

# **The Roundtable Meeting on Policy and Research Implications**

**18 May 2012**

**Centre for Strategic Studies and Training in Tropical Agriculture/Embrapa**

**Brasília**

On 17 May 2012, the International Policy Centre for Inclusive Growth (IPC-IG) hosted an international seminar in Brasília on the role of South-South Cooperation in agriculture development in Africa. The following day, Embrapa — the Brazilian Agricultural Research Organization — hosted a roundtable meeting to draw out the practical implications of some of the key issues identified during the seminar for evidence-based policy and relevant research.

Ten main messages emerged from the roundtable meeting:

1. There is a need to establish real horizontal cooperation between Brazil and African countries, adapting initiatives to local contexts.
2. Lack of knowledge about local contexts stems from the absence of country studies in Brazil and from the fact that the Brazilian Cooperation Agency does not have field offices.
3. Demands from national governments do not necessarily respond to the needs of the most vulnerable sectors of African countries.

4. Real appropriation by African countries is hindered by the fact that most do not have a clear view of their needs.
5. Brazilian official cooperation should be consistent with the lessons learnt domestically in social inclusion and respect for the environment.
6. Brazilian policies aimed at boosting family farming depend on strong domestic social mobilization — something that is not necessarily present in African countries.
7. South-South Cooperation among Brazilian and African social movements should be deepened and grounded in African realities and needs.
8. Brazil-Africa cooperation in agriculture is undergoing important shifts. These include the broadening engagement of national actors, which has not always been coordinated; the emergence of structuring projects instead of isolated initiatives; a shift from transfer to adaptation; the emergence of mixed forms of cooperation, beyond pure technical cooperation; and the proliferation of trilateral cooperation.
9. Chinese agricultural initiatives in Africa are characterized by a plurality of actors; a mixture of aid, trade and investment activities; and a focus on initiatives aimed at modernizing agricultural practices instead of targeting food security.
10. Evidence-based research is needed to assess lessons learnt and translate them into effective policies.

## Session 1

### Speakers:

**Beatriz Pinheiro**, Director General, Centre for Strategic Studies and Training in Tropical Agriculture (CECAT/Embrapa)

**Paulo Melo**, Deputy-Head for Capacity Strengthening, Centre for Strategic Studies and Training in Tropical Agriculture (CECAT/Embrapa)

**Sérgio Chichava**, Senior Researcher, Institute for Social and Economic Research (IESE), Mozambique

**Kojo Amanor**, Associate Professor, Institute of African Studies, University of Ghana

### Facilitator:

**Dr. Dan Bradley**, First Secretary, Climate and Development, UK Department for International Development (UK-DFID)

### Overview

The aim of the first session was to highlight from the perspective of African researchers and policy specialists the key agricultural development challenges in their respective countries. Participants

expressed their views on the current or potential role of Brazilian cooperation programmes and models for responding to these challenges.

Six questions framed the discussions in this session:

1. How can Brazil best move from a simple “transfer” approach to building validation and adaptation elements into South-South Cooperation in agriculture?
2. How can Brazil most effectively channel its wealth of diverse experiences from its “twin-track” agricultural development approach into supporting innovative responses to agriculture development challenges in Africa?
3. How can Brazil maximize the potential synergies and complementarities among the different institutions involved in South-South Cooperation in agriculture?
4. How can the framework for Brazil-Africa engagement on agriculture development be expanded beyond technical cooperation and beyond government-to-government exchanges?
5. Within this broader framework, what is the scope for engaging with agribusiness, and how should this engagement function, bearing in mind issues such as environmental safeguards and corporate social responsibility?
6. What role can research play in generating analysis and evidence to support policy development for South-South Cooperation in agriculture, and how might this role be

strengthened by collaboration involving Brazilian research institutions and development partners like DFID?

### **Summary of discussion**

After a short presentation about Embrapa and the Centre for Strategic Studies and Training in Tropical Agriculture (CECAT), the discussion moved to the dissatisfaction of both Brazilian and African civil society and academic representatives with official cooperation between Brazil and African countries in agriculture.

Participants speaking from the African perspective expressed their dissatisfaction with a perceived prevalence of transfers instead of real horizontal cooperation. This perception is linked to a lack of knowledge about local economic, social, political and cultural dynamics in each African country, and to initiatives that respond to demands from African central governments, which are not always considered legitimate by African civil society.

