



United Nations
Office for South-South Cooperation



South-South Ideas

**Methodological Pluralities
in Impact Assessment of
South-South Cooperation:**
A Synthesis from
Efficiency Perspective

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A Synthesis from Efficiency Perspective

July 2021

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Abbreviation and Acronyms

BAPA:	Buenos Aires Plan for Action
DAC:	Development Assistance Committee
DAG:	Development Assistance Group
GNI:	Gross National Income
GPEDC:	Global Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation
GSI:	Global Standard Institutions
IsDB:	Islamic Development Banks
ITEC:	Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation Programme
MDGs:	Millennium Development Goals
NAM:	Non-Aligned Movement
NATO:	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
ODA:	Official Development Assistance
OEEC:	Organization for European Economic Cooperation
OECD:	Organization for Economic and Development Cooperation
SAP:	Structural Adjustment Programme
SDGs:	Sustainable Development Goals
SSC:	South-South Cooperation
TCDC:	Technical Cooperation among Developing Countries
TCDC:	Technical and Development Cooperation
TOSSD:	Total Official Support for Sustainable Development
UNDP:	United Nations Development Programme
UNFSTD:	United Nations Fund for Science and Technology for Development
UNOSSC:	United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation
UNCTAD:	United Nations Conference on Trade and Development

Executive Summary

Plurality is the fundamental strength of South-South Cooperation (SSC). Such pluralities operate in terms of the governance structures of the countries belonging to the Global South. The internal institutional structures also exhibit pluralism that runs contrary to the 'governance related conditionalities', which require the borrowing country to adopt 'better' institutions that improve 'governance' – the feature attributed as 'Global Standard Institutions' (GSI) (Chang 2011).

Set against the backdrop of the prevailing debate on developing a standardized template for impact assessment of SSC-related activities in development cooperation, the present study attempts to develop a set of methodological tools and indicators to assess the efficiency of SSC from the perspective of its distributive implications and its role in ensuring agency efficiency in terms of reduction in transaction costs of delivery of developmental inputs to partner countries in need. In doing so, it is centred on the fundamental recognition of plurality as the source of strength of SSC. The proposed template would entail active participation of NGOs, academia, CSOs, private sector and national governments, along with the other stakeholders in development cooperation to enhance peer learning and knowledge sharing on a voluntary basis.

The document is divided into 8 sections. Section 2 elaborates the extent of multi-layered plurality found among the countries that are involved in SSC and argues that the accepted plurality renders the development delivery system under SSC complex, unlike the model evolved by the traditional donors, which contains a linear simple systemic structure of development cooperation. The next section looks at the issue of effectiveness and efficiency of development cooperation and their contributions to the two opposing models of traditional aid and SSC. Section 4 delves into the history of these two strands of development cooperation models as they have evolved over the years since the end of the Second World War. The next section looks at the process of development cooperation as an exercise that involves the use of visible hands, unlike the market-led process, which believes in efficient allocation of resources through the operation of invisible hands. Section 6 distinguishes the two major approaches to development cooperation – the OECD-led approach and SSC as viewed through an analytical lens that throws light on the difference in the theory of change subscribed to by the two models. The penultimate section develops an assessment template for SSC in the light of the difference in approach to development. The final section contains a general conclusion and provides the relevant policy conclusions.

The present study proposes to look beyond 'effectiveness' and into 'efficiency' of SSC in delivering the development outcomes in a cost-effective manner, given the resource crunch that is leading to uneven development across the globe. However, the measurement of cost effectiveness need not necessarily confine itself to 'economic' and/or 'time' costs alone. Any cooperation activity would potentially involve social, political, environmental and cultural costs for the recipient partners too. It can be further observed that while the traditional model of aid-based development cooperation relied on the 'efficiency' of a market-centred mechanism of resource distribution, SSC relies primarily on the role of visible hands through the different components of developmental support, as enshrined in the ideas of the 'development compact', involving a multitude of complementary modalities to reduce a potential rise in the economic, political and social costs of delivery to enhance its efficiency.

This process compares and contrasts the extant theories of change that differentiate the opposing models of cooperation in development and proposes a different operational

template to assess SSC. The proposed template includes three distinct components. The first component, designed to assess adherence to the principles of SSC, should be common to all partners engaged in SSC-related cooperation. This may be called process assessment and would ensure the extent to which the non-negotiable principles of SSC are being followed by the partner countries. The second component may be called assessment of the performance that would capture the modality-specific pluralities existing under SSC. The third component, exclusively left to the discretion of the partner countries, would be designed to assess the impact of SSC.

Finally, it is argued that the assessment process will help strengthen the quest for social justice and equity among the partners in the Global South, augment the spirit of solidarity and trust, and identify a roadmap to further contribute to the allocative and technical efficiency of them all.

1. Context

Plurality is the fundamental strength of South-South Cooperation (SSC). Such pluralities operate in terms of the governance structures of the countries belonging to the Global South.

The internal institutional structures also exhibit pluralism that runs contrary to the ‘governance related conditionalities’, which require the borrowing country to adopt ‘better’ institutions that improve ‘governance’ – the feature attributed as ‘Global Standard Institutions’ (GSI) (Chang 2011).

Since the Paris Forum on Aid Effectiveness in 2005 and the declaration of the Accra Agenda for Action 2008, there was initially a consistent effort at convincing the votaries of SSC to adopt the standardized DAC definition of Official Development Assistance (ODA), which later became diluted to a demand for developing a generic evaluation template that would help facilitate measurement of the effectiveness of SSC. The idea has been to ensure a natural and organic convergence between the two distinct institutional mechanisms that contribute to the flow of development finances across the globe. The declaration after the Fourth High Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness in Busan 2011 established ‘an agreed framework for development co-operation that embraces traditional donors, South-South co-operators, the BRICS, civil society organizations and private funders’ with common goals and shared principles but differential commitments. The Global Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation (GPEDC) also owes its creation to the efforts initiated in Busan. However, some of the stronger votaries of SSC – the emerging economies that have been extending significant developmental support to their partners – did not join forces with GPEDC. It is argued that the existence of a fundamental ideological difference between the adherents of these two models of development cooperation stands in the way of effecting such an organic convergence. Nor did the later attempt in 2014 that proposed a separate mechanism of Total Official Support for Sustainable Development (TOSSD) meet with a favourable response from those nations. The pluralities that have been honoured in a time-tested manner by the followers of SSC stand in the way of such a ‘desired’ convergence. The contestations are still too evident to be resolved. The present study is premised on these evident contestations.

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The objectives of the study are two-fold:

- It will develop a comprehensive but non-standardized framework of assessment of SSC to generate evidence on distributive efficiency;
- It will also identify tools to create evidence on allocative, technical and delivery efficiency of SSC partnerships.

Such a study will create opportunities for active participation of NGOs, academia, CSOs, private sector and national governments, along with the other stakeholders in development cooperation to enhance peer-learning and knowledge sharing on a voluntary basis (Paragraph 24I, BAPA+40 Outcome Document).

The document is divided into 8 sections. Section 2 elaborates the extent of multi-layered plurality found among the countries that are involved in SSC and argues that

the accepted plurality renders the development delivery system under SSC complex, unlike the model evolved by the traditional donors, which contains a linear simple systemic structure of development cooperation. Jobin (2008), following Picciotto (2002), elaborates as to how the paradigm of development aid has constantly shifted from an emphasis on engineering and mechanical foundation to stabilizing macroeconomic and finance policies of the aided countries and looking towards a multidisciplinary approach in facilitating development in countries lagging behind in terms of their aspirations and desire to catch up with their industrialized peers (P 438). The need to capture the complexity of a development process was discussed at length during the consultation process on revising DAC evaluation criteria (DAC 2018) where the necessity of including issues such as complexity, inclusiveness ('no one left behind') and partnerships was highlighted and, subsequently, a new criterion of cohesion was introduced in 2019 to better capture linkages, systems thinking, partnership dynamics and complexity (DAC 2019, P 3). The consultation also highlighted the narrow approach to 'results' as compared to the desired emphasis on 'transformational change' as another weakness of the evaluation criteria followed prior to the inclusion of the criterion of 'cohesion'. However, it is still not very evident from the available literature how the new criteria would be linked in practice to the evaluation design of development cooperation. Keeping in mind that the objective of the study is to develop a methodological structure for impact assessment of SSC from an efficiency perspective and acknowledging the complex features of a development process, the next section looks into the issue of effectiveness and efficiency of development cooperation and their contributions to the two contesting models. In doing so, it focuses on the emphasis in SSC on distributive efficiency and reducing the cost of delivery of developmental outcome. Section 4 delves into the history of these two strands of development cooperation models as they have evolved over the years since the end of the Second World War. The next section looks at the process of development cooperation as an exercise that involves the use of visible hands, unlike the market-led process, which believes in efficient allocation of resources through the operation of invisible hands. Section 6 distinguishes the two major approaches to development cooperation – OECD-led approach and SSC as viewed through an analytical lens that throws light on the difference in the theory of change subscribed to by the two models. The penultimate section develops an assessment template for SSC in the light of the difference in approach to development. The final section contains the conclusions.

2. Plurality Respects Complexity

Plurality is the essence of the theories that guide the developmental pathways of partners engaged in SSC. Hirschman (1981) distinguished between such theories in terms of two parameters, namely, the monoeconomics claim and the mutual benefit claim.

Development, in the spirit of SSC, is a complex process and more often than not, a non-linear one.

The monoeconomics claim underscores the view that developing countries as a group are set apart, through a number of specific economic characteristics common to them, from the industrialized world, and the traditional economic analysis, which has concentrated on industrialized countries can be safely applied to the former if those common features are taken care of. The mutual benefit claim is the assertion that economic relations between these two groups of countries could be shaped in such a way as to yield gains for both. Orthodox growth theories on development accept both these assertions, hence the emergence of two-gap and subsequently three-gap theories to help the countries lagging behind in achieving convergence. The Marxist theory, on the other hand, asserts the monoeconomics claim but rejects the other. Development economics, on the contrary, calls for rejection of the monoeconomics claim, while having complete faith in the mutual benefit claim. Centre-periphery models, theories of unequal exchange or dependency paradigm reject both these claims. SSC can well be argued to have rejected the ideas of the monoeconomics claim and to have pursued plurality of theoretical approaches in its application, with faith in the logic of sharing (Chaturvedi 2016) that yields mutual benefits to all the partners. The idea of monoeconomics has been elaborated further in Section 6.

SSC thus subscribes to the idea of plurality in its approaches to cooperation and, by extension, believes in methodological pluralities in carrying out an impact assessment of the activities carried out, with a firm belief in its fundamental principles that guide its operation. Development, in the spirit of SSC, is a complex process and more often than not, a non-linear one. Such a non-linear characteristic of development dynamics has to give way to an evaluation method that is not linear. A linear evaluation rubric links input, action, output, outcome and impacts in a linear relationship, where inputs are linked to action to yield the desired output and the consequent outcomes and impact in a deterministic manner in line with the monoeconomics claim. A developmental process identified by SSC that rejects the monoeconomics claim, on the other hand, acknowledges the reality that the process is rather complex and requires acceptance of the reality that it involves interconnected and interdependent elements and dimensions; feedback processes that promote and inhibit change within systems where system characteristics and behaviours emerge from simple rules of interaction. Ramalingam et al (2008) is an interesting contribution to clarifying the implications of complexity in a development process. Arthur (2015) provides a general perspective on complexity from an economic perspective. In simple systems, feedback operates in a relatively straightforward and predictable fashion and the evaluation mechanism is methodologically linear. In complex systems, feedback processes, on the other hand, occur when a change among any of the elements or dimensions of a system will have a dynamic influence on other elements or dimensions of the system. As a consequence, the whole developmental system is non-linear. Linearity, on the other hand, assumes proportionality where causes are proportional to effects (Strogatz, 2003). As a result, any linear problem can be broken down into independent components, with each piece

The rejection of
monoeconomics by the
practitioners of SSC opens up
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for its assessment.

analysed separately. Post analysis, the separate answers can be re-aggregated to answer the original problem. In a linear system, the whole is exactly equivalent to the sum of the parts. The operationalization of development cooperation through the construction of a logical framework [see Coleman (1987) for a lucid exposition on logical framework] follows this perspective of linearity. According to the World Bank (2000), the Logical Framework has the power to communicate the essential elements of a complex project clearly and succinctly throughout the project cycle. It is used to develop the overall design of a project, to improve project implementation monitoring and to strengthen periodic project evaluation. Any non-linearities that might arise are excluded through accommodation of a number of assumptions to that effect. Gasper (2000) provides a critical evaluation of the idea of logical framework as used in evaluating a developmental project and argues that a choice of an audit form of accountability as the priority of evaluation may be at the expense of evaluation as learning. With multiple stakeholders engaged in a complex process it becomes very difficult, both methodologically and politically, to identify a causal relationship and attribute the effects to certain interventions.

