

The Brazil-Africa Cooperation Programme on Social Development aims at promoting technical assistance from the Brazilian Ministry of Social Development and Fight Against Hunger to African countries in the development of social policies and programmes. It is an initiative financed by the British Department for International Development and supported by the International Policy Centre For Inclusive Growth.

Good Perspectives for Social Protection in Angola

Angola is now preparing to revise its Social Protection framework. According to Nilsa Batalha, National Director of the Angolan Ministry of Assistance and Social Re-Insertion (MINARS), the idea is to design a cash transfer programme, where various complementary programmes are implemented, similar to Brazil's Bolsa Família and Ghana's Livelihoods Empowerment Against Poverty (LEAP).

The plan is to make a diagnosis of the vulnerability status in the country. This work will build on previous surveys and mapping to define new programmes. The existing surveys are fragmented and the country faces shortage of data on vulnerability. UNICEF will fund a consultant which will carry this initial diagnosis and give recommendations.

The government is gradually mobilizing political support for Social Protection. At the

end of 2008, there were legislative elections in the country. The new members of the Legislative Forum have already showed interest in learning more about the programmes carried out by MINARS. Even in the absence of integration among the ministries around a social protection policy, MINARS, as the leading ministry for social assistance in Angola, has already started its process of internal debate and revision of policies and programmes.

As part of the mobilization process, in June 2009 there will also be a meeting, of the Child Forum. At this meeting the work undertaken by the government will be reviewed. Angola has the National Council of Children which is the organization responsible for coordinating this mission. The expectation of the Angolan Government is that Brazil can also contribute to this Forum by sharing its experience and learning from the Angolan achievements.

Angola is a country of 17,02 million people where almost 70% of the population is under the national poverty line of 1,7 dollars a day. Recent years have brought many improvements in the infra-structure of the country and now attention is turning to the enhancement of social protection.

South-South Cooperation in Civil Society and the World Social Forum

Political leaders, environmentalists, researchers and representatives of non-governmental organizations from all over the world met in the ninth edition of the World Social Forum, which was held in Belem, Brazil, between January 27 and February 1, 2009.


With the motto "Another World is Possible" the main issues discussed throughout the forum were the Latin-American integration,

the conflicts in the Middle-East, the Amazon and the global financial crisis. The next edition of the forum will take place in an African country, still to be defined, in 2011.

The Minister of Social Development and Fight Against Hunger, Mr. Patrus Ananias, took part in the delegation of President Lula. The Minister was in the round-table on the perspectives of basic incomes in

Latin America, which was held in the Federal University of Para. The National Secretary for Social Assistance, Ana Ligia Gomes, was also invited to present a lecture on "The social reach of the Continuous Cash Benefit Programme (BPC) in Brazil and its place within the policies for social assistance". The National Secretary of Food and Nutritional Security, Crispim Moreira, also took part in the





round-table on “Natural resources, Communities and Markets: the Difficult Paths of Sustainable Development in the Amazon” and in the International Seminar of Solidarity Economy and Food Security”.

After the meeting, representatives of various African organizations visited Brasilia between

February 3 and 6. The aim of the visit was to learn about the Brazilian social programmes and forge partnerships with civil society organizations. The delegation was composed of 22 representatives of trade unions, associations of rural producers, NGOs and networks from Angola, Cape Verde, Guinea Bissau, Kenya, Ivory Coast, Malawi, Morocco,

Mozambique, Namibia, Nigeria, Senegal, South Africa and Zimbabwe. Representing Brazilian civil society, Ibase led the mission along with the Presidency of the Republic. The visit is another example of the effort by the Brazilian government to foster closer relations with African countries.

Interview

Frederico Campos Guanais de Aguiar,
Special Adviser in the Minister's cabinet,
Ministry of Social Development and Fight against Hunger
on the participation of Brazil in the first Ministerial Conference on Social Development, promoted by the African Union which took place in Windhoek, Namibia, October 30-31, 2008.

International Poverty Centre (IPC): How do you evaluate Brazil's participation in the ministerial conference in Namibia?

Frederico Guanais (FG): I believe Brazil's participation was excellent. We were represented during the entire conference. There were two days of discussion on social development, which sought to address to following issues: What is social development? Which policies does it involve? What are the possible strategies?

It was a very productive discussion. So when the Ministers of Social Development arrived for the last two days of the conference, the teams of experts had already gathered together an abundance of information. Our participation was important. Minister Patrus delivered an address at the opening session and he also took part in a round-table in the afternoon, where he was able to address significant issues. So Brazil's participation was one of the highlights in the conference. I believe we can contribute, and we can also learn a lot from African experiences.

