



Community of Practice on Measurement and Quantification of South-South Cooperation Meeting on established approaches to measurement and quantification May 26th, 2022

[\(You can view the recording of this session at this link\)](#)

[\(You can download the base presentation for the session at this link\)](#)

[\(You can download the presentation made by Alexandra Díaz from APC-Colombia, at this link\)](#)

On May 26th, 2022, APC-Colombia convened the second meeting of the Community of Practice on Measurement and Quantification of South-South Cooperation (CoP). Participants were invited to reflect on the question of **'What's missing from the measurement frameworks you are familiar with? Which examples do YOU know of approaches to account for qualitative components and impacts?'**

To inform the research and discussion agenda of the CoP, a keynote presentation about geopolitical frameworks for measuring SSC and a panel with four representatives of established institutions and approaches for measuring and quantifying SSC was organized, followed by a discussion.

Agenda:

1. Opening remarks and recapitulation of previous work. Luis Roa, APC-Colombia.
2. Keynote presentation on geopolitical frameworks for measuring SSC in the Global South. Dr. Laura Waisbich, Articulação SUL.
3. Panel about established approaches for measuring SSC:
 - a. Cristina Xalma, Ibero-American Integrated Data System for South-South and Triangular Cooperation (SIDICSS)
 - b. Enrique Oviedo and Luis Flores, Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC)
 - c. Dr. Sabyasachi Saha, Research and Information System for Developing Countries (RIS)
 - d. Alexandra Díaz, Presidential Agency of International Cooperation of Colombia (APC-Colombia)
4. Q&A and discussion

Opening remarks and recapitulation of previous work

Mr. Luis Roa from APC-Colombia provided a quick recapitulation of the work of the CoP, for attendants who had not participated in the first meeting organized in December 2021.

He mentioned that the CoP gathers knowledge professionals to discuss how SSC is quantified/measured/assessed in 2022, with the aim of **producing a benchmark document** summarizing the past, present and potential future of measurement and quantification methodologies for SSC.

Mr. Roa highlighted that APC-Colombia sees value in promoting this discussion in the context of rising expectations for developing countries (characterized by the concept of "Development in Transition"), as measuring helps take action:

- 1) to **showcase** what is being done;
- 2) to **improve** actions (doing more, better);



- 3) to **promote narratives** about how SSC advances the 2030 Agenda, at its half-way point in 2022.

He recalled that the CoP conducted an opening event on December 7th, 2021, in which the following topics were discussed:

1. Measurement for management and making risky bets (presented by Catalina Quintero, APC-Colombia)
2. Key Performance Indicators for nurturing entrepreneurship in Colombia (presented by John Hardy, Palmira Chamber of Commerce in Colombia)
3. TOSSD eligibility criteria and global public goods from the perspective of SSC (presented by Paulo Esteves, global researcher)
4. 'Meaning' as a conduit for exploring definitions, objectives and approaches to conducting SSC (presented by Emmanuel Letouzé, Datapop Alliance)

Participants were also polled to identify key readings to create a virtual library, and the following documents were gathered and analyzed:

Year	Author	Name
2009	United Nations	Nairobi Outcome Document of the High-level United Nations Conference on South-South Cooperation
2014	Southern Voice	Dialogues on South-South Cooperation in the context of Global Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation
2015	PIFCSS	Management guidelines for implementing Triangular Cooperation in Ibero-America
2015	World Bank	The Art of Knowledge Exchange
2016	Chaturvedi	Development Compact: A theoretical construct for South-South Cooperation
2016	PIFCSS	Valorización de la Cooperación Sur-Sur: Avances y retos en Iberoamérica
2016	PIFCSS	Valorización de la Cooperación Sur-Sur: Estudios de caso Brasil, Chile y México
2017	Silva & Waisbich	Guia para o monitoramento e mensuração da cooperação sul-sul brasileira
2018	OECD	Toolkit for identifying, monitoring and evaluating the value added of triangular co-operation
2019	GPI Triangular Cooperation	Triangular Cooperation in the era of the 2030 Agenda. Sharing evidence and stories from the field
2019	Besharati	Measuring Effectiveness of South-South Cooperation
2019	United Nations	BAPA+40 Outcome Document
2019	Letouzé et al	Harnessing Innovative Data and Technology to Measure Development Effectiveness
2020	UNDP	Metodología de Evaluación Modular (MEM) para la Cooperación Sur-Sur