The extant methods of evaluation of development cooperation that have been in operation are, for all practical purposes, not appreciative of such pluralities. The evaluation structure has been based on the five criteria identified by the Development Assistance Committee (DAC) of the traditional developed donors club in 1991 – relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability (DAC 1991 P 5), and subsequently defined in 2002 – are premised on a linear model of development that corresponds to the monoeconomics claim of development through growth¹. The OECD DAC Network on Development Evaluation (EvalNet) revisited the definitions and use of the OECD DAC evaluation criteria in 2018-2019 and adapted revised definitions for the five criteria already in use, with a new criterion introduced in terms of coherence. Coherence would call for complementarity, harmonization and co-ordination with others, and the extent to which the intervention adds value while avoiding duplication of effort (DAC 2019). Furthermore, the newly introduced criterion has not been enough, as we argued earlier, to incorporate the complexities in developmental cooperation processes, even though during the consultation that preceded the adoption of a new criterion and the revised definitions revealed that one of the most important perceived weaknesses of these criteria was their inability to capture the system thinking and non-linearities within the ambit of evaluation design. The rejection of monoeconomics by the practitioners of SSC opens up the need for a new paradigm for its assessment, capturing the complex and non-linear nature of the cooperation that is very much sensitive to the initial conditions of the partner countries – another feature of a complex system. A complex system is further characterized by self-regulation and co-evolution, as is indeed captured in the guiding principles of SSC.

The dimensions of any system can be mapped using a concept called phase space – also described as the ‘space of the possible’ (Cohen and Stewart, 2000). The phase space can be developed by identifying all the dimensions that are relevant to understanding the system and assigning possible values to the identified dimensions (Romenska, 2006). Phase space is useful to describe complex systems as it goes beyond establishing known relationships between a set of dependent and independent variables, with an intent to understand the overall shape of the system covering all key dimensions that operate in reality. In a sense, a phase space is used to identify the patterns underlying seemingly complex behaviour. Such patterns may be random for a particular complex system. Conversely, the system may be limited to a particular part of the phase space. When observed over time, the points can start to form recognisable patterns. These

¹ The criteria were further defined in the 2002 Glossary of Key Terms in Evaluation and Results Based Management

patterns are known as attractors and they embody the long-term qualitative behaviour of a system (Capra, 1996). The existence of attractors in a complex system, thereby rules out the compulsory existence of a stable equilibrium in a system. A complex system has the ability to create numbers of unstable equilibrium situations as it moves along its dynamic path—the phase space. Thus a complex system requires the existence of adaptive agents who would be engaged in self-organization and facilitate co-evolution. (for a detailed exposition on complex systems, see Ramalingam and Jones 2008). The ideas enshrined in the Development Compact capture the complexities in development cooperation at operational level (Chaturvedi 2016, Chakrabarti 2016)

The application of development cooperation practices, in line with the application of the fundamental philosophical doctrine behind the effort also brings in plurality in SSC. Two fundamental features – the extent of plurality on demand from recipient partners and that of plurality in comparative advantage of provider partners – determine the model of development cooperation. SSC, being non-negotiably demand-driven, asserts the plurality of demand, while simultaneously asserting the plurality of comparative advantage of the providers – the perspective of efficiency having been brought in. Examples of the effective implementation of the IBSA Fund (IBSA Fund, 2020) or the Reverse Linkage programmes through country-led Resource Centres initiated by Islamic Development Bank (IsDB) (IsDB 2018) are important pointers to the assertion of pluralities in terms of both perspectives. The traditional model of development cooperation, in its earlier state, rejected both these possibilities. Supply-driven support, coupled with conditionalities and fragmentation of aid from amongst the donor countries, has been raised a number of times in the literature (see Koch 2015 who gives a typology of conditionalities, and Klingebiel et al 2016 and Gehring et al 2017 for a detailed analysis of fragmentation of aid). After the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness in 2005, plurality of comparative advantage of the providers was asserted but there was little agreement on the plurality of demands from the recipients. The declaration and the subsequent Accra Agenda for Action called for inclusive partnership to facilitate harmonization and national ownership but were not forthcoming in appreciating the plurality of demand. The Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) appreciated the plurality of demand from the recipient countries but rejected, to a large extent, the plurality of comparative advantage of the providers. All goals were intended to be achieved through flow of financial resources from the donors to the recipients, for them to take care of their respective requirements. Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), to a large extent, are appreciative of the existing pluralities on both counts. Dutt (2013) offers an interesting elaboration of the motives that are found to be contributing to increased activities around SSC in terms of pluralities of demand and those of comparative advantages in supply across the Global South.

While appreciating the complex process involved in the developmental path of a developing country, nor can SSC afford to be rigid in terms of modalities applied to help support a partner country in achieving its aspirations. Thereby, SSC also believes in multiplicity in modalities of support. It is observed that plurality in modalities is relatively higher in SSC, compared to those found in the efforts by traditional donors. Furthermore, SSC models in development cooperation are not absolutely homogenous. The Latin American approach to SSC is mostly confined to technical cooperation and policy transfer while the Asian model – with its application of the Development Compact is found to be more plural in that it tries to capture other foundational features of development not observed in the Latin American model (Bracho 2018).

Given the multiple layers of pluralities observed in the operationalization of SSC, the present document is a synthesis of different methodological approaches followed by partners engaged in SSC. In doing so, it will examine the existence of plurality at several

It is observed that plurality in modalities is relatively higher in SSC, compared to those found in the efforts by traditional donors.

stages of the idea: its theoretical conceptualization, its mode of implementation and consequently, its pluralistic approaches to assessment of impact.

NeST carried out a study entitled 'ASSESSING IMPACT OF SOUTH-SOUTH COOPERATION: VARIATIONS IN PERSPECTIVES: SELECT COUNTRY CASE STUDIES', which was published in March 2019 during the BAPA+40 Conference in Buenos Aires (UNOSSC 2019). The study considered four cases of assessment carried out across four countries – Brazil, China, India and South Africa – and observed the nature of heterogeneity and plurality in their respective assessment frameworks, to argue against a common assessment framework, even though there may be some common elements. Two factors contributed to the initial choice of the countries being limited to what they were. First, these four countries are considered to be emerging as the votaries of evolving a plurality influenced country-led template of impact assessment of SSC as opposed to the arguments raised for standardized and common models of monitoring and evaluating SSC – a feature often attached to the activities of the Global Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation (GPEDC). Second, the fact that the founding members of NeST are located in these countries also influenced the choice, as it was considered that more insights would be generated by capturing the existing pluralities and the consequent complexities in their cooperation practices.

The summary of findings from the case studies appears in Table 1 below. It is evident that the table can provide a good enough framework of assessment of SSC with all the scopes for capturing plurality in modalities and conforming to non-negotiable principles of SSC. A close look at the matrix also reveals that an assessment of an SSC experience initiated by a particular country need not necessarily fill up all the cells given therein. Each partner engaging in SSC will be free to assess the modalities, processes and results. However, it is desirable that all the cells under SSC principles are ticked. Interestingly, it should be noted that there is a clear convergence across the countries in their approaches to assessment as we consider the issue of conforming to the principles of SSC in implementing the cooperation activities. Almost all the cells linked to the principles of SSC have been ticked in respect of the countries considered in this study. All the case studies identified the principles of demand-driven characteristics of partnership, mutual benefit and equality as features necessary to be assessed. The same phenomena are observed in respect of the modalities as well. Capacity-building support to partner countries and technology sharing also emerged as the common means of cooperation in SSC. The variations in respect of assessing the results are, however, significant. The case studies from Brazil and South Africa do not appear to have shown much concern for results while assessing their SSC activities. The Chinese and Indian case studies, on the other hand, tried to cover the results perspective as well in their respective assessment frameworks.

Table 1. Convergence and Divergence Matrix of Country Case Studies

Dimensions	Assessment criteria	Brazil case study	China case study	India case study	South Africa case study
SSC Principles	Respect for national sovereignty		✓	✓	✓
	National ownership and independence	✓		✓	✓
	Equality	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Non-conditionality		✓	✓	✓
	Non-interference in domestic affairs		✓	✓	✓
	Mutual benefit	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Demand driven	✓	✓	✓	✓
Modalities	Capacity-building	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Trade & Investment		✓	✓	✓
	Development Finance			✓	✓
	Grants	✓	✓		✓
	Technology	✓	✓	✓	✓
Processes	Cost-efficient delivery		✓	✓	✓
Results	Output		✓	✓	
	Outcome		✓	✓	
	Impact		✓	✓	
	Sustainability		✓		✓

Given the insights derived from the earlier study, the present one attempts to develop a generic template for assessing SSC that also incorporates the pluralities in practice and approaches. The candidate indicators that are available to capture the variations across the countries are listed for populating the assessment templates.

3. Effectiveness and Efficiency in Development Cooperation

The issue of effectiveness in development cooperation has been attracting attention from practitioners for quite some time.

Development cooperation is often considered to be an unquestionable candidate for ‘evidence based policy making’ (Sanderson 2002; Sutcliffe & Court 2005; Howlett 2009; Banerjee et al 2017). The Prize in Economic Sciences in memory of Alfred Nobel was awarded in 2019 in recognition of efforts to bring this issue in focus. Marston & Watts 2003 challenges this view. The repeated call for ensuring ‘effectiveness’ of cooperation meted out to countries in their search for development indicates the concerns centred around evaluation/assessment that help collect such evidence. Paragraph 29 of the BAPA+40 Outcome Document urges in favour of the need to enhance the effectiveness of SSC and triangular cooperation. It also recognizes that the impact of SSC should be assessed with a view to improving its quality in a results-oriented manner.

Effectiveness, as per the criterion evolved within the Development Assistance Committee (DAC) of OECD in 1991 and defined in 2002, “is a measure of the extent to which an aid activity attains its objectives”. It also looks for “factors influencing the achievement or non-achievement of the objectives”. The definition of effectiveness was later revised in 2019 when it was rephrased as “the extent to which the intervention achieved, or is expected to achieve, its objectives, and its results, including any differential results across groups” (DAC 2020, P 9). The revised emphasis on ‘results’ beyond the earlier focus on achievements of ‘objectives’ and the distributional aspects of development cooperation is “to open the door to asking important questions about the distribution of results across different groups, and to look beyond intended objectives. This is in line with the policy priority to leave no one behind” (DAC 2020 P9).

While DAC criteria are linked to evaluation of individual projects or programmes introduced in a developing country to facilitate development, GPEDC, on the other hand, is particularly engaged in linking development effectiveness to the 2030 Agenda and has endeavoured to develop a country-level dashboard to monitor results-based project management for managing development results, highlighting the need for transparency and mutual accountability. It emphasized the need to measure progress on SDG targets, namely 17.5, 17.6 and 5 c.

Efficiency is also considered an important criterion in DAC’s evaluative framework. It defined efficiency in 2002 as “a measure of how economically resources/inputs (funds, expertise, time, etc.) are converted to results” (DAC 2002, P 21) which was subsequently revised in 2019 as “the extent to which the intervention delivers, or is likely to deliver, results in an economic and timely way” (DAC 2020, P 10). The shift refers to a move away from comparison with feasible alternatives to evaluating the conversion of inputs (funds, expertise, natural resources, time, etc.) into outputs, outcomes and impacts, in the most cost-effective way possible. ‘Timely’ delivery is within the intended timeframe, or a timeframe reasonably adjusted to the demands of the evolving context.

Assessing operational efficiency (how well the intervention was managed) of cooperation activities was also brought within the purview of this criteria.

