

THE NEW BOOM IN SOUTH-SOUTH COOPERATION: THE EXPERIENCE OF IBERO-AMERICA

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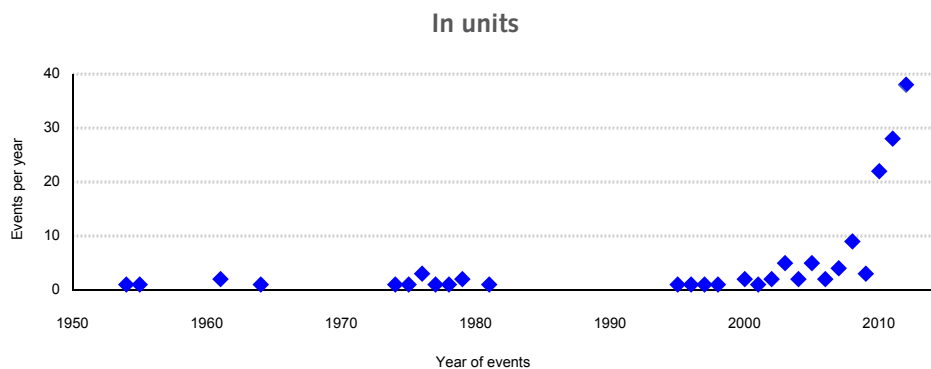
The article reviews and characterizes the recent boom in South-South Cooperation (SSC) by focusing on a specific experience: that of the member countries of the Ibero-American Conference and, in particular, the nineteen Spanish and Portuguese-speaking Latin American countries (from Mexico to Chile, including Cuba and Dominican Republic), plus Spain and Portugal. It seeks to understand a kind of cooperation that is expanding under various different guises and gaining in importance in the international development cooperation agenda with each passing year. Accordingly and in constant reference to this specific case, the article first explores the way this kind of SSC is evolving, its new scope, and its main features. Next, it reconstructs the bloc's political discourse regarding SSC, as well as the way it is pervading the international debate. With this in mind, it draws on the various editions of the Report on South-South Cooperation in Ibero-America, prepared by the Ibero-American General Secretariat (SEGIB), an analytical tool that, in addition to providing information, constitutes, both in itself and by structure, an intergovernmental, horizontal, and collective instance of SSC.

SOUTH-SOUTH COOPERATION: A BRIEF LOOK AT OVER HALF A CENTURY OF HISTORY

Any review of the history of South-South cooperation (SSC) immediately runs into a major obstacle: the reader is faced with

a multidimensional (political, economic, financial, technical) phenomenon that goes beyond simple "collaboration" between "Southern countries," whose

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Figure 1**EVOLUTION OF NUMBER OF ANNUAL EVENTS CONTRIBUTING TO SSC DEBATE (1954-2012)**

Source: Based on the 2009, 2010, and 2012 *Reports on South-South Cooperation in Ibero-America*, and on the official Declarations and Documents linked to the various events included.

variety of manifestations make it difficult to unify both its concept and a way of identifying it.¹ Thus, faced as we are with this heterogeneity of forms, one approach to the evolution of SSC that takes in all of these dimensions is to keep track of the various regional and international events where SSC has played a leading role in the debate.² Similarly, when the number of events carried out during this exercise is associated with each of the years for which this type of event is recorded, a time series is obtained, as in *Figure 1*. From this it emerges that:

- a. Like the concepts of Development and of International Cooperation itself, SSC places its origins in the political and economic scene that emerged after World War II. In this new framework, SSC's first steps date back to the mid 1950s, coinciding with the exchange of Technical Cooperation measures among Southeast Asian countries, and with the momentum toward the creation of a space for consensus-building, such as the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM).
- b. Different stages distinguished by their intense dynamism can be identified in SSC's five-plus decades of accumulated history. As shown in *Figure 1*, there have been three periods of intense activity: the 1970s, the phase from 2000 to 2007, and that beginning in 2008 marked, as will become clear later, by particularly intense activity.
- c. There are no doubt several factors that explain this dynamic of behavior, but two are worthy of special mention: the geopolitical context and the way International Development Cooperation interacted with South-South Cooperation.
 - Geopolitically, both the 1970s and the start of the new millennium coincided with the renewed sturdiness of the developing countries on the international economic and political scene: in the first

¹ Another way of putting it is that SSC is seen in a variety of ways depending on who is looking. In illustration, the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) refers to SSC by showing the evolution of the exchange of financial, trade, and investment flows among developing countries. The annual reports of the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) combine the same approach with another, more focused on Technical Cooperation and capacity building. In the meantime, the Development Assistance Committee (DAC) of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) tends to equate the phenomenon of SSC with Official Development Assistance (ODA) flows of "non-DAC" and/or "Southern" countries.

