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REPORT ON THE SOUTH-SOUTH COOPERATION ACTIVITIES CARRIED OUT SINCE THE THIRTY-FIFTH SESSION OF ECLAC

Note by the secretariat



UNITED NATIONS



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INTRODUCTION

This report reviews the activities carried out from May 2014 to April 2016, that is, the period since the thirty-fifth session of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC).

At its meeting held in the framework of the thirty-fifth session of ECLAC, held in Lima in 2014, the Committee on South-South Cooperation elected the following Presiding Officers: Peru (Chair); Argentina, Chile, El Salvador, Trinidad and Tobago and Uruguay (Vice-Chairs).

The fourth meeting of the Presiding Officers of the Committee on South-South Cooperation was held in Santiago on 14 April 2016 with the aim of following up on the South-South cooperation activities carried out since the thirty-fifth session of ECLAC.

I. MANDATES ESTABLISHED PURSUANT TO RESOLUTION 688(XXXV) OF ECLAC

By virtue of resolution 688(XXXV), the member States took note of the *Report on the technical cooperation activities carried out by the ECLAC system during the 2012-2013 biennium*;¹ the document *South-South Cooperation. Note by the secretariat*;² the document containing case studies for the design of a methodological approach to measuring South-South cooperation; and the report on the outcomes of the calculation of structural gaps in Costa Rica. The following mandates were also established pursuant to resolution 688(XXXV) in order to guide the work of the Presiding Officers during the period:

Requests the Chair of the Committee on South-South Cooperation, together with the Presiding Officers of the Committee, the Executive Secretary of the Commission and the Statistical Conference of the Americas of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean, to continue with the process of identifying indicators of South-South cooperation, incorporating the methodology and advances developed for the Ibero-American Secretariat's Report on South-South Cooperation in Ibero-America, under the Ibero-American Programme for the Strengthening of South-South Cooperation, and to report on any progress to the Committee of the Whole at its session in 2015,

Also requests the Chair of the Committee on South-South Cooperation to take steps to ensure that the Committee is invited to the forthcoming meeting of the task force on the quantification of South-South cooperation set up within the framework of the Statistical Conference of the Americas of the Commission,

Invites countries to participate in the process of calculating structural gaps with the support of the secretariat,

Requests that the secretariat and the Presiding Officers of the Committee disseminate once per year the technical notes relating to the construction of indicators of South-South cooperation,

¹ LC/G.2593(SES.35/10).

² LC/G.2602(SES.35/13).

Decides to convene the fourth meeting of the Presiding Officers of the Committee on South-South Cooperation in Lima during the second half of 2014,

Requests the Executive Secretary to report on the fulfilment of this resolution at the meeting of the South-South Committee to be held in the framework of the thirty-sixth session of the Commission.

II. FULFILMENT OF THE MANDATES OF THE COMMITTEE ON SOUTH-SOUTH COOPERATION ESTABLISHED PURSUANT TO RESOLUTION 688(XXXV) OF ECLAC

At the fourth meeting of the Presiding Officers of the Committee on South-South Cooperation, the secretariat reported on the activities carried out in fulfilment of the mandates established pursuant to resolution 688(XXXV), as summarized in the sections below.

A. REPORT ON THE SEMINAR-WORKSHOP ENTITLED “ANALYSIS OF THE STATUS OF PROPOSALS TO MEASURE SOUTH-SOUTH COOPERATION” (SANTIAGO, 16-17 DECEMBER 2015)

At the seminar, regional specialists on South-South cooperation highlighted the existence of political-technical tensions and the need for greater transparency in countries’ activities and for existing information that was not being used in projects and programmes to be taken into consideration.

Reference was made to the importance of prioritizing quality over quantity in the variables for measuring South-South cooperation in projects and programmes. Furthermore, it was vital to take into account the changes that the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development implied.

With regard to evaluating results, it was noted that evaluation, measurement and monitoring costs should be incorporated into the design of programmes and projects and that processes should be analysed before moving on to results. Lastly, with regard to models, strategies and mechanisms, the current priority focus is on collecting comparable data, while recognizing that the work of professionals who export knowledge is a fundamental part of South-South cooperation.

B. PROPOSAL FOR MEASURING SOUTH-SOUTH COOPERATION IN LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN THROUGH A SYSTEM OF SATELLITE ACCOUNTS, PRESENTED BY THE STATISTICS DIVISION OF ECLAC

Under this proposal, satellite accounts revolve around the central national accounting framework and describe in detail the structure and behaviour of certain areas or specific socioeconomic fields, allowing new, more appropriate aggregates and indicators to be built and used.

Using satellite accounts in the field of cooperation was based on three balance-of-payments items related to South-South cooperation activities: current international cooperation, current transfers and capital transfers.

Satellite accounts would raise the profile of South-South cooperation and allow the weight of cooperation in national economies to be quantified, its different forms to be identified and simulations to be carried out.

C. PROPOSAL FOR MEASURING SOUTH-SOUTH COOPERATION IN LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN THROUGH THE MONITORING AND EVALUATION OF SOUTH-SOUTH COOPERATION PROGRAMMES AND PROJECTS, PRESENTED BY THE SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT DIVISION OF ECLAC

Measuring South-South cooperation in Latin America and the Caribbean through the monitoring and evaluation of South-South cooperation programmes and projects is a complementary, rather than exclusive, proposal based on an analysis of processes as well as impacts since it takes time for the outcomes of programmes and projects to become apparent.

Under the proposal, follow-up efforts should go beyond monitoring budget implementation, by moving towards creating institutions to measure cooperation and formulating a consensual plan with common criteria and reasonable deadlines. Furthermore a specific model should be designed for each project, which would allow for statistically controllable intervening variables to be included, using quasi-experimental models.