The present study proposes to look beyond 'effectiveness' and into 'efficiency' of SSC in delivering the development outcomes in a cost-effective manner, given the resource crunch that is leading to uneven development across the globe. However, the measurement of cost effectiveness need not necessarily confine itself to 'economic' and/or 'time costs' alone. Any cooperation activity would potentially involve social, political, environmental and cultural costs for the recipient partners too in accompaniment with the often quoted economic and time-related costs. Development-induced displacement of communities and environmental and ecological damage caused by projects initiated with financial support under development cooperation are quite common. Recent actions by the World Bank and other global/regional financial institutions that involved withdrawal of financial support from projects involving large scale displacements and introduction of some consciously designed norms to minimize such social costs of involuntary displacements or environmental degradation can be mentioned as measures to contain the rise in such costs, which are often not included in the measurement of efficiency. The DAC criterion of efficiency, unfortunately, does not consider those costs. Further, the literature on transaction costs also identifies a feature of agency efficiency that captures the efficiency of facilitating minimization of cost in market transactions. As development cooperation by OECD donors is completely determined through the financial metric, it involves 100% conversion of financial resources into usable inputs for development, under an assumption of the existence of a 'complete set of perfect markets', thereby avoiding the reality of transaction costs or, at the most, hoping for their minimization. In reality, as we consider the existing structural format of the developing countries, market failures or even non-existence of markets constitute a fundamental constraint in imitating the development model followed by the Western world. Such conversions of development finance into inputs required for development evidently involve a significant transaction cost due to associated search, bargaining, negotiating, contracting, monitoring and enforcing costs that are the hallmarks of market-led transactions in a real sense of the term. However, they are often found to be inadequate and the relevant institutions required to minimize them are often missing in a developing country seeking aid from a DAC partner country. The Washington Consensus (see Williamson 2004 for a detailed exposition on the idea) to bring about desired institutional changes in developing countries that would reduce transaction costs preceded by the prevalence of tied aid, also to ensure similar effects on the costs of transactions by reducing search and bargaining costs, was expected to add to efficiency in the development cooperation exercises. This urge generated the need for conditionalities to be linked to the provision of aid. However, being centred around conditionalities and mostly supply-driven, all these components of transaction costs, in effect, increased for both parties in the cooperation. The issues of aid fragmentation, already mentioned earlier, and the consequent call for harmonization across donors, have figured prominently to flag these concerns. The emphasis on evaluation in a DAC framework is necessarily an effort to ensure that the contracts are fulfilled as per the logical framework decided *ex ante* while a project or programme was initiated, thereby reducing the incidence of transaction costs of the donors. However, they add immensely to those of the recipients of the aid.

As we look at SSC, it is necessary to appreciate that these other cost components very much influence its final results. Bereft of any conditionality, being demand-driven, to a significant extent, being non-financial and often in-kind support (capacity-building, duty-free, quota-free trade support, technology sharing beyond the IPR requirements) and unequivocally centred around the idea of mutual benefit, development cooperation

through an SSC paradigm is consciously aware of increasing efficiency measured in terms of cost of delivery not only through reduction in social, political, cultural and often ecological and environmental costs, but also by ensuring a considerable reduction in transaction costs.

In this context, it would also be relevant to mention that the OECD with inputs from Brookings and the Centre for Global Development created a Quality of Aid (QuODA) Index to measure aid effectiveness at the level of OECD donors². The index uses 31 indicators grouped in four dimensions that reflect the so-called ‘international consensus’ of what constitutes high-quality aid: (i) Maximizing Efficiency (ii) Fostering Institutions, (iii) Reducing Burden on Recipient Countries and (iv) Transparency and Learning. As per the latest assessment using these indicators, it was observed that between 2008 and 2012 hardly any improvement was observed in the efficiency index among the OECD donors (Birdsall & Kharas 2014), even though there were visible and significant gains in fostering institutions and in transparency and learning. There has been little progress on the dimension of reducing the burden on recipient countries, with three indicators worsening and four indicators improving. The lack of improvement in the efficiency dimension is evidently the result of increasing transaction costs in delivering the result of development cooperation to the developing countries (Vandeninden & Paul, 2012). As an EU document puts it, “Transaction costs may be defined as the extra costs – beyond that of the aid itself – of delivering aid. These costs may be borne by the recipient, the donor, or by both. It may cover, for example, the money, time, inconvenience of identifying, negotiating, implementing, monitoring and evaluating aid delivery.” (EU 2007, P 19). Asset specificity faced by aid agencies also contributes to their inefficiency. Asset specificity is considered to be high when donors are not perfectly aligned with the recipient’s policies and require some guarantee over the intended use of aid. Being unconditional, SSC support avoids the scourge of asset specificity and enjoys what is referred to in the firm efficiency literature as agency efficiency. Commitment to follow a standardized structure and format of aid distribution and an evaluation format also has the potential to contribute to increased asset specificity and a resultant raised agency efficiency of the aid organizations affiliated to OECD.

Efficiency, from an economic viewpoint, can be considered in multiple ways. Some of the well-known concepts are allocative efficiency, technical (production) efficiency and distributive efficiency. Put simply, allocative efficiency calls for producing the “right” basket of goods and services, while production or technical efficiency insists on them being produced in the ‘right’ way. While the first approach to efficiency leads to the choice of the best alternative, the second approach confirms that they are produced in a manner such that the ratio between the value of inputs and that of outputs is the minimum. Needless to say, both these measures of efficiency can be ascribed methodological objectivity to a considerable extent and hence are open to measurement. Distributive efficiency, on the other hand, demands that goods and services are received by those who have the greatest need for them. Obviously, the concept is not purely objective and involves a considerable value judgment.

In view of the long history of SSC, it may be clearly argued that it was premised primarily on the distributive efficiency perspective – to initiate a collective effort in facilitating a process that includes citizens from all the Southern countries through the creation of the solidarity income (for an elaboration on solidarity income, see Mihalyi et al 2019) and generating positive externalities for the partners (Chakrabarti 2016). The initial emphasis on ‘capacity-building’ and ‘technical cooperation’ attest to such an emphasis.

² The latest findings are available at <https://www.cgdev.org/blog/how-do-you-measure-aid-quality-and-who-ranks-highest>

The lack of improvement in the efficiency dimension is evidently the result of increasing transaction costs in delivering the result of development cooperation to the developing countries.

The strategy of export-led growth, subsequently fuelled by the onset of globalization in respect of emerging economies from the South, caused a paradigm shift from the earlier strategy of a self-reliant growth path pursued by the global South. Such a shift also calls for some consideration of the issues of allocative and technical efficiency *vis-à-vis* SSC. In the process, being driven by a quest for mutual benefits, they also facilitated adding to the agency efficiency of the partnership. The quest for an assessment template for SSC is thus not aimed at ensuring that the aid 'contracts' are fulfilled. It would look for the indicators that give us opportunities to examine if the agency efficiencies have been improved through reduced transaction costs.

To cut the whole story short, it is imperative that SSC and its assessment is viewed through a glass that emphasizes two of its potent differentials *vis-à-vis* those of traditional donor-driven cooperation – SSC is a complex system and its main objective is to contribute to distributive efficiency – features often not considered relevant in the DAC-led evaluation framework. The indicators identified in the proposed assessment template presented later will help assess the distributive efficiency perspective of SSC along with estimating the cost efficiency of the delivery system facilitated in the process.

4. Development Cooperation: A Historical Perspective

The present section traces the emergence of the two contesting models of development cooperation from a historical perspective.

A cooperative model that engages the players in repeated interactions has the potential to yield a better result for each one engaged in such an interaction.

Several studies exist that throw light on the historical evolution of OECD/DAC and SSC approaches. The novelty of the arguments presented in this section runs in terms of a comparative treatment of the simultaneous evolution of these two strands in operationalizing their respective world views. As the demand for developing a standardized assessment template, more or less in line with the practice followed by the members of DAC, for examining the impact of SSC has been at the centre of the present contestation on its desirability or otherwise, it is worthwhile to consider the genesis of the two contested models of development cooperation that have evolved since the middle of the previous century. It is often argued that such a template would add to the accountability, transparency and even predictability of SSC supports. The present section provides a brief history of the fundamental contestations that distinguish the practices of the traditional donors from those of the adherents of SSC. Any cooperative action that thrives on a spirit of solidarity is a conscious deviation from actions influenced by the principles of market mechanism based on the notion of competition. The famous Prisoners' Dilemma game confirms that strategies built upon the self-interest of those engaged with no opportunities to interact with each other, often lead to a solution that is suboptimal for each player engaged therein. A cooperative model that engages the players in repeated interactions has the potential to yield a better result for each one engaged in such an interaction.

The strength of cooperation was realized after the devastation of World War II when the famous Marshall Plan, also known as the European Recovery Programme was designed by the United States of America to help the European countries decimated by the War. Crafted as a four-year plan to reconstruct cities, industries and infrastructure the Plan also aimed at facilitating trade among the European countries and between Europe and the USA. Initiated in 1948 with a corpus of more than US\$15 billion, the Marshall Plan was also influenced by the expressed desire to halt the spread of communism on the European continent. It is also considered a key catalyst for the formation of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), a military alliance between North American and European countries established in 1949, and the subsequent beginning of the Cold War.

The success of the Marshall Plan – the USA committed and distributed 5% of its GDP as aid that was distributed to 16 European nations, including Britain, France, Belgium, the Netherlands, West Germany and Norway – was evident from the fact that by the time of the plan's last year, 1952, economic growth in the countries that had received funds had surpassed pre-war levels, a strong indicator of the programme's positive impact, at least economically. The political legacy of the Plan was highly impactful. It effectively divided the world into the East and the West – a feature that pervaded global geo-politics until the disintegration of the Soviet Union by the end of 1991. The 'solidarity income' created and the resultant positive externalities generated through engagement among a group

of equals – socially, politically and ideologically worked wonders for the war-ravaged societies in Western Europe. The absence of a conditionality element in the Marshall Plan should also be noted. The Marshall Plan may well be argued to have emerged as a successful example of a solidarity-based model of cooperation – an insight that the later champions of SSC might have applied to action.

The end of World War II also witnessed the emergence of a large number of new sovereign countries that came into existence due to the process of decolonization that ensued at the same time. A large part of Asia and Africa became independent. Between 1945 and 1960, about 36 of them either became independent states or gained autonomy from their European colonial rulers. The creation of so many new countries, some of which occupied strategic locations, others of which possessed significant natural resources, and most of which were desperately poor, altered the composition of the United Nations and the political complexity of every region of the globe. The newly independent nations that emerged in the 1950s and the 1960s became an important factor in changing the balance of power within the United Nations. The original membership of UN stood at 51 in 1945, changing rapidly to 99 in 1960 and to 127 by 1970. As the US Office of the Historian noted, “These new member states had a few characteristics in common; they were non-white, with developing economies, facing internal problems that were the result of their colonial past, which sometimes put them at odds with European countries and made them suspicious of European-style governmental structures, political ideas, and economic institutions. These countries also became vocal advocates of continuing decolonization, with the result that the UN Assembly was often ahead of the Security Council on issues of self-governance and decolonization. The new nations pushed the UN toward accepting resolutions for independence for colonial states and creating a special committee on colonialism, demonstrating that even though some nations continued to struggle for independence, in the eyes of the international community, the colonial era was ending.”³

This fluid politico-economic global situation was marked by two distinct approaches to international cooperation. The Truman Doctrine elaborated in 1947 “established that the United States would provide political, military and economic assistance to all democratic nations under threat from external or internal authoritarian forces.” This was obviously a strategy to restrict the spread of Soviet influence in the newly independent nations that were to emerge in large numbers in the coming decades and enjoy a numerical majority in the United Nations that could not be simply overlooked. The anti-colonial, read anti-West, narratives prevailing in most of the newly decolonized countries made the effort sharper to garner support in favour of an economic system that was market-led and governed in the spirit of ‘democracy’. Strengthening of economic structures in the newly independent countries that would be dictated by command and control of the State was to be avoided at all costs. Needless to say, the Doctrine did not only consider providing economic support to the countries in need but also created the space for possible dispatch of American civilian and military personnel and equipment to the region. It was often argued to be the *de facto* declaration of the Cold War. The Doctrine became shaped into the declaration of the Point Four Programme by Harry Truman in 1949 as an extension of his Doctrine announced in 1947. He called for a “bold new programme for making the benefits of our scientific advances and industrial progress available for the improvement and growth of underdeveloped nations”. The resulting Point Four Programme (so-called because it was the fourth point in Truman’s speech) resulted in millions of dollars in scientific and technical assistance, as well as hundreds of US experts, being sent to Latin American, Asian, Middle Eastern and African nations. As would be seen, this programme ultimately culminated into what is termed North-South Cooperation as exemplified by participation of countries

³ <https://history.state.gov/milestones/1945-1952/asia-and-africa>

that are members of Organization for Economic and Development Cooperation (OECD) in providing Official Development Assistance (ODA) to developing countries in need of resources to cover two fundamental gaps – gap in domestic resources to invest and gap in foreign exchange reserves to procure capital goods from the industrialized world. This idea is termed as the famous two-gap theory behind the argument for initiating international cooperation for development.