2021	UNOSSC	The role of institutional arrangements for South-South Cooperation. Experiences from Ecuador and Sri Lanka
2021	CCONG	Infografía sobre Entidades Sin Ánimo de Lucro (ESAL) en Colombia
2022	Waisbich	'It Takes Two to Tango': South-South Cooperation Measurement Politics in a Multiplex World

Mr. Roa mentioned that, after reviewing the documents, a pattern was identified in the timeline of knowledge. The presented list has been color-coded according to these criteria:

Established approaches in measurement and quantification

Current challenges in 2022: data convergence and divergence between ODA and SSC

Experimental approaches to account for actors and data

The May 26th webinar was presented as the first in a series of three, designed to explore this pattern.

The library of documents, as well as the minutes and video recording of all meetings can be consulted at the website for the CoP, [in this link](#).

Keynote presentation by Dr. Laura Waisbich, Articulação SUL, on geopolitical frameworks for measuring SSC in the Global South

Dr. Waisbich opened the discussion by summarizing insights from her recently published paper on South-South Cooperation measurement politics ([available here](#)), which follows the rise of South-South Cooperation effectiveness as an issue between the UN High-Level Conferences on South-South Cooperation held in Nairobi 2009 and Buenos Aires 2019.

Within this context of understanding whether and how SSC initiatives are working, and for the benefit of whom, three key points can be made:

- 1) **Increased focus** on measurement and quantification of SSC is happening at a technical and political level, as Southern countries explore the results and impact of their work. This increased focus on measurement can be seen as resulting from **pressure experienced by Southern countries from the outside** (such as traditional donors and their institutions and agendas, e.g. the 2030 Agenda), **and from within** (from domestic constituencies such as political parties, media or civil society, according to each country's internal ecology). As a political response enacted through diplomatic means, a kind of differentiated integration into measurement agendas is taking place, where Southern countries participate in larger conversations with traditional actors, while upholding a distinct Southern identity.
- 2) **Experimental methodologies** are being developed around the world at country and regional levels, with perhaps more operationalization happening in Latin America. This development shows a political will by governments and practitioners to move from discussing to implementing context-relevant solutions.



- 3) **“Measurement battles”** are taking place at global, regional and national levels, owing to the contentious nature of measurement as both a technical and political exercise. Although no single framework to count and account for SSC exists, several initiatives are advancing to generate southern-led and SSC-relevant agreed frameworks, enacted through political and diplomatic means, such as the UN Core group of Southern partners, the Global Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation and the Total Official Support for Sustainable Development (TOSSD) framework. These efforts prove that measurement is not just possible, but beneficial to SSC’s legitimacy and strength.

Panel about established approaches for measuring SSC:

Cristina Xalma

Ibero-American Integrated Data System for South-South and Triangular Cooperation (SIDICSS), Spain

As a representative of the General Ibero-American Secretariat (SEGIB), Mrs. Xalma addressed three topics:

1. **Context about the experience** of quantification of South-South and Triangular Cooperation from SEGIB. Mrs. Xalma mentioned that work started in 2007 with the first Report on South-South and Triangular Cooperation in Ibero-America, which has accumulated 13 editions thus far. She highlighted that the report arose as a response to the political demand from SEGIB member countries, formulated in the early 2000s under the Millennium Agenda. The first countries in Latin America achieved Middle Income Country status during this period, with a correlated reduction of ODA flows and a boom for SSC. This transition generated a big demand for information about the work being carried out, which supported the development of an exercise in quantification and systematization of SSC.
2. **A brief summary of the experience.** Developing the report required a three-step process:
 1. Generating a conceptual and methodological framework, deciding by consensus what SSC is for our countries, its principles, and how to measure it. This works through an intergovernmental and horizontal exercise in which countries engage in political and technical dialogue.
 2. Translating the concepts into data, creating the SIDICSS in 2015 as a repository of information from more than 9000 SSC projects. Cross-checks across this large pool of data allows for two kinds of dialogue: one among the 22 Ibero-American countries, and another between the group of countries and the SEGIB, which provides deep legitimacy to the consensus.
 3. Collecting and gathering data about SSC, through the network of data providers from each member state.
3. **A few lessons from the process:**
 1. Refining the framework and the report is a process of continuous change.
 2. The Report has developed into a management tool for countries, strengthening their national cooperation agencies. It empowers countries at a political, technical and institutional level.
 3. The process has boasted political debates about measurement nationally and internationally, providing great visibility for South-South Cooperation.
 4. The Report has become an international reference. SEGIB has assisted in developing an African report and another for the Asia and Pacific region.