IPC: What Brazilian policies do you think could be shared with the African countries?

FG: I think that there is a group of social policies, and we can begin with a policy for social development and the fight against hunger. Of course, the Bolsa Família

programme is a reference and a yardstick in this area. But just as in Brazil, the success of Bolsa Família depends on a network of social promotion and protection, and I believe that Africa could also benefit from these other experiences. I would like to mention one programme in particular: the Family Agriculture Food Acquisition Programme [PAA, in its Portuguese abbreviation]. In Africa, a few food acquisition programmes are being implemented. The World Food Programme, for example, has been developing a purchase programme in Mozambique, which at the same time generates labour and income for families in rural areas. It also promotes food and nutritional security, increasing food production and creating a mechanism that makes it easier to access food in the countryside. PAA is a very successful programme in Brazil and it could be shared with the African countries.

We also have other elements in our social promotion and protection network, such as the Comprehensive Family Care Programme (PAIF). This is implemented through the Social Assistance Reference Centres (CRAS). These programmes support the beneficiary families of the cash transfer programmes. They help promote household stability and strengthen community and family ties, and they also monitor socially vulnerable families, so they are very important initiatives.

And there are a range of other programmes, such as the Cisterns Programme, which could also be applied in Africa, where access to water is a very complex issue. We also have the Pro-Jovem Adolescente (Pro-Youth) initiative, which is managed by the Ministry of Social Development and Fight against Hunger (MDS). And aside from these practices that fall under the responsibility of MDS, the Brazilian government has other relevant policies, such as the Family Health Programme. This is a model of basic healthcare, prevention and monitoring of families even before illnesses develop. We also have many other programmes that could definitely be very useful in Africa.

IPC: What do you think Brazil can learn from the African experience?

FG: I find this exchange experience very interesting, this spirit of South-South cooperation, because it is not something unilateral that goes in only one direction. We can tell by the name “South-South”, unlike “North-South”, which denotes one direction. “South-South” is something that goes both ways. So I think that in Africa, in particular, the experience of discussing the concept of social development during those two days of the conference is a great example. I think that in Brazil we also need to move forward in this sense, discussing and establishing a concept for social development policies, and





also how can we integrate and exchange them with other countries. In particular I think that we have learned a lot by participating in this discussion with them. And they certainly have individual programmes and successful experiences that can be of great use in Brazil.

IPC: In the current context of the global financial crisis and rising food prices, what contribution do you think this cooperation between Brazil and Africa and within the continent is making?

FG: My view is that in times of financial crisis and even before, with food prices rising, these are times when it is even more important to move forward and consolidate social development policies, social protection and promotion policies, because there is a real chance of terrible consequences for the poorest and most vulnerable families, and they need protection mechanisms. So I think that in times of crisis, it is crucial to reinforce the social promotion and protection network, and to emphasize its importance, which does not end here. If we look at countries that are

more developed in the social area, especially the Scandinavian countries with their model of social welfare, those countries have not undone their social protection system. On the contrary, they grew and expanded the system even more. So I think that the spirit of South-South cooperation can be important in reinforcing positive ideas, experiences and best practices, so that they can be refined and improved—especially in a context of crisis like the one the world is currently experiencing.

IPC: A final question. What are the prospects for cooperation between Brazil and Africa? How do you see the next steps developing?

FG: The prospects are very promising. We have already developed a few activities with the African countries. First there was the cooperation with Ghana, whereby officials and experts from MDS went to Ghana for three weeks and helped design, formulate and implement public policies. Then a Brazilian delegation took part in the three Regional Experts Group Meetings on Social Protection,

organized by the African Union. We also participated in this last Ministerial Conference, where Minister Patrus Ananias spoke. The next steps will be towards countries that have already been to Brazil on a “Study Tour”, as we call it. Representatives of five African countries came to Brazil to learn about social programmes. They learned about how those programmes were formulated in Brasilia and then they went on a field visit to see the how the programmes actually work. Those countries were Angola, Mozambique, Kenya, Namibia and Ghana. Their representatives came to Brazil and most probably they will be the ones to engage in cooperation activities in the short term. We are currently discussing and working on the next series of activities with these countries so that we can establish a work programme, since they have already shown interest in cooperation with Brazil. So at the moment we are working to put the next cooperation activities into practice.