A simultaneous and almost parallel effort was initiated at the behest of leaders from the newly decolonized developing countries. The Bandung Conference in 1955 attracted participation from twenty-nine countries, representing a total population of 1.5 billion people, 54% of the world's population at the time. The Bandung Conference set the tone for what later came to be identified as SSC. The core principles of the Bandung Conference were political self-determination, mutual respect for sovereignty, non-aggression, non-interference in internal affairs, and equality. These issues were of central importance to all participants in the conference, most of which had recently emerged from colonial rule. These principles were formalized through the creation of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) in 1961. The phrase itself was first used to represent the doctrine by India's permanent representative V.K. Krishna Menon in 1953, at the United Nations. Even though, some of the member countries joining this group were actually quite closely aligned with one or another of the superpowers, it primarily focused on developing multilateral ties and connections as well as unity among the developing nations of the world, especially those within the Global South.

Incidentally, OECD was also established in 1961, replacing the Organization for European Economic Cooperation (OEEC) that had been set up in 1948. OEEC emerged out of the Marshall Plan and the Conference of Sixteen (Conference on European Economic Cooperation), which sought to establish a permanent organization to continue work on a joint recovery programme and in particular to supervise the distribution of aid. The Development Assistance Committee (DAC) was also established in 1961, to substitute the Development Assistance Group (DAG) that was engaged as a forum for consultations among aid donors on assistance to less-developed countries. Institutionalization of economic cooperation by the industrialized countries (donors) to facilitate development in the countries that were lagging behind (recipients) was complete.

A 0.7% ODA/GNP target was first agreed in 1970 and was repeatedly re-endorsed at the highest level at international aid and development conferences. Discussions to identify the flow of official aid targets based on total flow of both official and private resources going to developing countries were initiated in 1958. A target of 1% was first suggested by the World Council of Churches and during the 1960s all DAC members subscribed to it. However, it had a major flaw in that governments cannot control or predict private capital flows, nor can they adjust official flows to compensate for fluctuations in private flows. Efforts were made to correct this, concentrated on elaborating a sub-target for official flows. A target of official flows of 0.75% of gross national product was proposed to be reached by 1972, based on work by Nobel Prize winner Jan Tinbergen, who estimated the inflows required for developing economies to achieve desirable growth rates. In 1969, the Pearson Commission, in its report *Partners in Development*, proposed a target of 0.7% of donor GNP to be reached “by 1975 and in no case later than 1980.” This suggestion was taken up in a UN resolution on 24 October 1970. The target built on the DAC's 1969 definition of ODA. With the revised System of National Accounts in 1993, gross national product was replaced by gross national income (GNI), an equivalent concept. DAC members' performance against the 0.7% target is therefore now shown in terms of ODA/GNI ratios.

The idea of solidarity-based SSC had been in existence for quite some time, even, to be specific, before the birth of OECD. The spirit of the Bandung Conference (1955) and the resultant formation of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) in 1961 and G77 in 1964 was mostly built on the need for political solidarity and social networking among the newly independent colonies. UN also played its role in helping form a platform for SSC with a clear focus on economic cooperation among the Southern nations, when it set up the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD set up in 1964) for cooperation in trade, Special unit for Technical Cooperation among Developing Countries (TCDC) in 1974 within United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) for promoting technical and economic cooperation among the Southern nations and United Nations Fund for Science and Technology for Development (UNFSTD) established in 1987, for cooperation in science and technology. The Special Unit for TCDC was renamed in 2004 as Special Unit for South-South Cooperation and subsequently, United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation (UNOSSC) was carved out as a separate entity in the UN system in 2013.

The Buenos Aires Plan of Action (BAPA) in 1978 made distinct progress for the cause of SSC with its call for strengthening TCDC in the face of deteriorating terms of trade à la Prebisch (1950) and Singer (1950), subsequently extended by Myrdal (1956) [for a detailed exposition on the ideas linked to terms of trade crisis facing the Southern world see Ziesemer, 1998]. The NAM, on the other hand, went from strength to strength, having organized 4 Summits before the formalization of the Buenos Aires Plan of Action in 1978, which called for economic and technical cooperation among the Southern countries to help them become self-reliant in a bid to escape the prevailing paradigm of ‘dominance’ by the North. The famous ‘Prebisch-Singer Hypothesis’ became the starting point for the Southern nations to go beyond the sphere of political cooperation to the economic domain of cooperation with one another.

In the meantime, the Algiers Conference of NAM in 1973 called for a New International Economic Order. The Declaration on the Establishment of a New International Economic Order was adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in 1974 and referred to a wide range of trade, financial, commodity and debt-related issues (1 May 1974, A/RES/S-6/3201). The call for the new order was based on the following tenets:

1. Developing countries must be entitled to regulate and control the activities of multinational corporations operating within their territory.
2. They must be free to nationalize or expropriate foreign property in conditions favourable to them.
3. They must be free to set up associations of primary commodities producers similar to OPEC; all other States must recognize this right and refrain from taking economic, military, or political measures calculated to restrict it.
4. International Trade should be based on the need to ensure stable, equitable, and remunerative prices for raw materials, generalized non-reciprocal and non-discriminatory tariff preferences, as well as transfer of technology to developing countries; and should provide economic and technical assistance without any strings attached.

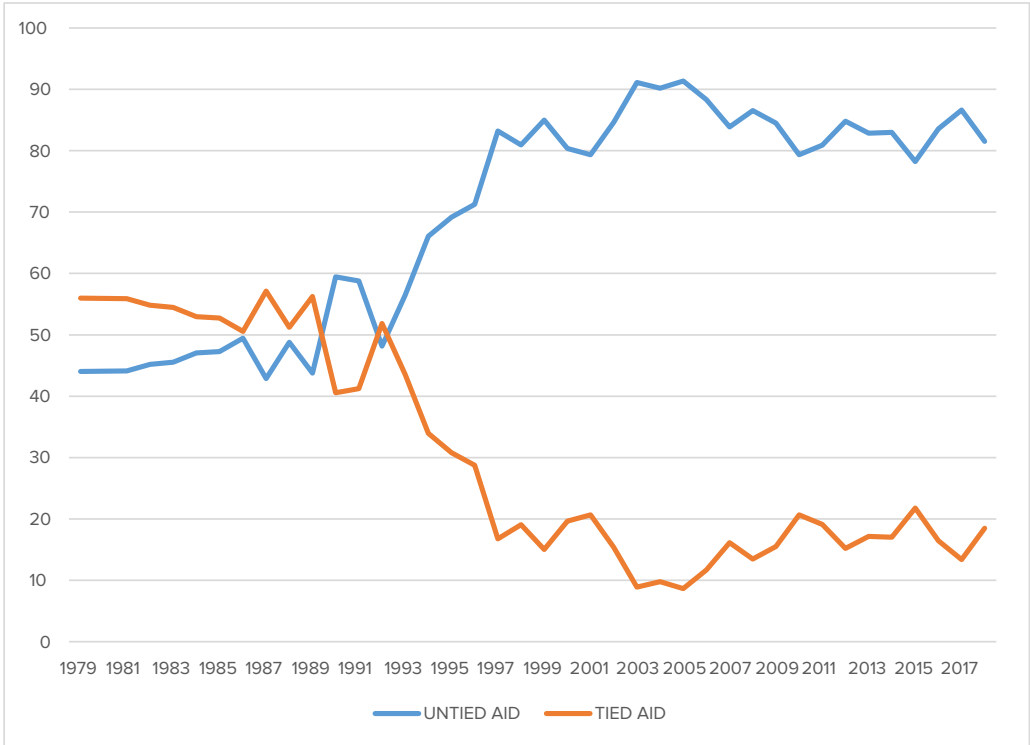
The prospects of North-South Dialogue that ensued from this demand for a new order noticeably worsened in view of the gloomy economic prospects that faced the southern nations and the aggravation of the general international situation from the early 1980s. Virtually no part of the New International Economic Order was implemented. Instead, from the 1980s onward, the Bretton Woods System would be replaced with the Washington Consensus and economic globalization in terms often described as neoliberal. The

Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP) made its appearance at this juncture of history to subsequently bring almost the whole of the Southern world under its ambit, leading to a temporary lull in SSC-related activities, even though there were collective efforts by the South at different multilateral forums such as the Stockholm Summit, Rio Summit, WTO, Climate Summit, the Bretton Woods Institutions and UN to press for an equitable space for them.

NSC was already characterized by a significant share of tied aid. Chart 1 below reveals that more than 50% of bilateral commitments under ODA until the end of 1980s were partially or completely tied. The Washington Consensus, first coined in 1989, led to a new set of conditionalities linked to required domestic reforms to be carried out by the recipient countries in exchange for support from the multilateral organizations. This perhaps led to the reduction in tying status of bilateral assistance from the DAC member countries.

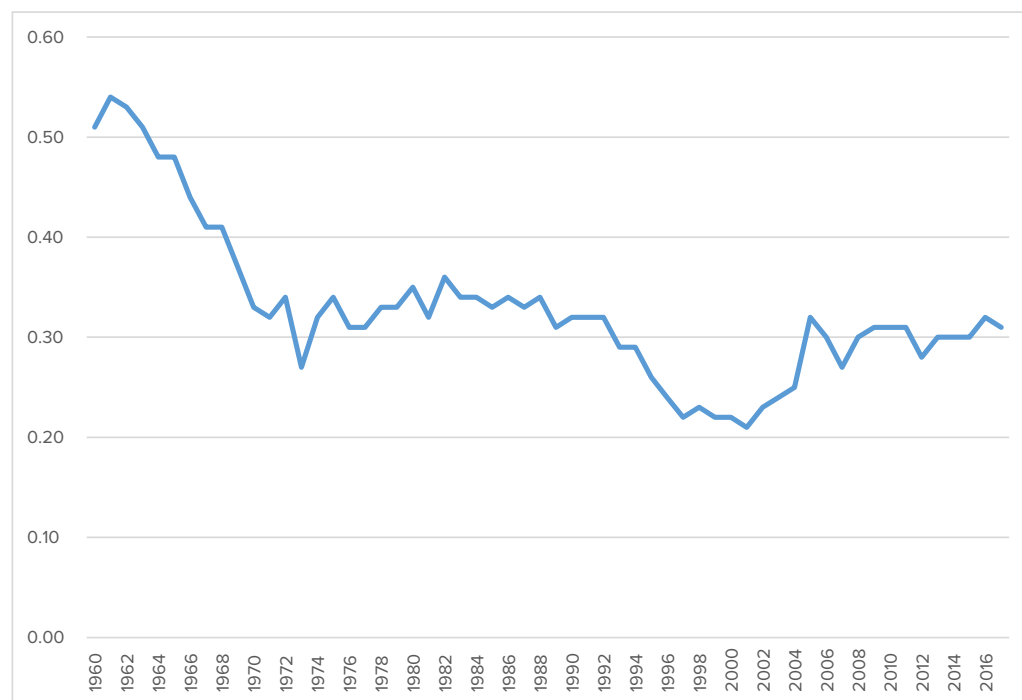
On the other hand, ODA as a share of GNI never reached the committed 0.7%. As Chart 2 below would suggest, the ODA/GNI ratio hovered around 30% between 1960 and 2017, with the share decreasing further between 1993 and 2005. Interestingly, it was in 2005 that the OECD called for aid effectiveness. The end of the Cold War has been cited as the proximate reason behind reduced interest among the donors to use ODA as a tool to enhance strategic self-interest (Brown 2020). The failure of ODA to generate the desired level of development was initially ascribed to the failure of the governments of the recipient countries. When it was realized that the failures had continued, in spite of all the stringent conditionalities attached, OECD leadership opened up to the idea that donors also needed to change how they worked.

Chart 1. Tying Status Of Bilateral ODA



Source: Calculated using data from OECDSTAT.

Chart 2. ODA as % of GNI



Source: Calculated using data from OECDSTAT.

The aspirational emergence of SSC practitioners in providing development support in significant quantum to the Southern countries to complement the flow of development resources from the traditional donor countries also contributed meaningfully to the concern for effectiveness. The inclusion of SSC as an important mechanism in global development cooperation in the Busan Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation meeting in 2011 signalled a great shift in the approach towards cooperation. The emphasis shifted from aid effectiveness to development effectiveness. It can be noted that the most prominent partners practising SSC are yet to join this bandwagon and still prefer to continue with their existing platform, as was clear in their sincere participation during the BAPA+40 Conference held in 2019 to commemorate the 40th anniversary of the original BAPA principles towards charting out a fresh road map to strengthen solidarity among the Southern partners. Meanwhile, the High-level United Nations Conference on SSC was held in Nairobi, Kenya, in 2009 to adopt the Nairobi outcome document, which was later endorsed by the General Assembly. The Third International Conference on Financing for Development held in Addis Ababa in 2015 also endorsed the role of SSC in contributing to the process of sustainable development.