Luis Flores and Enrique Oviedo
Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), Chile

Mr. Flores and Mr. Oviedo relayed the experience of ECLAC through the following key points.

Regarding the **context** of the work of ECLAC on SSC, they mentioned that it takes place on two axes:

- 1) As the Latin American focal point for the United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation (UNOSSC), since ECLAC is also a UN agency, and
- 2) as hosts of a Committee on SSC, comprised of member states that discuss SSC issues during ECLAC sessions. Within this space, the topic has become so relevant that countries decided to create a Conference, to be held during the first half of 2023, to deepen the discussion about means of measurement.

Regarding the **ongoing discussion** about how and what to measure, at a national level there are examples of measurement frameworks developed and implemented in countries like Brazil, Chile, Colombia, and Mexico, with solid methodologies and indicators. Yet, at a regional level, political decisions are yet to be made about why, what and how to measure. In this sense, countries have been advancing in 1) monetary measurement, and 2) new approaches that give relevance to non-monetary aspects that are central to SSC.

Regarding **recent experiences** by ECLAC with specific actors, the following four were provided:

1. 2014, national study with Peru that identified four measurement-relevant dimensions: 1) interaction between cooperation actors; 2) considering different stages of implementation; 3) estimating committed and mobilized resources, and 4) managing a framework of prospects, to facilitate replication.
2. 2015, work with the Regional Conference of Statistics of Americas. Building on the 2014 experience with Peru, the exercise expanded into a glossary of terms on SSC, focusing on quantification of cooperation, and the basic aspects that countries should take into consideration when reviewing their SSC.
3. 2017, development of a methodological proposal to measure and compare cooperation between Southern Cone countries.
4. 2019 – 2020, study on evaluation of SSC in six countries: Barbados, Colombia, Cuba, Jamaica, Paraguay and Uruguay. ([available here](#))

Regarding the **lessons learned** during this time, Mr. Flores mentioned that following a step-by-step process is fundamental to keep track of progress and react to circumstances. He also advised including cooperation agencies and institutes of statistics in the process, so as to consider conceptual and theoretical aspects of the work along with the political pressures. He finished by promoting the Conference to be held in 2023, as a political forum for debate and discussion.

Dr. Sabyasachi Saha
Research and Information System for Developing Countries (RIS), India

Dr. Saha started his intervention underscoring how discussion of these topics is always relevant,



given the increasingly pressing nature of the challenges ahead. He stressed that consensus is the result of processes, which are themselves embedded in specific politics and histories.

He recalled that the 2030 Agenda began with a framework of dozens of indicators, which were progressively culled to make it more manageable. Regarding SDG 17, on paper it has the most indicators that satisfy specific targets, but they are low ambition indicators about global public goods and effective multilateralism. In contrast, the experience of the RIS on the theoretical and practical implementation of the Development Compact informs a general approach to indicators.

Dr. Saha mentioned that the process begins with the North-South divide, and the harm to developing countries that usually results from North-South engagement. He mentioned that the principles of SSC were developed as a response to this relation, and that compliance with the principle of demand-driven cooperation causes alignment with other principles such as national sovereignty, solidarity, national ownership, interdependence, equality, non-conditionality, non-interference, mutual benefit.

He stressed that the RIS promotes an approach in **the Development Compact that is a composite of multiple horizontal, interdependent modalities: capacity building, trade and investment, development finance, grants and technology transfers**. These modalities should combine to promote long term prosperity and macroeconomic stability.

According to Dr. Saha, development practice itself needs to evolve and be more observant of evidence, to reach the kind of impact we desire. In this sense, stakeholder participation, timeliness and objectivity are key to go beyond outputs and outcomes, and into impacts. Research organizations such as RIS, for example, often measure their work by whether they have made project deadlines and whether they have been successful in sustaining the research programs. Economists require time series of data to account for fixed costs as well as marginal costs in different interventions.