The criticisms focused on two particular programmes. Participants criticized More Food Africa for offering concessional loans to family farms for the acquisition of Brazilian machinery and equipment while ignoring the fact that most family farmers do not possess the requisite financial capacity; it would make more sense to invest in low-cost technologies that are accessible to a greater number of family farms. Pro-Savannah was criticized for failing to rely on a governmental and inclusive strategy for Mozambican agriculture development that supports a national articulation of local plans.

Embrapa's representatives reacted by noting that all cooperation projects involve prospecting and diagnosis missions, and that partners design projects collaboratively, with due consideration for

local production systems. They noted that CECAT was created in part to adapt technology by gathering broad information about the realities of recipient countries. They added that Embrapa's counterparts in requesting countries are Ministries of Agriculture; Embrapa does not work directly with farmers. Finally, Embrapa representatives explained that Brazilian cooperation was demand-driven and does not interfere in partners' domestic affairs.

African representatives pointed out that development takes place within an institutional and social framework. Brazilian inclusive and family farming policies developed in a context of strong social mobilization. In African countries, such mobilization has been hindered by poor international networking and by an integration of social movements into market/agribusiness approaches that do not rely on technical dissemination.

The African participants also deemed integration among Brazilian and African civil societies to be poor, aside from strong Afro-movements in Brazil. However, even in such case Brazilian organizations and movements were criticized for taking identity for granted, relying solely on common races and without considering African cultural particularities. One example mentioned by one of the African participants was an initiative aimed at taking *Carnaval* to Ghana, thus grounded in cultural transfer instead of thinking of cultural projects adapted to the country's traditions. One suggested avenue for broadening exchanges among Brazilian and African CSOs is to encourage exchange students programmes.

None of the Brazilian CSO representatives responded to these comments, and one Embrapa representative acknowledged that Embrapa is not familiar with all African stakeholders. Another Brazilian participant added that the lack of knowledge about African realities stems from the

absence of country studies in Brazil, and that official cooperation is informed only by official representatives in African countries.

Criticisms from Brazilian CSOs, on the other hand, focused on the lack of people- and environment-centred approaches to official cooperation in agriculture. Brazilian official cooperation can sometimes be at odds with national advances in increasing social participation among women, indigenous peoples and *quilombolas*, which has been possible thanks to broad articulations between grassroots movements and municipal and national authorities. Brazilian official cooperation may also favour short-term solutions centred on governmental demands, although it was noted that while governments come and go, people stay, and cooperation initiatives should therefore be people centred, drawing on traditional knowledge and culture.

Concluding remarks reflected the consensus that one model cannot uniformly fit a context characterized by a diversity of countries and approaches to agriculture. To deal with such complexity, it will be necessary to expand the number of stakeholders, going beyond an engagement based on projects headed by Embrapa only.

Two key issues emerged from Session 1. First, African participants suggested that respecting the sovereignty of African governments — a hallmark of South-South Cooperation — involves favouring policies that exclude the most vulnerable sectors of African societies, thus contradicting the rationale of Brazilian cooperation. Second, Brazilian CSOs tended to assume that their own concerns regarding agribusiness, transgenics and agriculture multinationals would automatically be opposed by Africans. A deep understanding of the particularities of each African country is crucial for dealing with both issues.

## Session 2

### Speakers:

**Lídia Cabral**, Research Associate, Overseas Development Institute (ODI)

**Lila Buckley**, Research Fellow, International Institute for Environment and Development (IIED)

**Blessings Chinsinga**, Associate Professor, Chancellor College, Malawi

**Dr. Dan Bradley**, First Secretary, Climate and Development, UK Department for International Development (UK-DFID)

### Facilitator:

**Alex Shankland**, Research Fellow, Institute of Development Studies (IDS), University of Sussex

### Overview

Session 2 built on previous discussions, focusing on knowledge gaps and moving the research agenda forward.

The discussions were guided by seven key questions:



1. What kinds of evidence do policymakers in Africa, Brazil, other rising powers (such as China) and established donor countries like the United Kingdom need to support efforts to enhance the effectiveness of South-South Cooperation in agriculture?
2. In the absence of formal policy statements, how should researchers understand the origins and rationales of current visions and practices of Brazilian agricultural cooperation policy in Africa?
3. How can research best develop a picture of African state-level perceptions of Brazilian agriculture cooperation models and their associated challenges and opportunities?
4. How can research best develop a picture of Brazilian understandings of African agricultural challenges and opportunities?
5. What data sources and research methodologies can contribute most effectively to developing an understanding of the drivers, dynamics and impacts of Brazilian engagement with African agriculture?
6. What are the opportunities for comparative analysis with the role of China and other rising powers, as well as established donors, in African agriculture?
7. What are the key knowledge gaps and priorities for further investigation in Brazil and at the country level in Africa?