During this entire period of its history, the UN system also played an important role in creating a visible space for effective cooperation among the Southern countries. Beginning with the establishment of the first UN technical aid programme by the Economic and Social Council in 1949, followed by the creation of the United Nations Conference for Trade and Development (UNCTAD) in 1964 and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in 1969, the creation of the Special Unit for TCDC in UNDP was endorsed by the United Nations General Assembly in 1974. The BAPA was endorsed in 1978. The High-level Committee on the Review of Technical Cooperation among Developing Countries was created by the United Nations General Assembly in 1980. 19 December was declared 'as the United Nations Day for South-South Cooperation' in 2003. The Special Unit for South-South Cooperation, hosted by UNDP was given a separate identity in 2012 as the United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation.

The expressed concerns about shrinking effectiveness of ODA-denominated cooperation coupled with the growing importance of SSC also opened up a new idea of development cooperation, in the form of triangular cooperation. Although often defined as a coalition between a traditional donor country and a country from the South providing developmental support to another country from the South, several other forms of triangular cooperation involving different kinds of partners are emerging in the context of development cooperation. The term was perhaps first coined in 2002 during the Monterrey Conference on Financing for Development.

As observed, the history of different approaches to development cooperation is replete with concerns about the effectiveness of the activities involved in delivering the desired developmental outcomes. As it is obvious, development outcomes, right from the inception of the idea of development cooperation, were never conceived to be attained through a market mechanism. Targeted efforts involving the use of visible hands were considered the essential ingredients in bringing about the desired changes to set a country on its path to 'development'. The following section discusses the steps involved in ensuring the effectiveness of using visible hands.

These historical perspectives have to be appreciated as we delve into the issue of imposing a generic template for assessing the impact of SSC to facilitate a standardized comparison with the impact of traditional donor-driven development cooperation. The following section develops an analytical framework to explain development cooperation to identify the fundamental difference in the approaches followed by the two extant models.

5. Development Cooperation: A Visible Hand Perspective

In an earlier section, we argued that ODA and its flow have typically been based on faith in the efficacy of a market-led model to facilitate development outcomes, hence the emphasis on delivering development finance to the developing countries.

This belief led to an approach that subsequently underscored the emergence of institutions that contribute to the strengthening of the market-led model as the necessary condition to get onto the path to development. Conditionalities were imposed to ensure that the negative externalities created by the absence of supportive institutions are minimized. Two important characteristics of a market-led system of exchange need to be highlighted in the present context.

First, markets, because they are operated by invisible hands, do not have a time horizon. The standard model of a market operated under the conditions of neo-classical paradigm, assumes exchanges to be instantaneous, thereby dismissing assuming away the role played by time in deciding the cost of transactions. This assumption is necessary to substantiate the rationality of an economic agent, as opposed to the bounded rationality (Simon 1957) that it suffers from in reality. Second, it also lacks a social horizon, in the sense that a market does not consider equity or the lack of it to be of a major concern when it plays the role of an arbiter in allocating resources among individuals (Prebisch 1979, Jennings 2016). Thus distributive justice as a basis of developmental process was believed to automatically result from a 'trickle down' process that was expected to operate thanks to the convergence hypotheses suggested by Solow.

Operation of visible hands, on the other hand, which appreciates the importance of both these horizons, calls for considering a planning horizon to bring about the desired changes (Boulding 1956, Shackle 1955, 1965, 1966, 1967, 1978, and Simon 1952, 1955, 1956, 1957, 1981, 1982-1997). The visible hands aim at solving some social problems, through inputs and actions applied over a period of time, which cannot be remedied individually through the one-shot interaction that characterizes the operation of a market. The process involves solving problems in a collective mode, engaging multiple stakeholders who often have conflict of interests among themselves. This is why a State endowed with its 'sovereign power' is generally considered capable of solving certain social problems where it uses its authority to offer carrots and sticks and bring the conflicting groups to the same table to arrive at a possible solution that is acceptable to all. Thus, an exercise involving the operation of visible hands is virtually an attempt at devising a conflict resolution mechanism among a group of 'self-interested individuals' to ensure that the cost of not having such a policy would be much higher than the cost of having one. The time and social horizons are also incorporated in the process.

Studies have also shown that the initiation of engagement of visible hands in a quest for change need not necessarily be always initiated by governments.

Studies have also shown that the initiation of engagement of visible hands in a quest for change need not necessarily be always initiated by governments. Successful experiences of collective decision-making in solving social problems are found in many cases that did not involve State participation. Cooperatives, protection of common pool resources by communities, Self Help Groups and Civil Society Organizations are some such initiatives that engage in collective actions involving participation of individuals in cooperative repetitive games to arrive at a long-term solution to a social problem (Ostrom 1992). An inclusive approach to the study of operation of visible hands must necessarily involve a thorough understanding of such efforts as well. SDGs, as they have been developed, also underscore the existence of multiple focal points of action beyond the states, highlighting the plurality of stakeholders in a developmental process. SSC, as a philosophy, believes in judicious and effective utilization of visible hands in bringing about improvements in the quality of life of citizens in the partner countries.

Viewed from this perspective, an exercise in development cooperation would involve

1. Identification of a social problem and the nature of conflicts, which links multiple groups of stakeholders not just horizontally, but also longitudinally. Thus, a potential problem identified for a possible solution through the use of visible hands would consider achievement of both inter-generational (time horizon) and intra-generational (social horizon) equities as its fundamental objectives. In an SSC framework, as the process is demand-driven, the recipient partner requesting support is expected to initiate such an exercise.
2. The identification of the sources of conflict leads us to the next step. It is now necessary to develop an analytical model, often referred to as the theory of change, behind the identification of such an action. Basically, every initiative to solve a social problem involves ushering in a change for the better. The theory of change first identifies the feature or phenomenon that is a candidate for the desired change, preferably measurable. We call it the objective of the effort. All the SDGs exemplify the nature of intended changes in the world that we intend to achieve by 2030. Once identified, the next identified step is to move backwards to link them to some target outputs to be achieved. Needless to say, they would also be amenable to some measurement to help us check that we are on the right track to achieve the objectives. Obviously, we require identification of the inputs and activities required to achieve the targets. The theory of change will analytically establish *a priori* a relationship among the identified inputs, activities and outputs (both short-term and medium-term) that would facilitate achievement of the desired objective. Being enacted in a social space, a theory of change need not be taken as foolproof in attaining the objectives. Continuous feedback from the participants would ensure that the theory of change is modified from time to time to ensure that we are not deviating from the achievement of the objective that was set. It is also possible that the objective that we started with may also undergo changes, leading to formulation of another theory of change, compatible with the changed objective. In a nutshell, this step would involve inputs from academics and researchers. However, the theory of change being an abstract analytical tool, it would identify the major ones out of a myriad of proximate drivers of change with suitable assumptions about those not incorporated in the analytical framework. The partner countries engaged in SSC are to develop the theory of change through brainstorming and discussions.

3. With the analytical model of change in hand, the responsibility passes on to the experts who would design the intervention, i.e. the engineering blueprint linking inputs, activities and output while keeping the ground-level realities in mind. The theory of change may, therefore, be suitably tweaked to convert the analytical model into an operational model, necessitating a continuous dialogue between those who framed the theory of change and those in charge of designing the operational model. Some expertise may be contributed by the provider country on request, while the major responsibility rests with the recipient country.
4. Once the operational model is ready, it is handed over to the implementing team with considerable skills in management tools, including those of monitoring the process. They are required to coordinate between the procured inputs and the specified activities mentioned in the operational design. They would also face practical difficulties in implementing the operational model. Continuous dialogue between the design team and the implementing team would facilitate ironing out of the difficulties. While the recipient countries are expected to take up the primary responsibilities of implementation, complementary technological and capacity building supports are often forthcoming from the providing partners. Under certain circumstances, managerial inputs are also contributed by the provider country.
5. The role of assessment begins at this stage, once the intervention is over. The assessment process would look into the extent of achievement or otherwise of the objectives, commonly referred to as impact assessment. In doing so, the exercise would also ensure if the operational plan developed at the design stage was effective and the management processes followed during implementation were sound and efficient. An assessor, in this process, would also examine whether the theory of change had been comprehensive in linking inputs, activities, outputs and the objectives in a logical manner. Often, there are mid-course assessments to ensure that the analytical, operational and management models of the interventions are in sync with one another leading to the achievement of the desired objective. The role of an assessment process also involves close interaction with the intended beneficiaries and those who might have suffered losses as a result of the intervention resulting from the achievement or otherwise of the intended objective. If the exercise identifies some such frailties in the operation of the visible hands, which is not unnatural, the assessor is obliged to straighten them out and ensure that a modified set of models is applied in the next intervention to help move closer to achieving the identified objective. The possible new theory of change identified by the assessor will form the basis for evolving a new analytical model for the researchers to begin with for the next attempt at developmental support. Obviously, the feedback will move on continuously. If the desired objectives have been achieved in full, the exercise will help document the process as 'best practice', while the failed efforts will be documented upon contextualization, as cautionary points for informing future decision-making.

Given these stages in solving a social problem, a development cooperation practitioner has to have some basic knowledge of all these domains. Moreover, assessment can play a very vital role in linking all these domains into a unified structure with its attendant feedback loops. An individual practitioner may decide to develop intensive skills in one such domain of expertise to be professionally relevant. However, for a development cooperation effort to deliver, it is required that all these domains are in sync with one another. A plurality-centric development cooperation model with its complex inter-connectedness among different parts of the system – economic, political, social, cultural, environmental and ecological – cannot overemphasize this necessity.

SSC, being expectedly driven by the spirit of solidarity, has created an inbuilt mechanism to ensure these stages through its guiding principles. It will be evident in the section describing the template that we focused more on the extent to which an SSC support abided by its guiding principles and the cooperation initiated in implementing the development ideas. The template for assessment of impact has been left to be decided by the partners in cooperation.

The next section elaborates the existing theories of change that inform the process of development cooperation followed by the contesting models and underscores the need for effective and efficient use of visible hands in bringing about the desired changes under SSC.

6. Development Cooperation: The Extant Theories of Change

As explained earlier, Prebisch vehemently opposed the mutual benefit and mono-economics claims while developing his hypotheses of dependency models in tandem with Hans Singer.

The argument moved forward as Hirschman attributed to Prebisch, Singer and Arthur Lewis as arguing that “without a judiciously interventionist state in the periphery, the cards were inevitably stacked in favour of the centre”. If we take the liberty of tweaking his arguments a little, we may argue that Prebisch, as an eager international civil servant, took the opportunity to make use of the prevailing global division between two sets of countries, North and South, and tried to create a new development economics theory for the South that asserts the mutual benefit claim among the Southern countries while prevailing on their rejection of the mono-economics claim and justifying the possibility of plurality across the Southern nations. Thus emerged a solid conceptual basis for SSC. North-South Cooperation, on the other hand, relied on the mono-economics claim and identified the gap theories to provide the singular theory of change to theorize development cooperation without paying much attention to the pluralities prevailing among the recipient countries. The invisible hand-led market mechanism was expected to help allocate the resources, once they were flowing into the economies of the recipient countries from the donors. The conditionalities imposed were aimed at strengthening the markets and creating them where they were non-existent.

Notwithstanding the perceived difference between the Afro-Asian perspectives on SSC, which are considered to be more holistic and go beyond the focus on economic and technological cooperation as pursued by their Southern counterparts in the Latin American region, Prebisch played a pivotal role in conceptualizing the relationship of solidarity in SSC through his articulation of the Centre-Periphery Theory first formalized during the late 1940s and early 1950s. It argued that the terms of trade were skewed against the exporters of primary commodities *vis-à-vis* the countries that were primarily engaged in exporting the finished products using the technological advantage they enjoyed over the other. BAPA in 1978, which called for a strategy of import substitution to be embraced by the Southern nations, derives its strength from what today is popular as the Prebisch-Singer hypothesis.

The recent spurt in economic growth across several Southern economies has forced several commentators to rethink on the relevance of Raul Prebisch. Given the fact that for some of these economies, to an extent, the very idea of Centre-Periphery seems to be coming full circle, where the peripheral economies of yesteryear are seen to be moving towards a central position. The relevance of Raul Prebisch is an important issue for consideration to all those who have been following the evolution of SSC as a distinct but quite useful mode of cooperation among the developing countries. Alacevich (2011) is an interesting discussion on the development theory debate that may help understand the two contested approaches to development cooperation.