D. PROGRESS MADE BY THE TASK FORCE ON THE QUANTIFICATION OF SOUTH-SOUTH COOPERATION OF THE STATISTICAL CONFERENCE OF THE AMERICAS OF ECLAC AND OUTCOMES OF THE DISCUSSION WORKSHOP ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF A METHODOLOGY TO MEASURE SOUTH-SOUTH COOPERATION (BOGOTA, 28-30 APRIL 2015), PRESENTED BY THE STATISTICS DIVISION OF ECLAC

The overall objective of the Task Force was to develop a methodology that would define, qualitatively and quantitatively, measurements for South-South cooperation by creating a glossary on South-South cooperation and strengthening collaboration between national statistical offices and national cooperation agencies.

The reports of the Task Force outline its activities, results and commitments, revealing that the main challenges in relation to measuring South-South cooperation are coordination with other regional initiatives, collaboration among different actors, and the political and technical complexity of developing a methodology.

Lastly, at its eighth meeting, held in Quito from 17 to 19 November 2015, the Statistical Conference of the Americas of ECLAC took note with satisfaction of the progress made by the Task Force on Quantification of South-South Cooperation towards defining a standard measurement of expert-hours, consolidating data collection methods for measuring South-South cooperation, and defining standard units for measuring grants, and urged the task force to continue making progress in these areas for consideration by the Executive Committee at its fifteenth meeting.

E. PROGRESS REPORT ON THE PROCESS OF CALCULATING STRUCTURAL GAPS BY THE FINANCING FOR DEVELOPMENT UNIT OF THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DIVISION OF ECLAC

To date, three countries have requested assistance in applying the structural gap approach: Costa Rica (2013), Guatemala (2014) and El Salvador (2015).

Costa Rica has made the most progress in this process. The country-led effort is being coordinated by Costa Rican institutions, which are responsible for identifying gaps, with technical support from ECLAC. This initial exercise constitutes the pilot test for applying the methodology.

The process in Costa Rica revealed various vertical gaps (inequality and poverty, education, productivity, innovation, infrastructure and tax) and a cross-cutting gap (gender). The document on the application of the structural gap approach in Costa Rica is currently being finalized and the draft will be sent to the Ministry of National Planning and Economic Policy and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Worship for review and approval. Once it has been approved, the document will be presented and disseminated.

III. FOURTH MEETING OF THE PRESIDING OFFICERS OF THE COMMITTEE ON SOUTH-SOUTH COOPERATION

The Presiding Officers welcomed the presentations on the activities carried out since the thirty-fifth session of ECLAC and requested that the updates presented at the meeting should be included in a report on activities, to be submitted to the Committee on South-South Cooperation at the thirty-sixth session of ECLAC.

At their fourth meeting, the Presiding Officers addressed the linkages between South-South cooperation and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The secretariat described the negotiation process under way to establish the Forum of the Countries of Latin America and the Caribbean on Sustainable Development, which would be chaired by the country presiding over the ECLAC session at the time and would serve as the regional monitoring mechanism for the Sustainable Development Goals and as a bridge for dialogue with the High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development. The new forum would prevent the duplication of work and would be built on existing structures, so that United Nations system organizations and subsidiary bodies of ECLAC, including the Committee on South-South Cooperation, could report to the forum on the relationship between their specific areas of action and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

The Chair proposed using the Committee on South-South Cooperation, as an intergovernmental forum, to link sustainable development and South-South cooperation. The representatives welcomed the proposal, but agreed that countries would need more time to reflect on the matter.

Annex

LIST OF DOCUMENTS

Relatoría del seminario-taller “Análisis del estado de avance de las propuestas de medición de la cooperación Sur-Sur”

See online:

http://www.cepal.org/sites/default/files/events/files/relatoria_seminario_medicion_de_la_cooperacion_sur_surok_1.pdf

http://www.cepal.org/sites/default/files/events/files/01_ppt_seminario_analisis_del_estado_de_avance.pdf

Propuesta de medición de la cooperación Sur-Sur en América Latina y el Caribe a través de un sistema de cuentas satélite, a cargo de la División de Estadísticas de la CEPAL

See online:

http://www.cepal.org/sites/default/files/events/files/02_informe_cuentas_satelites.pdf

http://www.cepal.org/sites/default/files/events/files/02_ppt_propuesta_medicion_sursur_cuentas_satelite.pdf

Propuesta de medición de la cooperación Sur-Sur en América Latina y Caribe a través del seguimiento y evaluación de programas y proyectos de cooperación Sur-Sur, a cargo de la División de Desarrollo Social de la CEPAL

See online:

http://www.cepal.org/sites/default/files/events/files/03c_propuesta_de_medicion_de_la_cooperacion_sur.pdf

Avances del Grupo de Tareas sobre Cuantificación de la Cooperación Sur-Sur de la Conferencia Estadística de las Américas de la CEPAL y resultados del Taller de Discusión sobre el Desarrollo Metodológico para la Medición de la Cooperación Sur-Sur (Bogotá, 28 a 30 de abril de 2015), a cargo de la División de Estadísticas de la CEPAL

See online:

http://www.cepal.org/sites/default/files/events/files/04_ppt_avances_grupo_tareas_sursur_cea.pdf

Informe sobre el avance en el proceso de cálculo de las brechas estructurales a cargo de la Unidad de Financiamiento del Desarrollo de la División de Desarrollo Económico de la CEPAL

See online:

http://www.cepal.org/sites/default/files/events/files/05_ppt_avance_proceso_brechas_estructurales.pdf