Cisterns Programme is Scaled Up to Support Food Production

*Dimas Ximenes
Ministry of Social Development and Fight against Hunger*

Brazil’s Ministry of Social Development and Fight against Hunger (MDS) has been developing a new programme to create opportunities and promote food and nutritional security for poor families in the semi-arid region of Brazil. This programme is called “Second Water” and its aim is to support the agricultural production of small landowners and food production for self-consumption using social technologies to collect and store rainfall.

Three states have been selected by a public bidding process to receive resources for the programme. Together, the Brazilian states of Bahia, Rio Grande do Norte and Piauí will receive R\$ 12 million for the implementation of the Second Water programme. Onaur Ruano, the National Secretary for Food and Nutritional Security in MDS, explains that





“after having met the target of benefiting 213,000 poor rural families in the semi-arid region with cisterns for collection of rainfall and storage of potable water, we are taking another step towards ensuring food and nutritional security for these families.”

Second Water will be implemented in 2009 in the municipalities where the Cisterns Programme, also known as the “First Water”, is already present. The “first water” is destined for consumption, to prepare meals, and for personal hygiene. The technologies to be used for Second Water are low-cost and have been proven to be efficient. Those that can be used include cisterns adapted for rural areas (calçadão), underground dams and stone tanks.

Semi-Arid. With an area of about 982,563.3 square kilometres, the semi-arid region of Brazil includes 1,133 municipalities in the states of Piauí, Ceará, Rio Grande do Norte, Paraíba, Pernambuco, Alagoas, Sergipe, Bahia and the northern part of Minas Gerais. The population is 20,858,264, some 44 per cent of which live in rural areas.

One of the region’s main features is its very high temperatures (averages above 26°C) and two well defined seasons: one extremely dry with hardly any rain, and another which is more humid, with irregular rainfall ranging from 300 mm to 800 mm a year.

Cisterns. The cistern is a popular technology for collecting rainfall and it is a solution in providing access to water for the people in Brazil’s semi-arid region. Cisterns are built with cement structures and can store 16,000 litres of water, enough for a family of five during the long dry season, which can last for eight months. Since 2003, MDS has built 213,000 cisterns in the semi-arid region, benefiting more than 1 million people. The Second Water Programme began with the construction of 274 units and has already benefited about 1,370 people. The Ministry’s total investment was R\$ 1,535 million (US\$ 661 million).

The Technologies of Second Water

Cistern “Calçadão”. This is similar to the cistern built to store drinking water but it is much bigger (it can store up to 52,000 litres of water). It is built with cement structures and is completely underground. Rainfall is collected through a large cemented area of about 220 square metres that can also be used for drying manioc (cassava root) and other rural activities.

Underground Dam. This is usually built on flat land and in river beds. It is a dam made of plastic vinyl that is built underground to hold the rainfall that drifts under the soil. A shallow well is usually drilled at the bottom of the dam, fed by the water that has accumulated in the dam.

Stone Tanks (“Caldeirão”). This technology is normally used in areas of rugged terrain and rolling hills, which are right for rainfall collection. It consists of large holes normally made of granite to store rainwater. To increase its capacity, brick walls are built in the lower parts or around it, so as to act as a barrier to accumulate water.

Including Gender in South-South Cooperation

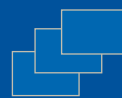
*Melissa Andrade
International Policy Centre For Inclusive Growth*

There is no doubt that South-South cooperation has incredible potential for the exchange of best development practices, but what can we say about how that exchange affects women’s empowerment? Social transfers in Africa focus strongly on children, people with disabilities and the elderly, but to what extent are women being explicitly considered?

It is worth remembering that women’s empowerment is part of the Third Millennium Development Goal (MDG) of eliminating the gender disparity in primary and secondary education, and in all levels of education no later than 2015. It is also part of MDG 5, to reduce maternal mortality by three quarters and achieve universal access to reproductive health by 2015. Needless to say, empowering women is good for the development of

everyone, since women then have more opportunities to generate income and care for their families together with their partners, and most importantly they can develop as individuals. The right to development is a universal principle, enshrined in General Assembly resolution 41/128 of 4 December 1986. Any prejudice that precludes a person from flourishing on the basis of gender, race or social status indicates our inability





to recognize human experience beyond superficial differences.