The contributions of W. Arthur Lewis also played a pivotal role in giving another perspective to the theory of change that would inform development cooperation efforts

from a Southern perspective. He (Lewis, 1954) rightly captured the sectoral duality characterizing a developing economy, a phenomenon completely overlooked by the gap theories pursued by NSC, as their theory of change for development was primarily centred on the extant single-sector models of growth. The obsession with raising the GDP of the developing nations as the sole driver of their development failed them by not appreciating the complexities in a development process. This failure was reflected in their creation of a linear and singular evaluation model.

The belief in 'big push' has framed the mainstream strategies for development for more than 60 years now, until Cohen and Easterly (2009) declared 'The Failure of Big Pushes to Raise Growth'. They identified three unsuccessful pushes:

1. The early big push in foreign aid (especially in the most aid-intensive continent, Africa).
2. Structural adjustment (also known as the Washington Consensus) in the 1980s and 1990s.
3. 'Shock therapy' in the former Communist countries. (P:2)

In the context of the failure of the so-called linking of development cooperation to the ideas of 'big push', it is worth re-examining the relevance of the Lewis model in factoring-in some of the typical characteristics of a developing economy that the 'big push' model ignored, but were appreciated by the adherents of SSC. Lewis argued in the very first paragraph of his 1954 article:

"This essay is written in the classical tradition, making the classical assumption, and asking the classical question. The classics, from Smith to Marx, all assumed, or argued, that an unlimited supply of labour was available at subsistence wages. They then enquired how production grows through time. They found the answer in capital accumulation, which they explained in terms of their analysis of the distribution of income. Classical systems stems thus determined simultaneously income distribution and income growth, with the relative prices of commodities as a minor by-product." (p 139)

He further argued that "Interest in prices and in income distribution survived into the neo-classical era, but labour ceased to be unlimited in supply... Unlimited supply of labour, though not a generalized global phenomenon, was very much a characteristic feature of countries like India, Egypt or Jamaica" (p. 139), he posited and tried to build this feature into his model of development.

He observed that a developing country is characterized by dualism in its domestic economic structures with simultaneous existence of a capitalist sector and a subsistence sector. While the former is capital intensive, the subsistence sector is characterized by the existence of disguised unemployment, a phenomenon that does not allow the wage to go beyond subsistence level and does not hamper the production level significantly if some workers are withdrawn from this sector. He argues that flow of capital can play an important role in releasing such disguisedly unemployed labour and push them to employment in the capitalist sector. The workers would benefit from higher wages, while the capitalist sector would be benefited with a higher surplus due to the higher level of production. On an assumption that such resultant surplus will be reinvested as capital, opportunities for further migration of labour from the subsistence sector to the capitalist sector will be created. This process will continue until the supply of labour remains unlimited and cease as and when labour starts to become scarce. The structural dualism would disappear simultaneously, bringing about a parity in wages across these two sectors.

However, Lewis did not distinguish between skilled and unskilled workers as he assumed that

“There may at any time be a shortage of skilled workers of any grade — ranging from masons, electricians or welders to engineers, biologists or administrators. Skilled labour may be the bottleneck in expansion, just like capital or land. Skilled labour, however, is only what Marshall might have called a ‘quasi-bottleneck,’ if he had not had so nice a sense of elegant language. For it is only a temporary bottleneck, in the sense that if the capital is available for development, the capitalists or their government will soon provide the facilities for training more skilled people. The real bottlenecks to expansion are therefore capital and natural resources, and we can proceed on the assumption that so long as these are available the necessary skills will be provided as well, though perhaps with some time lag.” Lewis (1954) p.145

Given the fact that the idea of human capital as a differentiated component of capital formation was yet to be developed during his time perhaps he was unable to appreciate the short-term importance of upgrading unskilled labour to skilled as a complementary necessity to augment the productivity of physical capital accumulated in the capitalist sector. Thus he asserted,

“Accordingly, in this analysis the growth of productive capital and the growth of technical knowledge are treated as a single phenomenon (just as we earlier decided that we could treat the growth of the supply of skilled labour and the growth of capital as a single phenomenon in long run analysis)”. (p.153)

Chiswick (2018) finds this assumption very optimistic and rightly questions Lewis’s implicit assumption that capital-formation is costless to the host developing country. Lewis’s argument could not survive critiques by Schultz (1962) and Sen (1966) and soon sank into oblivion maybe because of empirical evidence that failed to support Lewis’s assumptions, policy recommendations that were not successful, and the theory was not yielding new and useful insights. “There followed decades in which the Lewis model was virtually ignored, effectively displaced by a neoclassical approach to the economic problems of developing countries”. (Chiswick 2018 P:2).

The proponents of SSC, however, did visualize the role of skilling the labour force in developing countries. The beginning of SSC is distinctly marked by efforts to augment the skill sets of the citizens of fellow southern countries through capacity-building exercises. Even today, the largest chunk of cooperation under SSC is centred on the idea of capacity-building. India’s efforts at capacity-building through Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation Programme (ITEC) are quite significant. During 2018-2019, it plans to provide skill-building opportunities in about 30 domains that include artificial intelligence, banking, finance and accounts, cyber technology, environment and climate change, petroleum and hydrocarbons, power and renewable energy among others. Brazil has also engaged itself in such endeavours in an effective manner. The efforts made by Islamic Development Bank, through ‘reverse linkage’ also points to the importance of capacity-building in upskilling the citizens of the Global South to add to enhancement of the productivity of available physical capital that flows today not just from the traditional donors but also from their Southern partners. Thus, one may infer the important role of accumulation of human capital as an important component of the theory of change for development cooperation – a feature effectively made use of by the practitioners of SSC.

It is the insight generated from the Lewis model – existence of a domestic dualism in a southern economy – that, one may argue, might have contributed to the increasing

Even today, the largest chunk of cooperation under SSC is centred on the idea of capacity-building.

confidence in SSC to help their southern partners in capacity-building and thereby remove the 'bottlenecks' by generating a skilled labour force necessary to combine with the flow of physical capital from the developed world. This was the Southern contribution to reducing dualism, which the 'big push' argument could not address. Being abysmally low in their physical capital stock, the Southern partners, until the early 1990s, were not at all in a position to offer support by providing it. Buenos Aires Plan of Action (BAPA) also emphasized Technical and Development Cooperation (TDCD) in terms of sharing knowledge, experience and technology. It is only since the rise of some emerging economic powers from among the Global South that an increasing flow of physical capital from one Southern partner to another has become a phenomenon to be reckoned with.

By the mid-1980s, the term human capital became extended into a broader context of social capital. It was Bourdieu (1986) who first introduced the term in the literature for it to later be given a concrete shape by Coleman (1988). It may be reckoned that the idea of social capital can be traced to the writings of Tocqueville ([1840] 1945), Hanifan (1920), Jacobs (1961), and Loury (1977). However, it took the efforts of Coleman (1988), followed by the seminal work by Putnam et al (1993) to bring the idea into the forefront of the analytical framework of the theory of change that has been extensively used across the globe today. Dasgupta and Serageldin (2000) is a very comprehensive commentary on the early wave in Social capital literature. As Ostrom and Ahn (2007) records, "researchers are tackling a wide variety of questions including: the relationship between personal networks and political participation (Lake and Huckfeldt 1998), the challenge of building effective developmental policies (Gibson et al. 2005), the difference in the industrial structures of the capitalist economies (Fukuyama 1995), the poor performance of the African economies (Collier and Gunning 1999), the health and satisfaction of citizens (Kawachi et al. 1997), and the impact of active team-sport programmes to offset the higher potential for student disturbances in large urban schools (Langbein and Bess 2002)". The evolving literature is quite clear in linking the growth of social capital to contributing to unleashing desirable changes in a society – in both the developed and developing worlds. Abimbola et al (2019) on the impact of decentralization on health care governance, Sorenson (2017) on the linkage between social capital and entrepreneurship in China, Tossutty (2019) looking into the role of social capital in engaging youth across the education divide, DiTomaso et al (2018) examining the role of social capital in the US and China, Gupta et al (2020) investigating the importance of informal contracting in corporate innovation, Sweet et al (2018) on the linkage between personal well-being, social capital and severe mental illness, and Oran (2017) on the role of social capital in governing complex systems, are some of the recent additions to the literature on social capital. They all point to the role of social capital in bringing about positive changes in societies across diverse structural characteristics. Social capital provides care for unaccompanied minors in Sweden (Wimelius et al 2017); it is created through schools for young refugees in Denmark (Borsch et al 2019); it helps adolescents with disabilities (Byatt et al 2019); it is used in managing common pool resources (Aida 2019) and it helps evolve regional innovation systems (Njøs et al 2018). Migheli (2017) identified Ubuntu, the African social philosophy, as a typical example of providing a strong social capital base for communities. Munn (2018) hinted at racial inequality reproduction via the mechanism of differences in social capital. Carlton et al (2017) investigated the role of social capital in effective disaster management.

Social Capital has been defined in several ways in the literature. A 'glue that holds societies together' (Serageldin 1996, p. 196) may be considered an appropriate definition in the context of the present discussion that considers development cooperation as a collective action process. Ostrom and Ahn (2007) thus consider it a vital ingredient for

The formulation of the non-negotiable Principles of SSC and adherence to them by all partners in SSC may be referred to as an umbrella set of formal rules.

second-generation theories on collective action. They identify three ingredients of social capital that are very much linked to the success of a collective action process. They are: (1) trustworthiness, (2) networks and (3) formal and informal rules or institutions.

Interestingly, the proponents of SSC could realize the necessity of creating a pan-South social capital to facilitate development in the Southern world in a collective endeavour, without perhaps articulating the concept in an analytical framework. The lessons the leaders learnt through the working of collective actions in carrying out the freedom struggles in their respective countries, helped them realize the strength of social capital in creating a collective strategy that would help each of the developing countries to bring about a change for the better. Bandung Conference, the creation of UNCTAD, NAM, BAPA, the call for a New International Economic Order, emergence of the Group of 77, increasing importance of SSC in the global Architecture of development cooperation are nothing but the realization of building a strong social capital for Southern countries to move along the path of desired changes in their journey towards progress. The way forward involved the creation of trust among the partners; developing bilateral and multilateral networks for cooperation and setting up formal and informal rules or institutions at multiple levels. The formulation of the non-negotiable Principles of SSC and adherence to them by all partners in SSC may be referred to as an umbrella set of formal rules. Creation of different regional groupings to facilitate trade and development among southern partners highlights rule formation at a lower level, while need-based bilateral cooperation is mostly done in an informal manner. The initial efforts were to generate and use the social capital of solidarity to enhance their human capital bases through skill-upgradation and experience sharing in terms of technical cooperation. SSC now also engages in sharing of physical capital.

The discussions so far in the present section highlight the fundamental differences in the theories of change followed by the proponents of the traditional Donor-Recipient model of development cooperation and that guiding the philosophy of SSC. While the former began with emphasis on the role of physical capital to initiate a big push for development using the logic of a single-sector growth model under the assumption of an efficient market structure prevailing in the recipient country, the latter emphasized the creation of social capital among the countries in the developing world as the first step forward. The traditional model gradually realized the necessity of incorporating efforts at enhancing the human and social capital bases of the recipient countries as was reflected in the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness 2005. However, their faith on mono-economics à la Hirschman, convinced them to resort to conditionalities in several formats to ensure that the developing countries follow a deterministic path of development as experienced by the developed world. Chang (2010) aptly captures the perspective whereby he argues that, “the discourse suffers from a number of theoretical problems – its neglect of the causality running from development to institutions, its inability to see the impossibility of a free market and its belief that the freest market and the strongest protection of private property rights are best for economic development” – a phenomenon he terms as the imposition of Global Standard Institutions on the recipient countries in the name of development cooperation.

SSC, on the other hand, started with a belief in plurality and solidarity, created space – a dynamic phase-space – for plurality of ideas and systems *vis-a-vis* the possible theories of change and thereby could do away with the necessity of imposing conditions for offering development cooperation by one partner country on another. By accepting the reality that multiple pathways exist in pursuing development, the proponents of SSC could also avoid the hierarchical relationship between the provider and the recipient – a phenomenon that is clearly evident in the other model of development cooperation.

Senses of solidarity, horizontality and equality among the partners created a space for the countries to interact and generate the binding glue for them to move together. Some of them emerged as winners in the game of development. They are the ones who even started sharing physical capital with the other fraternal countries, in keeping with the fundamental principles of SSC. This process is akin to facilitating self-organization and co-evolution involving the partners in development – hallmarks of a complex system as discussed earlier.