² The meetings of the Group of 77 (the first in 1964), the High-Level Forums on Aid Effectiveness (the last in Busan in 2011), and the United Nations Conference on Technical Cooperation among Developing Countries (TCDC) in Buenos Aires (1978), to name but a few (SEGIB, 2008, pp. 11-13; 2009, pp. 23-28; 2012).

stage, as a result of the consolidation of the independence processes of the former African and Asian colonies, and of the need for new countries to make a stand against the prevailing global bipolarity; in the second and third stages, as a result of the ever more relevant role of the emerging countries on the world stage, where they have succeeded in expanding the Group of Eight (G8) (the seven most industrialized economies, plus Russia) to the G20, with the addition of countries like Brazil, Mexico, India, China, and South Africa (G5), and Argentina.

- In the 1970s, the architecture of international development cooperation was shaken by the impact of aid flows from “petrodollars”, accumulated mainly by the Arab countries in the second half of the decade and which, in their heyday (1975), accounted for 28% of global ODA (SEGIB, 2009, pp. 19-20), according to the Development Assistance Committee (DAC). Also, in response to a decade of question marks over the quantity and quality of aid, developments after the year 2000 (e.g. the Millennium Declaration, the International Conference on Financing for Development in Monterrey, or the

successive calls for Aid Effectiveness) also radically transformed the international development cooperation scene.

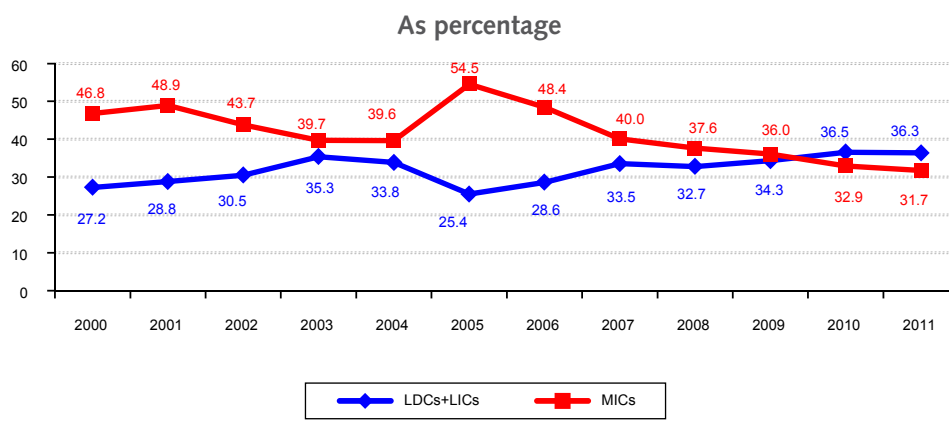
Specifically, as *Figure 2* shows, and coinciding with the two last stages, the main donors’ commitment to focus cooperation efforts on the most disadvantaged nations altered the structure of recipients: the least developed countries (LDCs) and low income countries (LICs) increased their share from 27.2% in 2000 to 36.3% in 2011, while middle income countries (MICs) went from 46.8% at the start of the period to 31.6% in the last year. Three inseparable dynamics can be identified: the displacement of MICs, the emergence of a dual role on the international cooperation scene, and the new boom in SSC.

THE NEW SSC BOOM: A LATIN AMERICAN APPROACH

In terms of *per capita* income, the nineteen Latin American countries (from Mexico to Chile) that are also members of the Ibero-American Conference

Figure 2

LDCs, LICs, and MICs’ SHARE OF TOTAL NET WORLD ODA AIMED AT DEVELOPING COUNTRIES (2000-2011)



Source: Based on <http://stats.oecd.org/Index.aspx?datasetcode=TABLE2A>.

classify as MICs. As a result, and along the lines of this argument, Latin America has, since the year 2000, been effectively displaced as a recipient of ODA. As *Figure 3* shows, Latin America in fact went from accounting for a record of 9% of total global assistance flows in 2001 to a 4.2% low in the financial period between 2007 and 2010.

Since the middle of the past decade, the region's cooperation agencies and bureaus began to feel that they were playing a new role on the international cooperation scene. But what in fact they were intuiting was that they were participating in forms of South-South collaboration no record of which was being kept.

A need then arose for more information on the process of change they themselves were involved in, for which there were scarcely any data. Through the Latin American countries' Cooperation Directors, the demand for the conceptualization, systematization, and recording of SSC reached the Ibero-American space and, more specifically, the Ibero-American General Secretariat (SEGIB).

This was how the *Report on South-South Cooperation in Latin America* came into existence, and in itself it was an SSC exercise. Looking back at its development from its first edition in 2007 to its latest in 2012 allows us to reconstruct and characterize SSC's most recent developments in Latin America and, via the construction of a joint political discourse, to identify the

region's growing influence in the global development cooperation agenda.