Looking at the status of women and different policy options in Brazil and some African countries may help foster this exchange. The issues attendant on the status of women in Brazil and countries like Angola vary significantly. In Angola, male and female literacy rates are very unequal (82.9 per cent and 54.2 per cent according to the OECD, 2008). In Brazil, by contrast, girls comprise the majority in school, including higher education (there are 17 per cent more girls in secondary school according to Edudata, 2006, and 29 per cent more females in higher education according to Edudata, 2004). But this difference has not yet reached such a point as to change women's lower rate of labour-market participation (0.46 for females and 0.70 for males, according to IPEADATA, 2000) or wage differentials (OECD, 2008 indicates that women receive 0.57 of the wages paid to men). In Brazil, violence is one of the main concerns of the women's movement (Pitanguy, 2007), reflecting the need to adapt the MDGs to national contexts.

Brazil now has a Special Secretariat of Policies for Women under the aegis of the Presidency. The Secretariat was created in 2004 and is entrusted with managing the Second National Plan of Policies for Women. That plan includes cross-sectoral and inter-ministerial policies involving 19 agencies of the Federal Government. Its work covers activities in the areas of economic inclusion, non-discriminatory education, health, prevention of violence, political participation, rural development, the empowerment of indigenous populations, culture and the elderly. At the moment, the Inter-ministerial Monitoring Committee is working on gender mainstreaming in the Social Assistance Reference Centres and the Special Social Assistance Reference Centres under MDS. Since Brazil's social policy focuses more on the "family" as a single unit, the plan is to highlight gender in the work of the social assistants (aide-memoire of the twenty-first

meeting, July 2008). In this case, the agenda includes policies specifically designed to empower women.

Apart from these activities, Bolsa Família, the country's leading social assistance programme, also takes a pro-gender approach even though its main targets are school-age children. The benefit is given to the women on the assumption that they know best how to spend the money on their children. Although gender was not a central issue in the programme design, a DFID-supported survey in 2006 by AGENDE, a non-governmental organization (NGO) showed that the benefit was important in ensuring that women have a regular source of income and can make decisions about household purchases without having to consult their husbands. The study suggests that the cash benefit should be followed by meetings with recipient women so that they can receive training and voice their concerns, as happened in the municipality of Belo Horizonte before Bolsa Família. The study shows that if gender had been a concern of the programme from the outset, complementary actions to empower women could have been included.

Indeed, there is a growing movement in the donor community to mainstream gender into development policies. This means taking gender differences into account from the start of each programme and producing information that can track the progress of gender equality. Usually, programmes either specifically target women or disregard them entirely. Gender mainstreaming means taking account of the fact that no programme is "gender-neutral" (DFID, 2008).

As regards cash transfers, a growing number of social transfers explicitly address gender inequality. A case in point is Bangladesh, a landmark experience where girls in secondary school receive tuition stipends on condition that they attend school and remain unmarried. Pakistan has also implemented a programme that gives cash to families in order to ensure that their daughters go to school. In Egypt, the new Ain El-Sira aims specifically to

empower women. The best known example is Mexico, where girls are given higher transfers than boys. In this regard Asia and Latin America seem to be the leading examples. Cash transfers in Africa usually fail to consider the impact of the programme on gender equality. Ghana's Livelihoods Empowerment Against Poverty gives preference to women when allocating the benefit but, like Bolsa Família, in this case women are not the main concern.

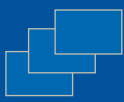
A few questions being posed would ensure that South-South cooperation programmes are sensitive to female empowerment. Who is to benefit? Does the programme reinforce gender inequality? How can we track the progress made in the area of gender? This would mean that the providers and recipients of technical assistance would be better placed to assess the status of women in their countries and ensure that the programmes create synergies that are conducive to fighting gender inequality.

There is much potential for an exchange of lessons learned in targeting women in social transfers, and also for learning how to take them into account in programmes whose targets are broader. This could become a two-way learning experience for both Brazil and Africa. There is evidence that investing in girls pays off, and that even when unintended, any policy will have an impact on gender relations. South-South cooperation, as it has grown, offers a new area to deepen knowledge on how women can increasingly become makers of their own destiny.

Reference:

Pitanguy, J. (2007). *Violence Against Women in the International Context: Challenges and Responses*. Rio de Janeiro, Cidadania, Estudo, Pesquisa, Informação e Ação (CEPIA).





To learn more about how gender equality can reduce poverty, see:

<http://www.undp-povertycentre.org/pub/IPCOnePager73.pdf>

In One Pager 73, Joana Costa and Elydia Silva discuss how tackling all types of gender inequalities can reduce poverty levels. The greatest impact comes from promoting women's participation in the labour market.

Related Event

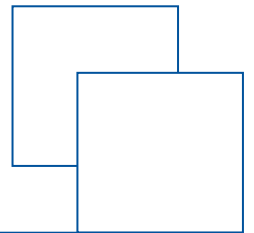
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