He reflected on the fact that capacity building approaches are not new to SSC, but that promoting technology development in the South should boost the amount of knowledge cooperation that we carry out, directly accelerating the SDGs by strengthening agricultural and sectoral capacities, for example. Concluding his remarks, Dr. Saha presented examples of Development Compact applied with great results between India and Mozambique in solar panel production cooperation, or between India and Ethiopia in strengthening the sugar value chain.

Alexandra Díaz
Presidential Agency of International Cooperation of Colombia, APC-Colombia, Colombia

Mrs. Díaz mentioned that APC-Colombia as a public institution is committed to improving the efficiency of its spending, and that the drive to improve the quality of their work through measurement has become more relevant as Colombia has achieved Middle-Income Country status, settling into a dual role of being both recipient and provider of South-South Cooperation.

Against this backdrop, she recalled that APC-Colombia understood that the statistics reported to SIDICSS from 2015 were very important to have a sense of the work done by different countries, but that there was a qualitative component to SSC that wasn't captured in the SIDICSS data. After reviewing efforts by Brazil, Chile and Mexico, documented by PIFCSS, APC-Colombia produced a South-South Cooperation Toolkit in 2017.



The main components of the 2017 SSC toolkit were a **Model for Measuring and Quantifying Added Value (MQAV)**, and a booklet of standardized guidelines to **organize and execute South-South** Cooperation activities.

The Model for Measuring and Quantifying Added Value looks at five qualitative dimensions:

1. **Knowledge generated:** Documents and research that helps broaden the scope of knowledge of experts, institutions and communities;
2. **Networks created:** Quantifying partnerships between governments and with other development actors;
3. **Visibility:** Quantifying information that is distributed about the activities;
4. **Differential approach:** which visualizes how a project aims to deliberately close gaps for vulnerable populations (for example women, indigenous and afro populations, children, etc); and
5. **Alignment with the SDGs:** requiring that all projects align with the SDGs, initially at the goal level but over time being more specific at the indicator level.

Since its mainstreaming in 2019, application of the SSC toolkit has produced the following learnings:

1. The guidelines and checklists for organizing South-South Cooperation activities have helped standardize procedures at the Agency.
2. The project format has proven difficult to manage, as it included macros and formulas to facilitate the formulation of budgets that were prone to breaking if partners add or remove elements.
3. Adequately accounting for the five dimensions of added value requires a facilitator to guide process, which is a very high organizational cost.

Mrs. Díaz concluded by highlighting that gaps remain for developing baselines and other tools necessary to conduct different kinds of evaluations that are commonplace in other public policy contexts (such as operational, institutional, results or impact evaluations), which should be transferrable to South-South Cooperation.

Q&A and discussion

A discussion was sparked around the following two questions, formulated by attendees:

- **Do developing countries, both providers and recipients, have capacity to maintain statistics on private flows. How do you extract from foreign direct investment the “public good / developmental“ portion of spending from its profit-oriented operations?** (Phalguni Sundaram Biswal)
- Processes such as ECLAC and SEGIB are mainly intergovernmental processes. It's hard to build consensus between governments, but it's even harder when civil society is at the table. Civil Society inclusion seems to follow ad hoc approaches. **What has been the experience of integrating civil society perspectives in these spaces?** (Artemy Izmestiev)

Cristina Xalma mentioned that SEGIB is an intergovernmental space that regards SSC as a technical (not financial) practice. She explained that some people ask why SEGIB measures SSC by projects and by costs, or value. The explanation is that, because of its nature, costs for SSC are relatively low when compared to ODA flows. Yet these relatively small budgets belie the



political significance of SSC, which is why SEGIB member countries have decided to account for projects and not budgets.

Alexandra Diaz explained that the risks of implementing cost-for-value exercises are understandable, yet an exercise structured around a 'cost for impact' approach could highlight SSC as a more efficient modality than ODA in strengthening technical capabilities around the Global South.

Luis Flores commented that ECLAC also addresses SSC as a technical issue that happens between countries. He mentioned that new approaches need to be developed and tested to measure the impact of private flows in development. Regarding civil society participation, he stressed that SSC acts in topics in which civil society is active such as employment or climate change, yet the terms of engagement are still unclear since Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) come in a wide variety of shapes, and the space is not yet mapped. He mentioned that the Regional Forum on SDGs has a multistakeholder mandate, but the topic is still in exploration.