## **Summary of discussion**

The session began with a short summary presentation by the FAC team of the main findings from initial scoping research on Brazilian and Chinese cooperation with African agriculture.

FAC's initial efforts have focused on descriptive exercises (mapping the institutions, policies and operational instruments used by Brazil and China in South-South Cooperation in the agriculture sector in Africa) as well as on critical reflections on the context of narratives and perceptions of development in Africa. Four African researchers are also involved in country case studies in order to advance research through the collection of field evidence.

Some of the tendencies identified in Brazil-Africa agriculture cooperation were:

1. a broadening of the engagement of national actors, going beyond flagship agencies such as the Ministry of Agrarian Development (MDA), the Ministry of Social Development (MDS) and Embrapa and including universities, the Agency for Technical Assistance and Rural Extension (EMATER), the Movement of Rural Women (MMC) and other institutions;
2. a shift from small and isolated to more structured initiatives (structuring projects);
3. a shift from technological transfer to adaptation of successful Brazilian policies;
4. a shift from technical to more mixed forms of cooperation, such as the More Food Africa programme, which is linking the cooperation agenda with the trade/industrial agenda; and

5. a proliferation of trilateral forms of cooperation, building synergies with other donors and increase scale. Examples include the Food Purchasing Programme and Pro-Savannah.

Working hypotheses concerning Brazilian engagement in cooperation with African countries include:

1. a mix of moral and pragmatic drivers;
2. the lack of a coherent Brazilian national policy on cooperation, with initiatives engaging several institutions, agendas and views;
3. a gap between the affinity discourse and its reflection in practice;
4. the possibility that the conflict among non-intervention and local policies of development lead to a questioning of the demand-driven principle of Brazilian cooperation; and
5. the inexistence of field offices representing the Brazilian Cooperation Agency, which hampers its ability to collect local knowledge.

In the case of China's engagement with agriculture initiatives in Africa, the discussion recognized that the engagement is characterized by diverse modes of cooperation. Whereas formal political and economic engagement is guided by the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation, there is a range of private actors as well, including immigrants, private firms and civil society.

China's engagement with agricultural development in Africa is also characterized by a mix of trade, aid and investment, guided by a vision of mutual benefit. This type of engagement is redefining the aid landscape towards promoting modernization initiatives that ignore local needs and food security issues.

The effectiveness of South-South Cooperation has been questioned not only from the emerging donors' side, but also from the point of view of recipients. One African participant asserted that African countries do not know what they want from cooperation and are not making clear commitments. This in turn hinders real appropriation. He also highlighted the need to promote debate among South-South Cooperation partners, a role that could be performed by traditional donors thanks to their decades of field experience.

One Brazilian CSO representative added that at an earlier stage, Brazilian *quilombola* communities were unaware of their own objectives. Social mobilization has been critical to helping them design clear demands and connect with official channels. Details were not provided, however, about how that processes evolved. The participant added that once Africans identify their preferences, Brazilian social movements can contribute to them by transferring techniques and traditions in agriculture and other areas.

Concluding remarks were centred on the need to connect knowledge and policy. Avenues for forging this connection include:

- understanding how useful current research is in meeting challenges;
- promoting equitable dialogue informed by context-knowledge (knowledge for dialogue);

- understanding the nature of the problems, finding and documenting solutions that have already been designed, including at the micro level, and facilitating discussions for adaptation (knowledge for change);
- identifying evidence-based research that has already been produced;
- understanding the complexity of the domestic processes that led to successes, with attention to the political-economic dimensions;
- possessing a clear view of what cooperation is trying to achieve and for whom; and
- ensuring that a growing number of initiatives will also have a sustainable dimension.

The key point to emerge from Session 2 is that the rhetoric of mutual benefits advanced by Brazil and China might be compromised if the cooperation they provide does not include the most vulnerable sectors of African civil society. Three approaches are needed to promote effective South-South Cooperation in agriculture: building bridges between research and policy; promoting periodic dialogue among official partners; and linking Brazilian civil society to its counterparts in Africa as a way to stimulate the social mobilization that can lead to real appropriation of South-South Cooperation by African partners.