THE REPORT ON SOUTH-SOUTH COOPERATION IN LATIN AMERICA: MORE THAN A TOOL FOR DIAGNOSIS AND VISIBILITY

The *Report on South-South Cooperation in Latin America* "is a horizontal **intergovernmental** exercise in systematizing South-South Cooperation in the region" (Xalma, 2013, p. 5). The twenty-two member countries of the Ibero-American Conference played an equal part in drafting the Report. Government participation through cooperation agencies and bureaus takes place at two levels:

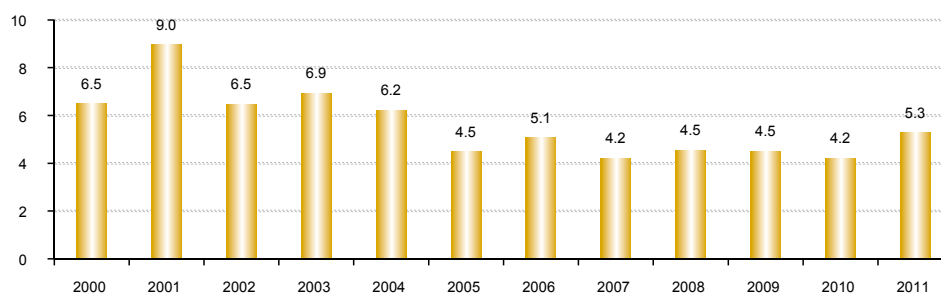
- a. As individual countries, through the politicians in the agencies and bureaus, and the staff that make up their technical units;
- b. As part of intergovernmental bodies and, in particular, of the Ibero-American General Secretariat (SEGIB) itself, and the Ibero-American Program to Strengthen South-South Cooperation (PIFCSS) (which will be explained in this section).

In this framework, the participation of the countries in the *Report on South-South Cooperation in Latin America* is not limited to providing the data it requires. Their participation goes far beyond, as they have simultaneously to work and decide collectively

Figure 3

IBERO-AMERICAN* COUNTRIES SHARE OF TOTAL WORLD NET ODA AIMED AT DEVELOPING COUNTRIES (2000-2011)

As percentage



Note: * Only includes the 19 Ibero-American countries that are also members of the Ibero-American Conference and classify as recipients of ODA.

Source: Based on <http://stats.oecd.org/Index.aspx?datasetcode=TABLE2A>.

and by consensus about aspects as diverse as: the conceptualization of SSC; the definition of a methodology for measurement and recording; the creation of indicators for improved identification, planning, and evaluation; tools for data collection and processing; or the discourse and position maintained where this modality is concerned. Consequently and as has been noted, **the exercise carried out is also technical and political**, as every breakthrough reconciles the technically possible with what is politically palatable to all.

The result is a Report that:

- a. Gauges and characterizes SSC in which Ibero-American countries participate. Given the nature of the decision-making and executive bodies, this is framed within technical cooperation among developing countries, where "*capacity building*" and "*knowledge, qualifications, resources, and knowhow exchanges*" are paramount (SEGIB, 2008, p. 16). Likewise, due, among other things, to the number and type of actors involved, this kind of cooperation is implemented via bilateral, triangular, and regional modalities (SEGIB, 2010).
- b. Is not limited to the systematization and characterization of SSC, but adds three complementary blocks of content to the results of the exercise:
 - To find out not just what happens but how, a chapter on case studies is included. Based on a methodology developed by the Ibero-American Program to Strengthen South-South Cooperation (PIFCSS, 2012b, pp. 15-17), it provides an insight into what occurs in the stages of identification, negotiation, formulation, and results of the bilateral and triangular projects selected.
 - Since the 2009 edition, the first chapter has been structured around a political reflection by the countries on the subject of SSC in Ibero-America. In fact, it is the Heads of Ibero-American Cooperation themselves (country representatives to the SEGIB) who draft, discuss, and agree the content.

- Albeit more marginally, the Report is careful to contextualize Ibero-America in the framework of international development cooperation through an annual analysis of the aid flows in which the region's countries are involved.

Over the six editions to date, the development of this content has also had positive repercussions for the Report as a product:

- a. It has become a visibility tool for SSC in Ibero-America, as well as an instrument to manage better.
- b. As we will see in detail in the next section, the Report has favored the articulation of an Ibero-American bloc position regarding SSC, as well as this position's gradual penetration of the international agenda and debate.
- c. And there is its contribution to the Ibero-American countries' institutional and methodological capacity building. Since 2009, this contribution has been reinforced by the emergence of the PIFCSS. Made up of nineteen of the region's twenty-two countries, its close relationship with the Report and clear orientation toward capacity building is suggested by the names themselves of its five Lines of Action (L) or work: Support for the Report (L3), and development of a Case Methodology (L5), the Formation (L1), and Design, Deployment, and Development of Information Systems (L2), as well as the facilitation of a Policy Discussion Forum (L4).

IBERO-AMERICA AND SSC: MAIN TRENDS

A review of the findings in the successive editions of the *Report on South-South Cooperation in Ibero-America* leads to the following description of SSC in the region between 2006 and 2011. In terms of major trends, it is worth highlighting that:

- a. Over the course of this period, the Bilateral Horizontal South-South Cooperation in which the Ibero-American countries participate through the exchange of Measures and Projects (see methodological note to *Figure 4*) has been

consolidated and strengthened. In particular, as can be seen from *Figure 4.A*, the number of projects and measures exchanged by the region's countries under this modality has tended to stabilize at above 800. The idea of strengthening is also supported by an increased share of projects (the largest instrument), which went from accounting for almost two thirds (62.8%) of exchanges in 2010 to nearly 72% in 2011.

