third or “beneficiary” country is in the position to actually play the strongest role and exert decisive ownership. Yet, triangular cooperation is often regarded as a modality to continue cooperation between the OECD DAC and the new development partner after phasing out bilateral cooperation. This also explains that the third country is at times neglected and perceives itself as the “victim country” (quote by a workshop participant in Istanbul 2010) of two great powers. On the other hand, it is in a very powerful position to play out the two cooperation providers against each other and thus to negotiate even more support than initially envisaged.

Clearly defined financial and in-kind contributions of all three partners could alter this perception. The case of a triangular cooperation between Peru, Brazil and Germany illustrates this. The beneficiary country (Peru) contributed as much funds as the OECD DAC partner (Germany) and the new development partner (Brazil) gave about 70% of the total project budget (GIZ internal documents). With all three partners contributing financial, personnel and other in-kind means, the partnership is likely to be perceived as more equal. An often discussed issue in this regard is the quantification of in-kind contributions. Yet, the dedication of personnel, logistics, equipment, etc. is at times hard to convert into euros or dollars. Nevertheless, it should be considered as equally important contribution.

The role of the third country in triangular cooperation is still an often underrated and also under researched topic (McEwan/ Mawdsley 2012). Focus is mostly laid on the strategic partnership

between the two providers of cooperation. However, in most cases the strategic partnership remains below its potential due to a lack of “love” – as aforementioned – as well as a long-term vision of where to steer this cooperation modality. In its initial phases ten years ago, it was perceived as a hype which will be over in a couple of years and followed by a new hot topic. This might be one explanation for many OECD DAC partners not to think the instrument strategically enough. But they incorporate the interests of new development partners in their thinking. Most Southern cooperation partners attribute high relevance to triangular cooperation and aim at enhancing this cooperation modality with partners from the North and the South (Müller/ Piefer 2015).

For triangular cooperation to tap into its full potential the third country’s perspective, development strategies and demands need to be considered more systematically. The instrument should be thought stronger from the perspective of the beneficiary country, if development results are to be achieved here. Alignment to national strategies, complementary contributions in existing fields of cooperation, involvement of different partners from the private as well as public sector, and planning the modality into the normal tool kit of instruments and modalities, would give it more footing which in the long run could lead to better developmental results. Furthermore, in current practice budgets from the OECD DAC partner are usually assigned to the new development partner and not the beneficiary country. A fund model could be thought of where the beneficiary country chooses its cooperation partners and not vice versa, as is currently common practice.

Moreover, in trilateral cooperation not all impacts can be measured along indicators that give evidence of results in the third country. The creation of partnerships and trustful relations between the three partners can be regarded as just as important as the actual developmental results and impacts on the ground. This relationship dimension also paves the way for successful scaling up and ensures greater sustainability of the project, as the aforementioned example from India illustrates.

5. Concluding Remarks

“The future is probably a combination of traditional and non-traditional partners and partnerships that apply new and innovative approaches and modalities, and working together to strengthen human and institutional capacity for sustainable development, and to eradicate poverty and underdevelopment” (Casoo 2014: 14). This is a vision of partnerships between Northern and Southern providers of development cooperation following a common goal of sustainable development in all world regions and not one of persisting old hegemonic and counter-hegemonic structures. With their inflexibility and often paternalistic tone towards Southern partners, some OECD DAC partners run the risk of remaining in old cooperation paradigms and losing partners in international cooperation. Triangular cooperation is a modality which could bridge North-South and South-South Cooperation effectively by also putting the relationship between the two providers of cooperation on a new footing.

Looking at the findings of this paper, is there really such a huge difference between South-South and North-South Cooperation? Can we generalize this much in saying that SSC is *per se* a horizontal partnership, whilst NSC is an asymmetric donor-recipient relationship? Isn’t the perception of the nature of the relationship between development partners subjective in each single project? One could argue that it always depends on the way that development cooperation projects are

implemented. In practice, we find many partnership oriented, horizontal North-South cooperation projects as well as vertical donor-recipient driven South-South cooperation projects. A representative of the British Department for International Development (DFID) remarked at a workshop in New Delhi (September 2013) *"in terms of distinguishing NSC and SSC, it doesn't matter where you live on the globe (North or South), but that the cooperation is horizontal"*. Horizontality and partnership have been aimed for, not only since Busan (2011) or the Global Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation in Mexico (2014) and most recently of course within discussions on the post-2015 agenda.

The analysis of triangular cooperation also from different theoretical perspectives has reached the conclusion which Nederveen Pieterse (2010: 216) sums up as: *"A core dilemma of development cooperation is, to put it bluntly, how to balance power and emancipation, or how to sustain advance countries' privileges while promoting or endorsing social justice"*. Theorizing is still largely stuck in hegemonic (realist) or counter-hegemonic (post-colonial) thinking. Neither one serves to address the changing power geometries of today's multi-polar world completely. Constructivism supports in analysis of normative negotiations and the alignment of principles and norms with actors' identities. As was elaborated along the case of triangular cooperation, none of the partners have the power to impose its norms on the other and this should be carefully avoided. Whilst NSC has an established tradition of over 60 years, SSC is often treated as newer (although its history is probably even longer than NSC) with more horizontal and partnership oriented principles. It does not serve developmental interests to discuss which one is outdated and which one is normatively and morally 'better'. A combination of both approaches is the only constructive way forward. If not, power plays between the global great powers will dominate the development discourses. Openness for learning and adaption is needed, rather than constructing new emancipatory agendas which dismiss the established system as malfunctioning. Criticism of NSC is well founded, but the case of SADPA's creation in South Africa has shown a constructive engagement with the critics of NSC and the proponents of SSC towards new visions for development. The case of Brazilian ABC illustrates the crossroads between a genuinely Brazilian way of working in development cooperation combined with the experience that structures, legal basis and instruments which may (or also may not) originate in the North might be useful in reforming the system efficiently. Overall, these aspects are not mirrored sufficiently in international relations and development theories. Furthermore, not one theory can explain new developments, such as triangular cooperation. Rather, a kaleidoscopic approach of drawing from various theoretical strands could deliver theoretical backing for current debates, which needs to be developed further than could be done within the scope of this paper.

Concluding, it can be said that the value added of triangular cooperation is achieved when the synergies of contributions from the three partners are bigger than what could be gained by cooperation among two. Ideally, comparative strengths of all three partners should be used and a harmonization of development efforts envisaged. This should be in line with the national development priorities of the third country and oriented along the specific demand for support. In all areas of joint intervention, the beneficiary country's ownership should be at the core of triangular cooperation. And after all, three is a lucky number – so why not cooperate in a triangle?

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