## **PROVISIONAL AGENDA**

### **The Role of South-South Cooperation in Agricultural Development in Africa: Opportunities and Challenges**

**Concept note for roundtable meeting on policy and research implications**

**18 May 2012 – CECAT/Embrapa, Brasília**

#### **Objective**

This informal roundtable meeting will be held as a follow-up event to the international workshop on *The Role of South-South Cooperation in Agricultural Development in Africa: Opportunities and Challenges*, which will take place in Brasília on 17 May 2012. Its objective is to draw out the practical implications for evidence-based policy and policy-relevant research on the key issues in South-South Cooperation and African agriculture identified at the workshop.

#### **Venue and logistics**

The meeting will be hosted by Embrapa, the Government of Brazil's Agricultural Research Corporation, at its research and training centre (CECAT) in Brasília, with facilitation and logistical support from the UK Department for International Development (DFID), the Future Agricultures Consortium (FAC) and the International Policy Centre for Inclusive Growth (IPC-IG).

The meeting will run from 9:30am to 12:30pm, and will be structured into two working sessions.

## Issues for discussion

**Session I** will encourage dialogue on the *policy implications for Brazil-Africa cooperation for agriculture development*. It will begin with a short summary presentation by the FAC team of the main policy-relevant issues identified at the previous day's workshop. This will be followed by presentations from African researchers and policy specialists, who will highlight the key agriculture development challenges that they have identified in their countries, and present their views of the current and/or potential role of Brazilian cooperation programmes and models in responding to these challenges. This will be followed by a debate on key questions, including:

- How can Brazil best move beyond a simple “transfer” approach to building validation and adaptation elements into South-South Cooperation in agriculture?
- How can Brazil most effectively channel the wealth of diverse experiences from its own “twin-track” agricultural development approach into supporting innovative responses to agriculture development challenges in Africa?
- How can Brazil maximize the potential synergies and complementarities among the different institutions involved in South-South Cooperation in agriculture?
- How can the framework for Brazil-Africa engagement on agriculture development be expanded beyond technical cooperation and beyond government-to-government exchanges?

- Within this broader framework, what is the scope for engaging with agribusiness, and how should this engagement function, bearing in mind issues such as environmental safeguards and corporate social responsibility?
- What role can research play in generating analysis and evidence to support policy development for South-South Cooperation in agriculture, and how might this role be strengthened by collaboration involving Brazilian research institutions and development partners like DFID?

**Session II** will focus on *knowledge gaps and moving the research agenda forward*. It will begin with a short summary presentation by the FAC team of the main findings from initial scoping research on Brazilian and Chinese cooperation with African agriculture. This will be followed by a debate on key questions including:

- What kinds of evidence do policymakers in Africa, Brazil, other rising powers (such as China) and established donor countries like the United Kingdom need to support efforts to enhance the effectiveness of South-South Cooperation in agriculture?
- In the absence of formal policy statements, how should researchers understand the origins and rationales of current visions/practices of Brazilian agricultural cooperation policy in Africa?
- How can research best develop a picture of African country perceptions of Brazilian agricultural cooperation models and their associated challenges and opportunities?



- How can research best develop a picture of Brazilian understandings of African agricultural challenges and opportunities?
- What data sources and research methodologies can most usefully contribute to developing an understanding of the drivers, dynamics and impacts of Brazilian engagement with African agriculture?
- What are the opportunities for comparative analysis with the role of China and other rising powers, as well as established donors, in African agriculture?
- What are the key knowledge gaps and priorities for further investigation in Brazil and at the country level in Africa?

The meeting will conclude with a brief discussion of next steps for strengthening research and policy dialogue in this field.

### **Detailed agenda**

9:30-9:45 Welcome by CECAT/Embrapa and DFID

9:45-11:00 Session I

- Emerging issues from the previous day's seminar – Alex Shankland
- African insights on South-South Cooperation for agricultural development in Africa – Dawit Alemu, Kojo Amanor and Langton Mukwereza
- Roundtable discussion

11:00-11:15 Coffee break

11:15-12:15 Session II

- FAC research on Brazil and China in Africa – Lídia Cabral and Lila Buckley
- Roundtable discussion