- b. Nevertheless, *Figure 4.A* also suggests a downward trend in the absolute number of Bilateral Horizontal South-South Cooperation exchanges recorded between 2007 (the first year for which data exists) and 2011. But this "apparent trend" does not invalidate the previous idea. Rather, two methodological problems add nuances to these observations: on the one hand, there are the still necessary and frequent adjustments in the concepts of measurement used;³ on the other, the fact that we have not yet

been able to consolidate a stable data supply.⁴ Both things ultimately limit the reliability of the time series obtained.

- c. On the other hand, again in the framework of Bilateral Horizontal South-South Cooperation, certain trends can be identified that relate to the role and degree of the countries' participation. As seen in *Figure 4.B*, the nineteen Latin American nations actively participate in cooperation exchanges, but the intensity with which they do so differs according to whether they are acting as providers or recipients. Accordingly, just six countries (Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Cuba, and Mexico) tend to concentrate 95% of projects offered. By contrast, the top six recipients (mainly Paraguay, and Andean and Central American nations) together never account for more than 40% of the total projects received.

³ With the Report came a record-keeping system, in which the concepts used to identify the evolution of this cooperation have gradually changed. As mentioned in the note to *Figure 4.A*, the turning point was 2009, when there was a shift from recording just "Measures" to differentiating between "Projects" and "One-Off Measures".

⁴ The 19 countries participating in this modality have not been able to report their data every year. Venezuela, for example, a country that had previously led the supply of projects (179 in 2009 alone, i.e. 20% of the total recorded that year), has been missing since 2010.

Figure 4

SSC IN IBERO-AMERICA BY MODALITY, COUNTRY, AND SECTOR

A. BILATERAL HORIZONTAL SOUTH-SOUTH COOPERATION PROJECTS AND MEASURES (2007-2011)

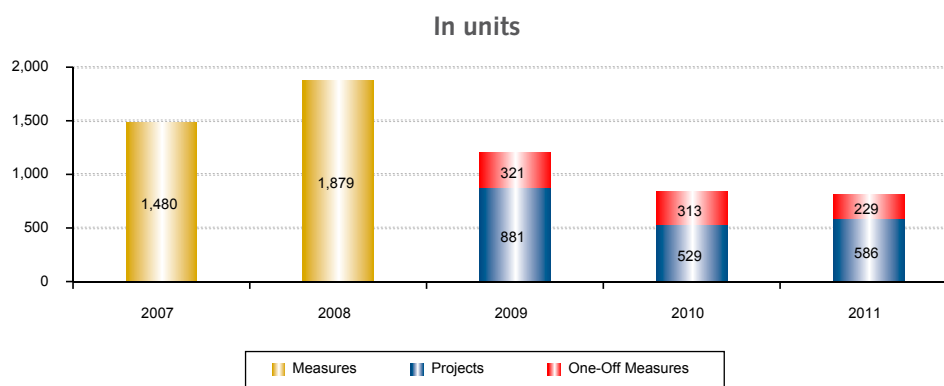
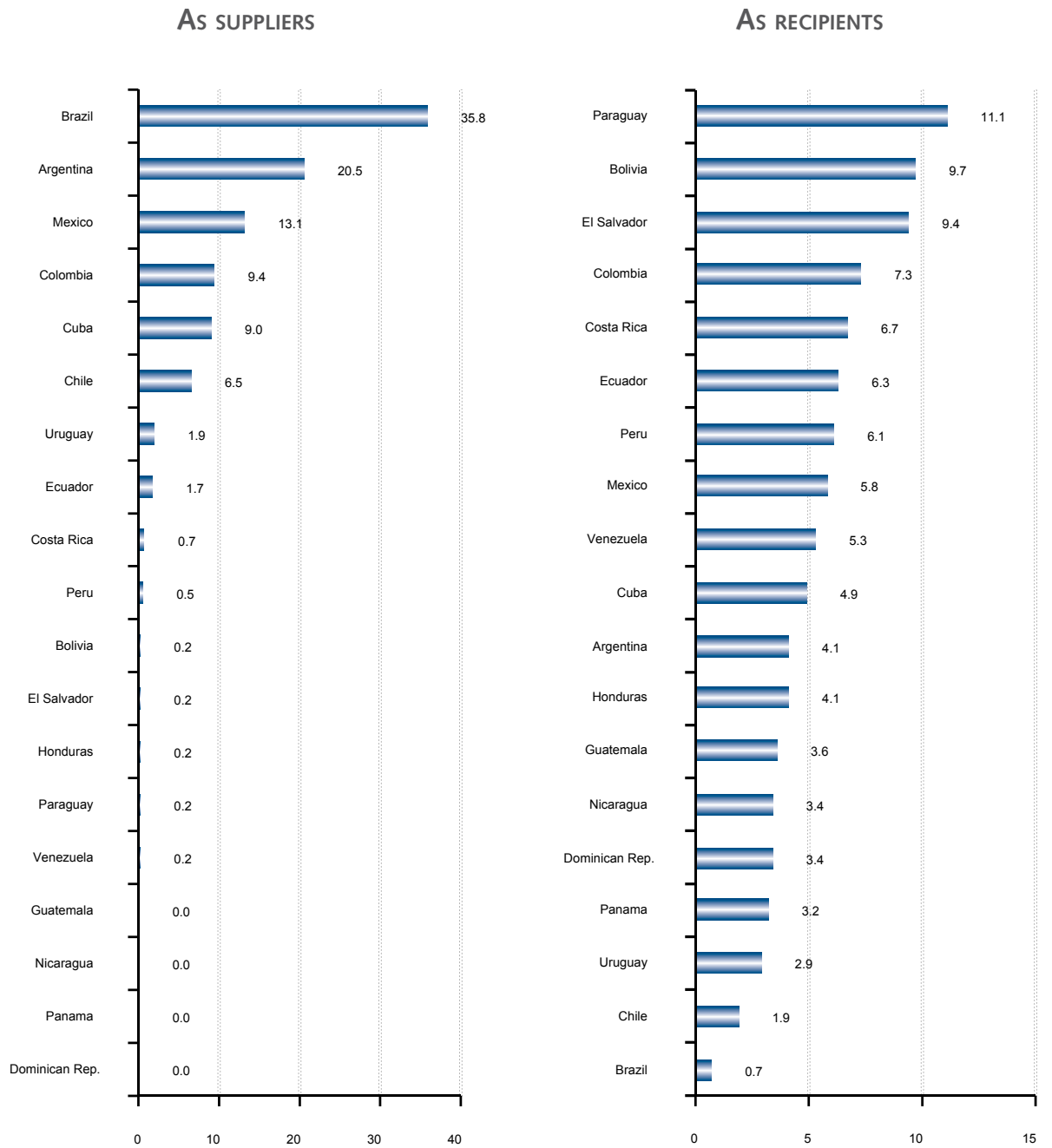