It is obvious that the process of designing and implementing the models of development cooperation would vary because of the differences in their respective theories of change. Consequently, the assessment mechanism for SSC would also differ from the evaluation framework created by DAC to provide the necessary feedback for improvement. Used as they are to look at development through the lens of markets, the prescription for development offered by the OECD has been to lead the developing countries in a conditional roadmap to market-led equilibrium. The distinct need for development cooperation through visible hands was only to fill the gaps prevailing in terms of a desired, effective and efficient market ecosystem to emerge in the countries lagging behind and thereby put them on a path to development.

SSC, on the other hand, has been consciously engaged in emphasizing expansion of the time and social horizons in the partner countries through emphasis on equity (social horizon) and sequential and continuous support to partners as and when such demands arose from them (time horizon). Therefore, support was not often forthcoming in small doses for time-bound projects (as in the case of the OECD model), but was designed in a programme or mission mode to continue until the objectives had been achieved.

This fundamental difference in the theory of change warrants the assessment of SSC not being taken up using the criteria identified by DAC. Nor can there be a single set of criteria for the assessment of all SSC activities, given the plurality of its approaches. The next section goes into the detail regarding a proposed template for impact assessment of SSC. In fact, some evaluation specialists have also been found to question the usefulness of evaluation in assessing the success of a complex system when they argue that “complexity as a feature of development programmes may be necessary for success, but it unquestionably makes it difficult for evaluation.” Nkwake argues that “most complexity attributes, such as dynamic interaction, emergence, adaptation and scale, may facilitate programme success. However, most of the complexity attributes also make it difficult to evaluate programme success” (Nkwake 2020 P 22). See also Wolman, (1981), Newton & Llosa, (2010) for further discussion on this perspective. That is why the entire discussion so far had talked about developing an assessment framework instead of opting for an evaluation framework for SSC.

7. An Assessment Template For SSC

There is a distinct need for efforts at initiating consultations on country-led and non-binding voluntary methodologies to assess the impact of SSC, while respecting diversity within SSC and within national approaches. The present section offers a suggestive assessment framework, keeping in mind the diversities in pursuing SSC.

It is to be highlighted, even at the risk of repetition, that SSC has been designed to create a strong quantum of social capital. Thus, an assessment framework must involve mechanisms to infer the extent of the creation of social capital through SSC activities. As it is often difficult to be amenable to quantitative measurement, the assessment of generation of social capital would involve the use of mostly qualitative indicators.

SSC is characterized by a plurality of modalities that are country-led. However, the pluralities are subject to a set of non-negotiable guiding principles that has evolved over the years and has now been accepted by all adherents to SSC as the basis and spirit of development support shared among the partner countries. Table 1 below captures the guiding principles acknowledged by different official documents and a few studies from partner countries, as the basis of their development cooperation philosophies.

As the entries in the table suggest, the varieties are often in terms of the use of words, while the spirits espoused are more or less similar.

As the entries in the table suggest, the varieties are often in terms of the use of words, while the spirits espoused are more or less similar. For example, inclusive partnership as identified by Mexico as one of its guiding principles in promoting SSC can well be argued to match the spirit of equality followed by China and South Africa, or horizontality identified by Brazil or India. Some of the principles as identified by 'Ibero-America' may be considered as further disaggregation of the generic principles followed by others. For example, the principles of fostering national and collective self-reliance may be subsumed under the principle of national ownership, while respect for the local level of development and broad stakeholder participation may be considered as disaggregated components of demand-driven approach. Fostering joint development and mutual coexistence may be grouped under mutual benefit, while recipient leadership and participatory and inclusive global governance may be subsumed either under the principle of non-interference in internal affairs or under that of equality (horizontality), respectively. Chinese identification of "fosters an increase in income and accumulated capital" may be included in the general principle of mutual benefit. The emphasis on focus on results by Mexico and on effectiveness and efficiency by the Ibero-American group of countries are factors that deviate from the general set of principles followed by most of the countries engaged in SSC and identified in this table.

Keeping these minor deviations in mind, we can construct Table 2, which may be argued to have captured the fundamental and non-negotiable guiding principles by all the adherents to the spirit of SSC. They will capture and assess the extent of creation of social capital through a specific SSC activity. It can be safely asserted that an appropriate and non-binding voluntary methodology for assessment of SSC can ensure that the principles enumerated in Table 2 have been followed in as much as practicable in letter and spirit. Significant deviations from such principles would render a particular effort at development cooperation involving southern partners open to question.

Table 3 provides a set of features of some indicators that may be made use of to ascertain that the countries practising SSC adhere to the non-negotiable principles identified to guide their development partnerships. The indicators are mostly generic, to begin with. However, they may be built into quantifiable ones once we reach a consensus about their acceptability.

Table 2. Guiding Principles of SSC followed by Different Partners

Ibero-America	India	China	Brazil	Mexico	South Africa
Mutual Benefit	Mutual Benefit	Mutual Benefit	Mutual Benefit	National Ownership	Equality
Demand-Driven	Demand-Driven	Equality	National Ownership	Horizontality	Demand-Driven
Fostering national and collective self-reliance	Non-conditionality	Non- Interference in internal affairs	Mutual respect for each other's territorial integrity and sovereignty	Focus on Results	Respect for national sovereignty
Equality between partners	Respect for National Sovereignty	Non-conditionality	Non- Interference in Internal affairs	Inclusive Partnership	National Ownership
Respect for the local level of development	National Ownership	Making partner country self-reliant	Horizontality	Transparency and Accountability	Non-Conditionality
National Ownership	Horizontality	Horizontality			Mutual Development
Broad stakeholder participation		Sustainability			Non-interference in internal affairs
Participatory and Inclusive global governance		Fostering an increase in income and accumulated capital			Mutual Benefit
Fostering Joint development and mutual coexistence					
Recipient Leadership					
Effectiveness and Efficiency					
Source ⁴ : SEGIB (2016)	UNOSSC (2019)	UNOSSC (2019)	ABC (2014)	AMEXCID (2019)	UNOSSC (2019)

Table 3. Common Guiding Principles of SSC

S. No.	Principles
1	Mutual Benefit
2	National ownership (independence)
3	Demand-Driven
4	Respect for National Sovereignty (Mutual Respect)
5	Non-conditionality
6	Horizontality (Equality)

⁴ SEGIB 2016; Report on South-South Cooperation in Ibero-America 2016. SEGIB, PIFCSS and AECID; Madrid; <https://www.segib.org/wp-content/uploads/Report-SSC-2016-EN1.pdf> (pp 131)
 Brazil: Manual of South-South Technical Cooperation, ABC http://unctad.org/meetings/en/Contribution/gds_stats_2015d06_Contribution_Brazil2_en.pdf (pp 27)
 Mexico: Monitoring Exercise in South-South Cooperation Effectiveness, AMEXCID (pp 2) https://www.gob.mx/cms/uploads/attachment/file/447837/EJERCICIO_DE_MONITOREO_2019-eng.pdf (pp 2)
 India (pp 37), China (pp 28), South Africa (pp 69): South-South Ideas Assessing Impact of South-South Cooperation: Variations in Perspectives (https://drive.google.com/file/d/1Dxd5aNGmK_61mkoKBLZCgJaaPs5aPYKN/view)

Table 4. Some Suggestive Features for Development of Indicators for Assessment: Respecting the Principles

Principles	Features of Indicators
Mutual Benefit	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Creating market access for partners 2. Enhancing knowledge, human capital and production bases 3. Inclusion in value chain
National ownership (Independence)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Compatibility with National Development Strategy 2. Creation of local capacities/opportunities
Demand-driven	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Nature of demand 2. Nature of Responses to demand
Respect for National Sovereignty (Mutual Respect)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Maintenance of territorial integrity of the partner country 2. Imposition of economic/political costs on partner country
Non-conditionality	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Conditional Change in Macroeconomic Policies, if any
Horizontality (Equality)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Equality between Partners in Decision-making process

The indicators mentioned here capture the adherence to the non-negotiable principles by the partners engaged in SSC. An SSC activity that involves opening up market access to partners does obviously add to mutual benefits for those engaged in the process. The introduction of duty-free quota-free market access to exports from less developed countries by other partner countries is a case in point in the present context. Sharing of knowledge, ideas, human skills and production bases would also count as mutual benefits accruing to partners in SSC. Mutual benefits would be enlarged as more such sharing happens. Participation in global value chain is considered as an important beneficial outcome for growth and development of a country and its citizens. It increases opportunities for employment generation with addition to productive capacities in the participating countries. The present structures of global value chains are mostly controlled by the developed nations, even though a large number of firms from the southern countries are engaged in national and global value chains. Creation of south-led and south-managed value chains would expectedly add to the mutual benefits of the partner countries. For example, Mohanty et al (2019) analysed the nature of the South-South value chain in Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania and Ethiopia and found their performances quite encouraging. These indicators may be used to assess the status of mutual benefits generated over time to obtain some indications about the impact of SSC in facilitating positive developmental outcomes for the partner countries.

National ownership of partnership is considered an integral principle of SSC. Post-Paris Summit, it has been incorporated into the world view of DAC-led development cooperation as well. While DAC defines National Ownership as “the effective exercise of a government’s authority over development policies and activities, including those that rely – entirely or partially – on external resources”. (OECD 2006), two indicators have been identified to capture and assess the implications through an SSC lens. They are Compatibility with National Development Strategy and Creation of local capacities/opportunities. While the first indicator situates the SSC activity in sync with the complex systemic web of activities pursued by the partner country and assess the extent to which such synchronization has been achieved, the second one looks into the internal capacity-generation to augment the development process through sharing of knowledge, ideas and skills. The progress made through capacity development programmes, technology sharing and their contributions to growth and development of the national economy and/or strengthening of the political/social/cultural/ecological/environmental systems in the partner country can be highlighted and assessed with the help of such indicators.

Indicators of the demand-driven approach to SSC will take care of the nature of demand emanating from the partner country as well as the response meted out to such demand from the provider countries. The method followed to identify the demand and supply accordingly as revealed from the correspondence and the minutes of meetings between the partner countries facilitate assessment of this particular feature.

The principle of mutual respect may be assessed through an examination of the extent of maintenance or otherwise of territorial integrity of the partner country, coupled with the Imposition or reduction of economic/political/social costs, if any, on the partner country. The assessment process will record the manner in which any potential instabilities in social/political systems were avoided in the recipient country while SSC support was initiated.

The principle of non-conditionality is uniquely placed as a signature identifier of SSC. The indicator to assess this phenomenon would look for any macro-economic conditions imposed on the recipient country in connection with the support provided.

The premise of solidarity is expressed through the notion of equality or horizontality among the partners. The assessment criteria will consider the extent of coercive measures, if any, introduced during the decision-making process.

Needless to say, all these assessment criteria will help assess the distributive efficiency of the process through reduction in costs of supply and receipt of the support through SSC.

Pluralities in Modalities

As has been repeatedly elaborated in the literature, SSC is characterized by pluralities in modalities. Table 5 below captures the pluralities across countries engaged in SSC. It is observed that capacity-building and sharing of technology constitute two major modalities under SSC. Both of them contribute to enhancement of human capital through sharing of skills, knowledge and technology and thereby contribute to increasing technical efficiency in the partner countries, besides ensuring distributive justice. The mutual benefits generated by the partner countries facilitate achievement of equality among the citizens of the countries engaged in SSC. The increased technical efficiency opens up opportunities for trade and thereby contributes to allocative efficiency as well. Trade also simultaneously helps generate physical capital. Concessional finance, an emerging and increasing component of SSC enhances the stock of physical capital, whereas grants, including humanitarian assistance, contribute to the creation of all three types of capital mentioned so far – social, human and physical.

Table 5. Modalities of Development Cooperation

India	China	South Africa	Mexico	Brazil
Capacity-Building	Human resource development cooperation	Human Resource Development	Academic cooperation	Educational cooperation
Concessional Finance (includes debt relief and interest-free loan)	Concessional Loan	Development Finance	Concessional Loan	Technical cooperation
Technology	Technical cooperation	Technical cooperation	Humanitarian Aid	Humanitarian cooperation
Grant	Grants	Grants	Debt forgiveness	Scientific and technological cooperation
Trade	Emergency humanitarian aid	Humanitarian Assistance and disaster relief	Technical and Scientific cooperation	Expenditure with international organizations
	Debt relief		Contributions to international organizations	Support and protection of refugees
	Interest-free loan			Peacekeeping operations

Source: India: RIS, Brazil: Brazilian Cooperation Agency (ABC), China: white paper on China's foreign aid (2014), South Africa: Department of International Relations and Cooperation (DIRCO). Note: Grant and Development Finance taken from UNOSSC's studies on SSC, Mexico: Mexican Agency for International Development Cooperation (AMEXCID).

Tables 6 and 7 capture the relevant indicators that can quantify the modalities and thereby help assess the contribution of SSC in generating human and physical capital, along with some possible generation of additional social capital through SSC as pursued by India and Brazil.