Participant Amanda Lucey posed the following question: **How do we begin to assess the demand-driven nature (or horizontality) of SSC?**

Dr. Sabyasachi Saha recognized the pertinence of the issues raised. Regarding private flows, he underscored that international cooperation seeks to correct failures (state or market) that have social impacts, and thus focuses on generating social benefit, rather than private benefit. That said, the economic growth provided by the private sector contributes to development, and in this case technology transfers are an important component. Regarding civil society engagement, he mentioned that the Indian Forum for Development Cooperation engages with CSOs and has established a community around the principles of SSC. Regarding the demand-driven nature of SSC, he echoed ideas from other panelists about how the conception of a problem influences how it is intervened. In this sense, the strength of SSC is its historical needs-based, demand-driven nature. SSC has multiple, interplaying principles, yet they are all anchored on the demand principle, thus respecting demand usually brings the other principles into alignment.

During the exchange, colleagues from **ABC (Brazil) made the following comments in the chat:**

Let me remember the participants that the UN has approved, early this year, the pilot-testing of the SSC quantification methodology, developed in the context of the activities of the IAEF-SDG Working Group created to discuss indicator for Target 17.3.1 (SDG 17). UNCTAD will be the custodian agency for SSC data. This methodology has already dealt with these questions on what should and should not be measured.

Brazil and Mexico, together with UNCTAD, have already offered technical support for governments that demand support in what regards compiling data on SSC flows.

This methodology was developed to quantify SSC flows, not to evaluate SSC (which is another thing).

"Measurement" includes 2 things: Quantification and Evaluation, each one with its own methodological platform.

Assessing actual horizontality is something related to evaluation, not measurement.

Phalguni Sundaram Biswal made this comment in the chat:



I think complementary capacities strengthen the capacity of developing countries to identify and analyses together their main development issues and formulate the requisite strategies to address them , to improve the capacity of developing countries to absorb and adapt technology and skills to meet their specific developmental needs increase and improve communications among developing countries, leading to a greater awareness of common problems and wider access to available knowledge and experience as well as the creation of new knowledge in tackling development problems recognize and respond to the problems and requirements of the least developed countries, landlocked developing countries, small island developing States and the countries most seriously affected by, for example, natural disasters and other crises.

International cooperation for sustainable development needs to become universal, multimodal, mutual, and transformative if it wants to deliver change, not aid.

Like: Challenges, Partnership, Collective Idea Of SDGs, Neighborhood, Global Gateway, Climate Change, Development Finance, Concrete project, Regional Aspects, Common Objectives Etc.

In 2022 To 2030 we should follow 5 qualitative approach that are: Narrative research, Phenomenology research, Grounded theory research, Ethnographic research, Case study research.

Fabiola Soto from AMEXCID (Mexico) made this comment in the chat:

For Mexico, the monetization of cooperation is a useful tool. However, measuring the impact and results of our cooperation is also a priority, therefore, the assessment of our SSC is seen as a driver to improve its quality in a results-oriented manner.

We are always open to share our experience and our views on quantification and evaluation of our SSC. I hope the SSC methodology developed in the context of the activities of the IAEG-SDG could be pilot very soon. Mexico and Brazil are on board!

Closing thoughts

Throughout the meeting, moderator Luis Roa highlighted a few key elements of each presentation, that can shed light on dynamics taking place around the topic of measurement and quantification of SSC:

1. The phenomenon of Southern countries entering other spaces, while upholding southern identity, sparks a **two-way process of change in which global spaces are also required to adapt to the presence and the politics of the Global South.**
2. Although consensus is usually understood as a costly endeavor that reduces flexibility, the experience of **SEGIB shows that consensus and continuous experimentation can go hand in hand.**
3. The approach of **progressive, evidence-based consensus building** explained by the ECLAC representative, signals how **proving a concept can disarm resistance** and help materialize new opportunities.
4. The **Development Compact promotes a composite, complementary approach between knowledge exchanges, long-term trend preservation and macroeconomic stability**, in which SSC principles interplay while being anchored in the demand principle.

The next meeting of the CoP is scheduled to take place on Wednesday June 29th, 2022

For any questions of comments, please write to luisroacontratista@apccolombia.gov.co