Figure 4

B. COUNTRIES' SHARE OF BILATERAL HORIZONTAL SOUTH-SOUTH COOPERATION PROJECTS BY ROLE (2011)

As percentage of total registered (586)

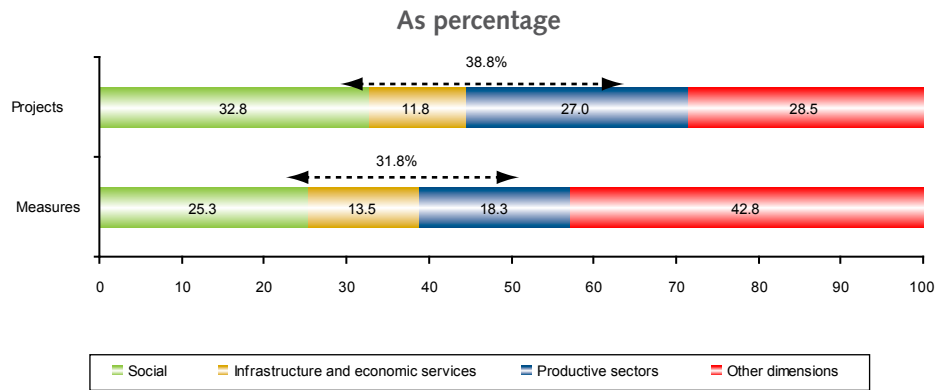


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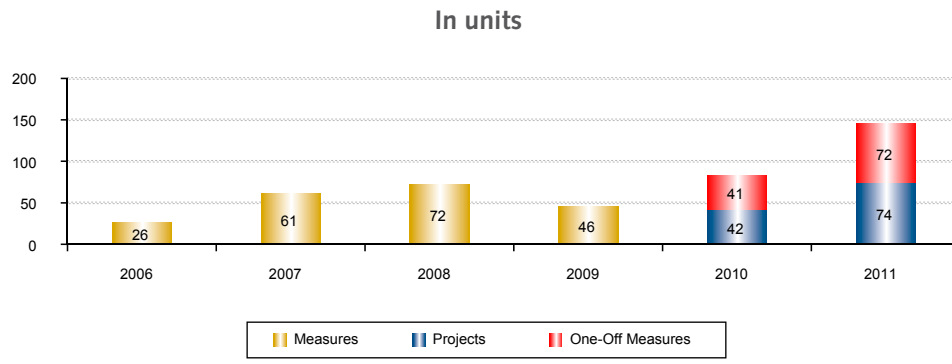
Figure 4

SSC IN IBERO-AMERICA BY MODALITY, COUNTRY, AND SECTOR

C. BILATERAL HORIZONTAL SOUTH-SOUTH COOPERATION PROJECTS AND MEASURES (2011) BY SCOPE



D. TRIANGULAR SOUTH-SOUTH COOPERATION (2006-2011)



Note: In 2007 and 2008, as with Bilateral Horizontal South-South Cooperation, as well as the period of Triangular Cooperation in 2006-2009, Measures made up all recorded SSC interventions without considering difference by instrument. From 2009 for Bilateral and 2010 for Triangular Cooperation, instruments of action are differentiated according as follows: **Projects** refer to a "set of interrelated measures designed to meet a common goal toward a specific recipient through implementation in the framework of one or several sectors and/or issues [...]"; **One-Off Measures** represent "a concrete if narrow expression of international cooperation. They are implemented just once, through specific modalities (counseling, internship, joint research, seminars, etc.)".