Table 6. Structure of India's Development Cooperation: Modalities and Indicators

Modalities	Indicators
Capacity-building	Number of training programmes conducted in host countries
Capacity-building	Number of participants in training programmes conducted in host countries
Capacity-building	Number of training programmes conducted in partner countries
Capacity-building	Number of participants in training programmes conducted in partner countries
Capacity-building	Number of experts deputed for training
Capacity-building	Number of experts deputed for research
Capacity-building	Number of experts deputed for teaching
Capacity-building	Number of students coming to host countries on scholarships
Capacity-building	Number of Student Exchange Programmes
Capacity-building	Number of capacity-building Institutions established in partner countries (including vocational training centres, prototype production centres, etc.)
Concessional Finance	Number of projects executed in the partner countries through Concessional Finance
Concessional Finance	Total allocation of concessional finance to partner countries
Concessional Finance	Number of partner countries to allocated concessional finance
Concessional Finance	Number of sectors facilitated through concessional finance
Grant	Number of countries for which debt has been forgiven
Grant	Number of projects executed in the partner countries through grants
Grant	Number of times Humanitarian and disaster relief assistance was provided to partner countries
Grant	Number of bilateral exchanges that involved in-kind assistance
Technology	Number of projects facilitating technology transfer
Technology	Number of joint scientific research projects
Technology	Number of science and technology cooperation agreements and programmes
Technology	Number of Technology Demonstration Centres set up
Trade	Number of countries provided with Duty-Free Quota-Free Schemes (Duty-Free Tariff Preference Scheme)
Trade	Share of tariff lines under Duty-Free Quota-Free Scheme (Duty-Free Tariff Preference Scheme, DFTPS)
Trade	Number of Infrastructure improvement projects for trade facilitation
Trade	Number of bilateral 'investment funds' created with developing countries
Trade	Number of SWAP Agreements with Southern Countries

Source: RIS Database.

Table 7. Matrix of Indicators for Modalities Developed by Brazilian Agency for Cooperation (ABC)

Modalities	Indicators
1. Capacity Development	Hours per Person (technical instructors)
	Hours per Person (undergraduates)
	Hours per Person (graduates)
	Scholarships
	Technical studies
	Training
	Internships (Professional/Specialized)
	Secondment of civil servants/experts (public sector)
	Deployment of Teachers (public officials)
	Volunteering (from civil society)
	Science, Technology and Innovation - Joint research
	Science, Technology and Innovation Researchers
	Donation of goods, materials and equipment (associated with capacity-building activities) - Public sources
	Donation of goods, materials and equipment (associated with capacity-building activities) - Private sources
	2. Capacity Development Associated Costs
Tickets, daily allowances and insurance for nationals	
Administration and management	
Technical and operational infrastructure in science and technology - Public sources	
Technical and operational infrastructure in science and technology - Private sources	
Services (associated with capacity development)	
Operational costs in the country	
Operational costs abroad	
3. Humanitarian Cooperation and Assistance to Refugees	Donation of food
	Donation of medicines and health supplies
	Deployment of Health professionals
	Humanitarian workers (public sector)
	Volunteers (humanitarian action) (from civil society)
	Expenses associated with support to refugees
	Donation of goods, materials and equipment (associated with humanitarian action) - Public sources
	Donation of goods, materials and equipment (associated with humanitarian action) - Private sources
	Services (associated with humanitarian action)
	Tickets, daily allowances and insurance for foreigners
	Tickets, daily allowances and insurance for nationals
	Administration and management
4. Peacekeeping Operation	Preparation and Mobilization
	Logistical support
	Troop engagement
	Demobilization

Modalities	Indicators
5. Financial Cooperation	Grants - Public sources
	Grants - Private sources
	Concessional loans (only concessional %)
	Debt relief
	Official export credits
6. Financial Contributions to International Organizations/Funds	Payment of quotas in multilateral development funds
	Regular contributions
	Voluntary Contributions
	Financial transfers for trilateral cooperation with international organizations, complementary to in-kind inputs
7. Economic Cooperation	Direct investment - Primary Sector
	Direct investment - Secondary Sector
	Direct investment - Service sector
	Construction of public facilities
	Donation of goods, materials and equipment (associated with production activities) - Public sources
	Donation of goods, materials and equipment (associated with production activities) - Private sources
8. Foreign Trade	Exports to developing countries
	Imports from developing countries

Source: Brazilian Cooperation Agency (2015)

Tables 6 and 7 give the multifarious possibilities of developing indicators of modalities that may be used for assessing SSC. Being pluralistic in nature, it is not necessary for the set of indicators to be identical across the partners. Each partner can decide on the indicators that it wants to use to assess the performance of its SSC activities.

There has been considerable clamour among some practitioners of development cooperation for SSC to be subjected to some type of impact assessment framework. A study carried out by NeST (UNOSSC 2019) found that, being involved in development cooperation from one developing country to another, SSC should offer some understanding and examination of the worth and merit of the activities involved. As it is an effort to enhance the level of solidarity among the Southern nations, Southern partners also have the responsibility to share the impacts – positive or otherwise – of an exercise with the rest of the Southern countries so as to help them identify some best practices that may be implemented, with the necessary adjustments, to contribute to their developmental aspirations. Under such circumstances, it is desirable for SSC to be assessed, not only to facilitate improvements in future performance, but also to ascertain the extent of mutual benefit flowing to the countries in partnership. It could be undertaken through an exercise that involves both the parties in the exchange to determine the criteria for assessment with those assessed in control of the assessment process so that it may utilize the feedback to its benefit. Therefore, SSC must develop a mutually agreeable method of assessment of ‘mutual benefits’ of their cooperation in solidarity. However, instead of developing a common template for such assessment, the partner countries should be assigned the liberty to arrive at a mutually agreed set of methodologies to assess the project/programme level impacts. They would, however, be expected to share their learning from such exercises for the benefit of other Southern partners.

In the future, the unique features of SSC should be sustained and diversification of assessment frameworks should be encouraged, as each southern country is different

from others with its own historical, cultural, political, social, environmental, ecological and consequently, its overall developmental background. The purpose of SSC assessment is not to make international comparison in a competitive spirit but to enhance mutual learning and experience sharing. Further, being pluralistic and complex in nature, SSC activities cannot be assessed using a common template. The four case studies presented in this study also attest to such observation.

Policy Implications

SSC can indeed have an impact assessment template that fundamentally differs from the one devised and followed by those subscribing to the DAC-led model of development cooperation. It will have three components. The first, used to assess adherence to the principles of SSC, should be common for all partners engaged in SSC-related cooperation. This component will also capture the extent of accountability and transparency maintained by a Southern partner while participating in activities linked to SSC and ensure sustainability or otherwise of the non-negotiable guiding principles. There are some allegations about some of the SSC activities flouting these principles. Assessment of SSC based on the first component would establish the validity or otherwise of such allegations. Further, general citizens, academia, civil society organizations and other relevant stakeholders from the participant countries also can play their respective roles in a constructive manner both in carrying out their own assessment activities and reacting to assessment findings. Use of and acceptance of this component in assessment would also enhance peer learning and knowledge sharing on a voluntary basis among the partners.

The second component used to assess the performance of SSC activities is centred around performance in terms of the different modalities followed. As each country may use different modalities to extend their partnerships with other southern countries, this component will involve every country identifying their respective modality-specific indicators to assess their performances. The third component will look at impact assessment in a country-specific methodology mutually agreed between the partners involved.

Thus it is proposed that a collective choice level assessment framework is to be provided based on the 'fundamental guiding principles' of SSC as they emerged through consultations and discussions among the Southern partners, which may be considered as a common component of the assessment template. However, the operational choice level of assessment need not conform to any fixed structure. Diversity in approaches to and modalities of SSC – the real strength of Southern solidarity – need not be compromised on the altar of 'standardization' of institutional arrangements. While the first assessment template, which deals with the guiding principles, may gradually evolve as a framework for 'process assessment', the second framework, which considers the modalities, may evolve as one for 'performance assessment'. These two components will constitute the bedrock of the assessment structure for SSC.

At this juncture, one may safely argue that SSC is highly process- and performance-intensive. While assessment of the process involves an exercise to understand the usefulness or otherwise of the fundamental theory of change guiding SSC, it will also capture the extent of generation of social capital through the cooperation activities. Further, it will obviously capture the cost of the delivery of development outcomes, thereby contributing to understanding of the efficiency of the processes. The assessment of the performance will help identify the deficiencies in design and implementation of the desired activities and measure their contributions to growth, not only of human and physical capital, but also of social capital. On the other hand, the extant impact assessment methods, developed so far, are almost neutral regarding the processes and performances

involved in developed cooperation. Further, the methods are highly resource-intensive as well. Given that the process and performance assessment will give a clear picture about the contribution of SSC to augmenting the three types of capital necessary for the holistic development of a partner country – the fundamental goal of SSC – a separate exercise using the existing methods of impact assessment would contribute marginally to assessing the results of development cooperation under this approach. We may infer that an assessment framework must provide the required space for process and performance assessments. The framework for impact assessment, if necessary, should be left to the partner countries to decide depending on their country-led objectives.

8. Conclusion

The objectives of the present study have been to

- develop a comprehensive but non-standardized framework of assessment of SSC to generate evidence on distributive efficiency and
- identify tools to create evidence on allocative, technical and delivery efficiency of SSC partnerships.

Through the sections developed above, attempts have been made to achieve these objectives. The present section summarizes the observations of the study and provides a road map towards creating an assessment framework for SSC, maintaining the pluralities at different levels that characterize the development cooperation model, which centres its primary focus on developing a pan-South social capital. SSC is founded on the notions of trust, network and institutions, while the OECD model of development cooperation relies on flow of physical capital to the developing nations.

It is argued that access to social, human and physical capital contributes to the development process of a country. Development cooperation ensures that the countries are supported in their quest for development with the availability of these types of capital using a mechanism of visible hands through a cooperative collective action process as a market mechanism that uses self-interest and competition as the basis for resource allocation and overlooks time and social horizons of the process. They are often not effective in taking care of distributive justice, a prime requirement that the developing world needs to be endowed with.

Two fundamental models of development cooperation, with working principles that may almost be termed as diametrically opposing, have been in operation. They differ in terms of the underlying theories of change. While the OECD-led development cooperation approach gave priority to providing physical capital to countries aspiring to develop, SSC began by building a pan-South social capital engaging all southern partners through a bond of solidarity and equity that espoused building trust and networks among the partners using non-negotiable guiding principles that have remained more or less unchanged for more than six decades.

Recently, the OECD model has also begun to accommodate the concern for building social capital at the level of a recipient country. It is yet to extend the scope of creating a pan global social capital that is inclusive. It still differentiates between donors and recipients, but began to consider the need to replicate the standardized institutions that had evolved in the donor countries in the developing recipient countries. Having been effective in creating the desired social capital, SSC moved forward in augmenting the human capital in the partner countries through capacity-building and technology sharing initiatives. Once some success was achieved, the votaries of SSC embarked on facilitating the supply of physical capital as well, although in a much more modest way, compared to what the OECD model of development cooperation could deliver. The OECD model, which began its journey by providing physical capital, gradually changed to provision of support to augment human capital and moved one step further in being aware of the need to help enhance the social capital base of the aspiring nations.

The diametrically opposite theories of change also ensured that the design and implementation processes of these two development cooperation models would also be different. Such differences also call for differences in assessment structure. While DAC called for evaluation of development cooperation activities that would follow a hierarchical and prescriptive strategy flowing down from the donor, SSC would be ready to assess the strength and weaknesses of their activities in an inclusive and participatory mode.

It is proposed that in respect of assessing the impact of SSC, it would be necessary to assess the process and performance of the development support provided by the partners. While process assessment would look into the implications for creation and strengthening of social capital, performance assessment will emphasise the augmentation or otherwise of human capital and the recent addition in terms of provision of physical capital to the countries in need. In line with the observed pluralities in the nature of activities as exemplified by the heterogeneity in modalities, the identified criteria for performance assessment would also be country-specific and cannot be a standardized uniform one as practised by DAC. Several possible indicators relevant to the modalities used by different partner countries have been identified in this context. These assessment criteria will meaningfully contribute not only to identifying the possible sources of agency inefficiency for further improvements, but also to promoting transparency of sharing knowledge and information in a mutually beneficial manner among the development partners.

Finally, it is argued that the assessment process will help strengthen the quest for social justice and equity among the partners in the global South, augment the spirit of solidarity and trust, and identify a roadmap to further contribute to the technical efficiency of them all.

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