12:15-12:30 Wrap up

## List of participants

	<b>Institution</b>	<b>Name of Participant</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>City Country</b>
1	Articulação de Mulheres do Amazonas e parte do Movimento Indígena do Amazonas	<b>Jomar Araci dos Passos Amaral</b>	Coordenadora	Manaus
2	Articulação SUL – Centro de Estudos e Articulação da Cooperação Sul-Sul	<b>Bianca Suyama</b>	Executive Coordinator	São Paulo
3	Articulação SUL – Centro de Estudos e Articulação da Cooperação Sul-Sul	<b>Iara Costa Leite</b>	Associate Researcher	Brasília
4	AWAN - African Women Agribusiness Network	<b>Clara Ancilla Ibihya</b>	Chair of Tanzania Chapter	Dar es Salaam, Tanzania
5	BRICS Policy Centre	<b>Paulo Esteves</b>	Coordenador do Núcleo Cooperação Técnica e Ciência e Tecnologia	Rio de Janeiro
6	CEBRI	<b>Adriana de Queiroz</b>	Executive Coordinator	Rio de Janeiro
7	CENIT - Centre for Research on Transformation, and the Science and Technology Policy Research Unit, University of Sussex, United Kingdom	<b>Anabel Marin</b>	Research Fellow	Buenos Aires

8	China Agricultural University	<b>Qi Gubo</b>	Professor and Director, Rural Development and Management Programme, College of Humanities and Development Studies	Beijing, China
9	CIRAD – International Centre for Agricultural Research and Development	<b>Frédéric Goulet</b>	Département Environnements et Sociétés (ES), UMR Innovation	France
9	DFID Brazil	<b>Daniel Bradley</b>	First Secretary for Climate and Development in Brazil	Brasilia
11	DFID Brazil	<b>Michael Ellis</b>	First Secretary	Brasilia
12	EMBRAPA/SRI	<b>André Dusi</b>	Coordinator – Structuring Projects	Brasília
13	EMBRAPA/CECAT	<b>Beatriz Pinheiro</b>	Director-General	Brasília
13	EMBRAPA/CECAT	<b>Paulo Melo</b>	Deputy-Head for Capacity Strengthening	Brasília
5114	FAC - Ghana	<b>Kojo Amanor</b>	Associate Professor, Institute of African Studies, University of Ghana, Legon	Ghana
14	FAC - Malawi	<b>Blessings Chinsinga</b>	Associate Professor, Chancellor College, University of Malawi	Malawi
15	FAC - Mozambique	<b>Sérgio Chichava</b>	Political Scientist, Instituto de Estudos Sociais e Económicos (IESE) in Maputo	Mozambique
16	FAC – Zimbabwe	<b>Langton Mukwereza</b>	Research and Development Trust	Zimbabwe
17	Federação Quilombola de Minas Gerais N`Golo	<b>Sandra Maria da Silva</b>	Presidente da Federação Quilombola	Minas Gerais N`Golo
18	IDS – Institute of Development Studies	<b>Alex Shankland</b>	Research Fellow, Participation, Power and Social Change Team Co-convenor, IDS BRICS Initiative Institute of Development Studies, University	UK

			of Sussex	
19	IIED - International Institute for Environment and Development	<b>Lila Buckley</b>	Research Fellow	UK
20	INTA - National Institute of Agricultural Technology	<b>Elena Hidalgo de Ávila</b>	Sociologist, specializing in rural and human development, research and extension; and Coordinator, Pro-Huerta Programme in San Juan Province.	Buenos Aires
21	IPC-IG	<b>Leisa Perch</b>	Team Leader, Rural and Sustainable Development Cluster	Brasilia
22	MDA – Ministério do Desenvolvimento Agrário	<b>Gabriel Leão Oliveira</b>	Consultor do Mais Alimentos	Brasilia
23	MDS - Ministério do Desenvolvimento Social	<b>Aline Ribeiro Dantas de Teixeira Soares</b>	Chefe da Assessoria Internacional	Brasilia
24	Movimento das Mulheres Camponesas	<b>Justina Ines Cima</b>	Coordenadora da Direção Nacional do Movimento das Mulheres Camponesas (MMC)	Brasilia
25	ODI – Overseas Development Institute	<b>Lidia Cabral</b>	Research Associate, Economist and Social Scientist, focusing on South-South Cooperation and public policy and aid management in the agriculture sector	Portugal
26	Pontifícia Universidade Católica do Rio de Janeiro	<b>Geovana Zoccal Gomes</b>	Masters student	Rio de Janeiro
27	UN Women	<b>Eunice Borges</b>	Ponto Focal para o fundo MDG	Brasilia
28	UN Women	<b>Miren Saiz Alzugaray</b>	Assistente de Programa	Brasilia

29	UN Women	<b>Rebecca Reichmann</b> <b>Tavares</b>	Representative/Regional Programme Director	Brasilia
----	----------	--	---	----------