Source: Based on PIFCSS (2012a, pp. 10-11) and Xalma (2013, p. 14 and 16).

- d. Last, the analysis of the sectors of activity within which the implemented Bilateral Horizontal South-South Cooperation classifies gives an idea of the profile of capacities strengthened through the exchanges (*Figure 4.C*). In very similar proportions, the specific projects carried forward reinforce capacities in social areas (particularly education and health, but also sanitation and water supply, and social and housing policy), economic areas (on the one hand, everything that favors the creation of infrastructure and services needed for the operation of national economies, such as energy, the application of advances in science and technology, and support for the fabric of small and medium enterprises (SMEs), and on the other, projects in productive sectors, essentially mining, agriculture, and the processing industries), and areas classified under other headings (e.g. institutional strengthening, the environment, and disaster prevention).
- e. As seen in *Figure 4.D*, Triangular SSC is another modality that has been consolidated and strengthened during this period. In this sense, even in spite of the same methodological nuances applied to Bilateral SSC, the number of measures and projects year on year rose: 42 projects and 41 measures were recorded in 2010; by 2011 these totaled 74 and 72.
- f. In country terms, the transfer of technical capacities (by "first providers") tended to fall to the countries that are more active in supplying Bilateral Horizontal South-South Cooperation, particularly Argentina, Brazil, Chile, and Mexico. Meanwhile, prominent among "second providers" (supported financially, and sometimes technically and institutionally as well) were Japan (simultaneously withdrawing its ODA from the region), Germany, Spain, and (incipiently) United States. Similarly, although all the countries in the region participated as "recipients" of Triangular SSC in at least one measure and/or project, this again tended to be concentrated in Paraguay, Central America and the Andean region.
- g. Last, the most striking thing about this modality is the type of capacities that it tended to reinforce. In sector terms, it has a similar distribution to Bilateral Cooperation, but, even in the framework of the same type of activity, triangular cooperation often display greater

scientific-technological complexity (which would, in fact, justify the support of a third actor). To illustrate, prominent among housing policies would be projects devoted to the construction of earthquake-resistant buildings for disadvantaged families; in agriculture, support for the creation of national phytosanitary systems; or, in the environment, action toward implementing solid waste management models.

IBERO-AMERICAN SSC IN THE AGENDA FOR INTERNATIONAL DEBATE

This section is divided into three blocks: a review of SSC's role in the agenda for international debate on cooperation; the discourse that the Ibero-American space itself has built up around this modality; and the way this discourse has penetrated the agenda for international debate.

SSC IN THE DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION AGENDA

There are three stages, growing in prominence, to SSC in the international agenda for debate on development cooperation: 1954 to the end of 1990, 2000 up to 2007, and, coinciding with a remarkable boom in this area (see *Figure 1* again), from 2008 to the present.

Qualitative differences can be identified in each of these stages, due both to aspects that are cause for concern and to the frameworks in which that concern is discussed. Thus:

- a. Between 1954 and 1999, there was barely any talk specifically in South-South terms. One usually spoke of economic and technical cooperation among developing countries (ECDC and TCDC respectively), and of the possible integration of the two modalities. Along these lines and always within these dimensions, one talked of programs and plans of action, and performance guidelines. This gearing of content was closely related to the fact that these discussions took place within frameworks or spaces of economic or even political dialogue that were emerging in these years, such as, in the international field, the United Nations and its various agencies, the

G77 or the NAM, and, at more regional level, the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) or Latin American and Caribbean Economic System (SELA).

b. The term SSC (and subsequently Triangular Cooperation) was coined in 2000 as part of the debate. In fact, in 2003, during the 58th session of the United Nations General Assembly, the term TCDC was officially and formally replaced by that of SSC. Accordingly, in the framework of the “*new aid architecture*” and of a likewise new “*development cooperation agenda*”, SSC begins to be addressed in connection with the other issues of the day: the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), Development Financing, Effectiveness, MICs, etc.

c. 2008, however, was a watershed:

- Until this date, the treatment of SSC had been “marginal”, more conspicuous in the preparatory discussions of major events than in their final declarations. And when it did appear in final declarations, it did so in a *quasi* “anecdotal” way, as experiences to be reviewed and taken into account.
- But SSC and Triangular Cooperation have acquired a much more prominent role since 2008 as a benchmark and tool for change in terms of what needs to be reconsidered. Since 2008, one now speaks of SSC’s role in the new scene, its possible contribution to development goals, its role as a financing mechanism, and even of its effectiveness.⁵
- Also, since 2008, a growing number of frameworks or spaces in the regional and international scenes have been looking at SSC and positioning it in the debate: thus, in contrast to the preceding stage, the DAC, the Union of South American Nations (UNASUR), the Bank of the

South, and the Bolivarian Alliance for the Peoples of Our America (ALBA) have all tackled this kind of cooperation.

