

FEDERATIVE REPUBLIC OF BRAZIL COUNTRY PROGRAMME EVALUATION

South-South and Triangular Cooperation

Over the last decade, Brazil has made enormous progress in tackling the problem of rural poverty. Although rural poverty exists throughout the country, nowhere do the factors causing poverty combine as viciously as they do in the semi-arid north-east. For more than 30 years, IFAD and the Government have collaborated in the search for answers to rural poverty in the north-east. The lessons learned about what works and what does not form a complex matrix, but one central fact is clear: there is a major role for the public sector and government, both federal and state, in supporting poor rural people to improve their well-being. Support from multilateral and bilateral agencies is also a priority requirement.

Brazil has grown in economic stature and begun to help other developing countries through “South-South and Triangular Cooperation” (SSTC), which has also increasingly been recognized as a key priority for IFAD to achieve its mandate. There is therefore a convergence between IFAD and Brazil’s attention and interest in using SSTC as a further development instrument, for promoting sustainable family farming in Brazil and beyond.

During the last decade, Brazil has made a concerted effort to step up its SSTC efforts, in particular with African and Latin American and Caribbean (LAC) countries. In fact, Brazil is an important source of development knowledge, applied policy, and academic, scientific and institutional experience and expertise in many fields of immediate relevance to other parts of the developing world. It has set up the Agência Brasileira de Cooperação (Brazilian Cooperation Agency, ABC), with the aim of also supporting the country’s south-south cooperation agenda. SSTC is also an integral activity in other Brazilian institutions, such as the Ministry of Agrarian Development, the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Food Supply, and the Ministry of Planning, Budget and Management.

IFAD’s main priorities for SSTC are captured in the final reports on the Ninth and Tenth Replenishment Consultation processes (concluded in December 2011 and December 2014, respectively). Both call for IFAD

to strengthen its role in promoting and facilitating SSTC as an integral part of its business model.

IFAD’s engagement in SSTC with Brazil is mainly through grants and non-lending activities (e.g. knowledge management), although its rich experience with investment projects in the country provides the basis for such activities. Of the 24 IFAD grants involving Brazil, nine focused on SSTC. The main thematic areas covered by these grants include: family farming; rural finance; agricultural innovation; productivity-enhancing technologies; natural resource management improvements; policy, institutional strengthening and knowledge management; empowering grassroots organizations to influence decision-making; biofuel; and sustainable food production and consumption.

The grant funded activities have also allowed IFAD and Brazil to take a regional approach, in which Brazil becomes one of the knowledge providers for its neighbouring countries. For instance, the best-known grant-financed initiative, the IFAD-MERCOSUR programme, has played a central role in disseminating Brazil’s experience in poverty-reduction policies and programmes in MERCOSUR and in Bolivia, Chile, Colombia and Ecuador. Through the IFAD-MERCOSUR programme, some of the leading family farmers’ organizations have had their voices heard in policy-making and in shaping public investment programmes affecting their lives.

The Fund has also assisted Brazil in its efforts to cooperate with African and other LAC countries in exchanging knowledge and experience, in terms of public policies for family agriculture, associations and cooperatives, and agricultural research and technology development. Two IFAD grants provided support to knowledge sharing and capacity-building between the Brazilian Agricultural Research Corporation (EMBRAPA - Empresa Brasileira de Pesquisa Agropecuária) and a number of institutions in Africa (e.g. in Angola, Ghana and Mozambique). The Africa-Brazil Innovation Marketplace is a mechanism designed to involve researchers from different countries in joint efforts to devise rapid, efficient and low-cost solutions to some of the challenges that family farmers face. Similarly, the LAC-Brazil Agricultural Innovation Marketplace grant, also led by EMBRAPA, is a multi-country IFAD grant project that has so far benefitted ten LAC countries.



Farmers intercrop beans and maize in Oito de Outubro community, Simão Dias district.

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SSTC activities in Brazil are carried out through a mix of conferences, expert visits, study tours, workshops and twinning arrangements. Study tours is the main modality for the execution of exchanges, especially in the context of IFAD's lending operations, where participants and coordinators visited other projects to understand and witness best practices in smallholder agriculture and rural development. As for non-lending activities, international workshops and conferences played a role in country exchanges. In this regard, the REAF (the MERCOSUR Specialised Meeting on Family Farming, established with the support of IFAD) has enabled Brazil and IFAD to raise awareness of its collective experience and successes in family farming (e.g. in water and land management in semi-arid conditions, targeting

approaches, etc.) that has informed the development of public policies in Brazil and other LAC countries. In the Innovation Marketplace, the main approach was the use of twinning programmes and direct partnerships between agricultural scientists and experts in different countries. Under the programme, a ministerial meeting and a forum for knowledge sharing and fostering policy dialogue were held in 2010.

The way forward

IFAD has clearly emphasized the importance of SSTC in its programme for Brazil. There are however some challenges that will need to be addressed moving forward to enhance the effectiveness of IFAD's contribution in promoting SSTC in Brazil. First of all, currently most activities undertaken have an ad hoc approach, limiting the synergies across the various actions promoted by IFAD in the country. In this regard, it would be useful for IFAD to select focus areas for its engagement in SSTC. One such example could be family farming policies and programmes, which are at centre of the country's food security objective and areas in which IFAD has accumulated rich experience over decades in Brazil. Having a key theme will enable IFAD to become a champion and referred authority in its chosen area, thus further improving other non-lending activities such as policy dialogue, partnerships and knowledge management.

Another dimension for IFAD will be to strengthen partnership in the future with the United Nations Rome-Based Agencies (FAO and WFP) in Brazil, who too focus on food and agriculture issues and are active in SSTC. This would allow the three Rome-Based Agencies to collectively use their respective comparative advantage, specialisation, experiences, technical expertise and lessons to further support Brazil in a more co-ordinated manner in pursuing SSTC objectives.

Stronger institutional partnerships – beyond those already in place for the design and implementation of individual investment projects – with other national institutions such as the ABC already involved in south-south cooperation would also be beneficial. However, for this to happen effectively, among other issues, the country programme evaluation underlines the need for a stronger synergy between IFAD's lending activities and the grant-financed SSTC initiatives, aspects that would be further facilitated by out-posting the Brazil country programme manager from IFAD headquarters in Rome to Brazil.

Further information:

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