- Last, multiple platforms appear. While different in nature, these platforms all have this modality of cooperation within their specific scopes of operation: notably the Task Team on South-South Cooperation (TT-SSC), the United Nations’ Development Cooperation Forum (DCF), the World Bank’s South-South Experience Exchange, the Building Block on South-South Cooperation, set up in Busan at the end of 2011, and the Ibero-American Program to Strengthen South-South Cooperation itself.

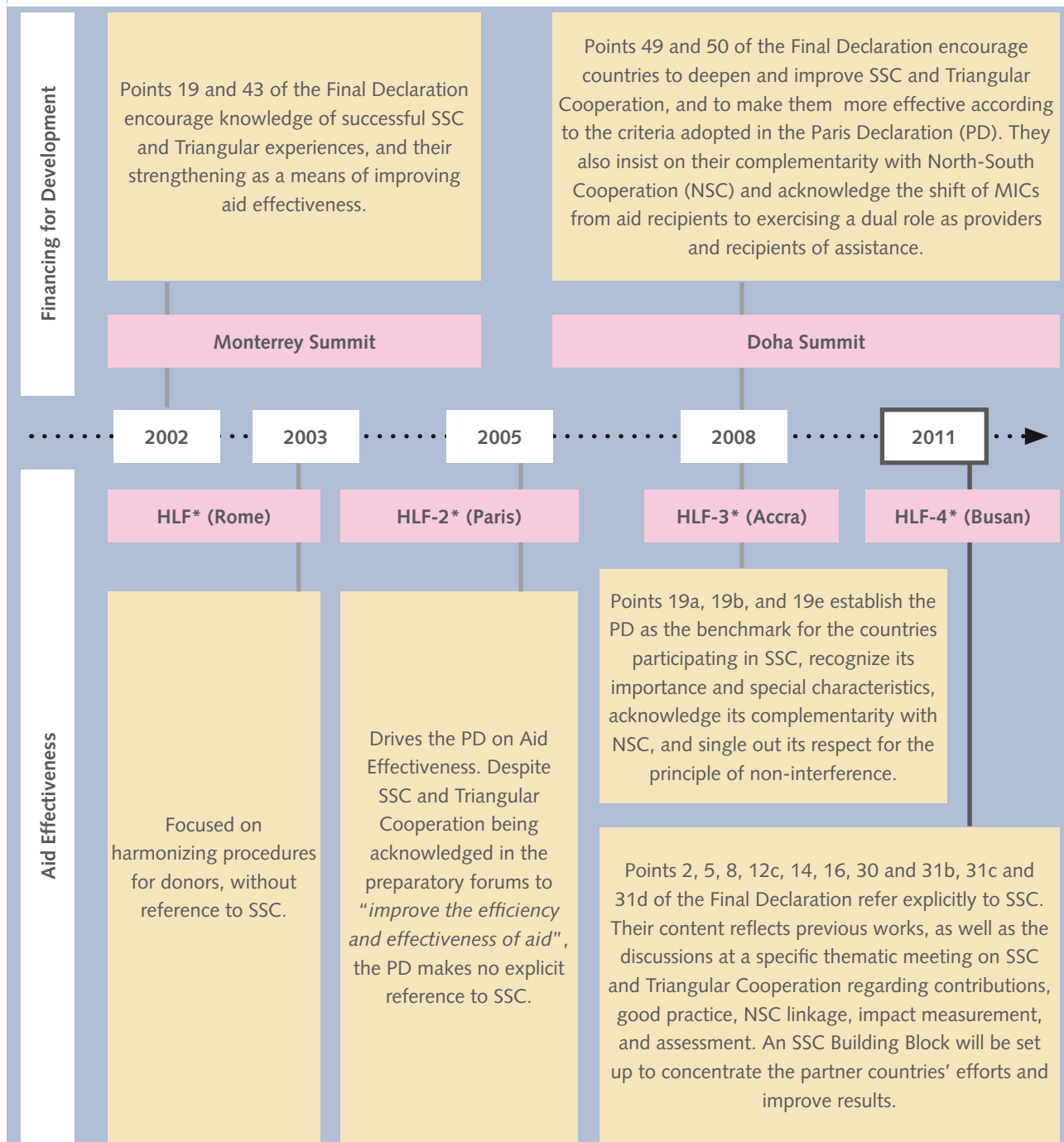
THE IBERO-AMERICAN STANCE ON SSC

Over the course of these years, the Ibero-American community has built up a position on SSC. The resultant discourse paints the following picture:

- a. The defense and deepening of the **criteria/principles associated with the practice of SSC in Ibero-America**. The countries place special emphasis on the fact that this is a form of **horizontal cooperation** (i.e. among equal partners, without conditions), where technical exchange and capacity building, reciprocity, the proximity of processes and adaptation to the local, respect for others’ sovereignty, and the search for efficiency in the use of resources are paramount.
- b. The understanding that SSC is **neither a substitute, nor a subsidiary, nor an instrument of NSC, but only a complement**. Here, a link between the two is favored and **the countries’ dual role** in the international cooperation scene is defended. This positioning has two outcomes:
 - On the one hand, in terms of “recipients,” it raises the need for MICs to continue receiving cooperation funds that contribute to consolidating their development processes. Along the same lines, they question the idea that *per capita* income should be the criterion of eligibility to opt for these funds, while ignoring inequalities within the countries.

⁵ A more detailed illustration appears in the [Box](#), which summarizes the differential treatment of SSC in the successive events on Financing for Development and Aid Effectiveness that have been held since 2000.

Box. SSC in debates over Development Cooperation Financing and Effectiveness



Note: HLF* (abbreviation for High Level Forum).

Source: Based on the Declarations of the First High Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness, in Rome (2003); the Second in Paris (2005); the Third in Accra (2008), and the Fourth in Busan (2011); and on the Final Declarations of the Development Financing Summits, in Monterrey, March 18-22, 2002, and in Doha, December 2, 2008.

Alternatively, they favor replacing this criterion with another that keeps these problems in mind, such as an approach based on “*structural gaps*”, as proposed by ECLAC in a recent document.⁶

- On the other hand, as new “cooperators” they demand the recognition of SSC and Triangular Cooperation as mechanisms for institutional strengthening, capacity building, and promoting regional integration.
- c. Last, in the Ibero-American framework, there are **two coexisting positions** toward the **effectiveness of SSC**: the countries that propound moving forward in an agenda embedded in the principles established in Paris, Accra, and Busan; and those that defend an agenda of their own that is not necessarily embedded in the international agenda.

IBERO-AMERICA AND SSC IN THE INTERNATIONAL DEBATE

Collective work and the articulation of a common discourse around SSC have, in the space of a few years, enabled Ibero-America’s voice to be heard on the international stage. The ways this is manifested are closely related, first and foremost, to the presentation and elevation of Ibero-American positions in international forums, and, second, to the impact and ever greater presence of the Program and the Report. More specifically:

- a. In 2009, the Ibero-American countries presented their first position on SSC at the *High Level United Nations Conference on South-South Cooperation in Nairobi*, in November, to commemorate the 30+1 anniversary of the Buenos Aires Plan of Action for Promoting and Implementing Technical Cooperation among Developing Countries (TCDC) (1978). This position also recognized the work these countries had done both individually and collectively

⁶ The structural gap approach includes in *per capita* income parameters relating to inequality, poverty, investment, savings, productivity, innovation, infrastructure, education, health, taxation, gender, and the environment (ECLAC, 2012).

in 2008 in order for SSC to be duly addressed in the discussions and final declaration that emerged from the Third High Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness (HLF-3) in Accra.

- b. Similarly, in 2011, Ibero-America presented a new joint position on SSC at the 4th High Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness (HLF-4) in Busan (PIFCSS, 2011). This position was also presented and discussed at following events to evaluate the agenda post-Busan and at the 2012 DCF.
- c. In fact, the second DCF, in 2010, had already welcomed a presentation of the *Report on South-South Cooperation*, and of the Program, which were represented in turn by the SEGIB and many of its member countries. The DCF has thus become a frame of reference and mouthpiece for Ibero-American activity in this area, as have the annual events organized by the *United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation* (formerly the Special Unit for South-South Cooperation).
- d. Explicit references to the Ibero-American Program and the Report begin to proliferate, as, for example, in the document on SSC and Triangular Cooperation prepared by the United Nations Joint Inspection Unit and presented at the Seventeenth Session of the High Level Committee on South-South Cooperation in May 2012.
- e. In this sense, the Program and the Report are analyzed as case studies. As noted in previous sections, the fact that they are in themselves SSC exercises makes them benchmark experiences in areas such as the *High Level Event on South-South Cooperation and Capacity Development* in Bogota in March 2010, in the framework of preparatory meetings for Busan.
- f. Last, the acquis that the Program and the Report have generated for SSC in the region, and in terms of methodological development (information, measurement, and indicator systems), have made them a staple for other organizations. Clear examples of this are the documents discussed at the Thirty-Third Session of ECLAC in 2010, or the meeting of the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC) in Chile in October 2012.

IN SUMMARY

The new boom experienced by SSC since 2000, and more conspicuously since 2008, marks a watershed in the historical trajectory of this modality, with Ibero-America playing a leading role in it. It has been influenced by the succession of dynamics generated by its classification as MICs, its subsequent displacement as recipients of ODA, and also the search and stimulus for a new dual role in international development cooperation.

In this sense, the need to systematize and record this new cooperation has, in their shared Ibero-American

ambit, led the Latin America countries and Spain to promote the drafting of a Report on South-South Cooperation. After six editions, this Report is now rather more than a tool to gauge and characterize the SSC in which the region participates. The Report is, first and foremost, an intergovernmental SSC exercise in itself: one that contributes to the strengthening of this cooperation in both Ibero-America and the world, through its technical and methodological contributions, and its contribution to the construction of a political discourse that is pervading the international debate on development cooperation. ♦

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