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Indonesian South-South Cooperation: Stepping Up the Institution and Strategy for Indonesia's Development Assistance

Aditya Alta¹* & Rhapsagita Malist Pamasiwi¹**

Abstract

This paper reviews Indonesia's South-South Cooperation (SSC) efforts with an aim of providing policy recommendations to improve Indonesia's management and implementation of its development assistance. The National Coordination Team on South-South Cooperation (NCT-SSC)—the current national institution mandated with SSC in Indonesia—is suffering from fundamental constraints in terms of coordination, organization, and institutionalization. Furthermore, the efforts to further the institutionalization by establishing a single agency for SSC have been progressing very slowly due to a lack of firm legal basis on one hand, and a proclivity for practical, business-as-usual approach on the other. To improve the institution and programming of Indonesian development assistance, a number of recommendations are suggested. First, a strong legal basis through the issuance of a Presidential Regulation on SSC management should be pushed to serve as a precursor to the single agency. Second, better public communication and outreach should be conducted to promote the SSC programs. Adequate monitoring and evaluation system should also be developed to measure program impacts. Moreover, Indonesia needs to have a strategy to promote the participation of business sector in SSC, such as by promoting firms' participation as contractor or a source of fund for projects in beneficiary countries. Finally, expertise in specific fields, such as agriculture and tsunami and earthquake risk management, should be promoted as a niche branding of Indonesia's assistance.

JEL Classification: F50; H11; 019

Keywords

South-South Cooperation — Development Cooperation — Development Assistance

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1. INTRODUCTION

"The Global South"—as a term referring to countries located predominantly to the south of the equator that share common historical traits and stage of development—was on the rise following the wave of decolonization in the aftermath of World War II. United by the spirit of self-determination and distrust of the prevailing international system, developing countries that made up the Global South materialized its presence as a new force through the Bandung Conference in 1955, and then by the establishment of the Non-Aligned Movement. Distinct pattern of interactions subsequently emerged from the relations among these countries, including in economic cooperation. South-South cooperation in its early days was more or less a reaction to developing countries' needs for support to assist their state-building effort and the insufficient support from developed countries.

Today, as new growth poles flourish and cross-cutting international arrangements govern states' relations, it might not be relevant to discuss cooperation among developing countries strictly under the confinement of institutions such as the Non-Aligned Movement. On the other hand, many of the postwar newly independent states, including Indonesia, have now achieved a middle-income status. As the flow of Official Development Assistance to these countries gradually decreased, technical and financial cooperation between them became more important. As stated by Kumar (2008), this is supported by the fact that the South is no longer a uniform group in terms of level of development—different stages of development between countries of the South enable them to complement each other. Indonesia is no exception, who has long provided experts, technology, and training to developing countries in the region. That said, Indonesia's assistance is only beginning to take shape as the government discusses the proper institutional form, which countries and development areas to serve, and what strategy to take.

This paper reviews Indonesia's South-South cooperation (hereinafter SSC) efforts by compiling relevant literature, research, and secondary data on the topic. The aim is to provide policy recommendation to improve the management and implementation of Indonesia SSC. In the section that follows, the concept of SSC—which includes the principles, modes, and advantages—is discussed. Subsequently, in the third section, historical and current development of Indonesia SSC is provided, which sets the stage for a discussion of its institutional achievements and challenges. In the fourth section, we discuss the organization of SSC in other emerging countries. From there, alternative strategies for improving Indonesian SSC are laid out in the fifth section. Finally, we conclude the paper by providing policy recommendations.

2. CONCEPTUALIZING SOUTH-SOUTH COOPERATION

International organizations offer a number of interpretations on the definition of SSC. According to United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation (UNOSSC) (n.d.), SSC is understood as:

> "...a broad framework of collaboration among countries of the South in the political, economic, social, cultural, environmental and technical domains. Involving two or more developing countries, it can take place on a bilateral, regional, intraregional or interregional basis. Developing countries share knowledge, skills, expertise, and resources to meet their development goals through concerted efforts. Recent developments in South-South cooperation have taken the form of increased volume of South-South trade, South-South flows of foreign direct investment, movements towards regional integration, technology transfers, sharing of solutions and experts, and other forms of exchanges."

When discussing SSC, a different yet related concept is often involved: triangular cooperation. The two are often mentioned together as South-South and Triangular Cooperation (SSTC). According to the UNOSSC (n.d.), triangular cooperation is collaboration in which traditional donor countries and multilateral organizations facilitate South-South initiatives through the provision of funding, training, management and technological systems as well as other forms of support. Triangular mechanism provides the means for South-South programs amidst small budget that often becomes an obstacle to a complete South ownership of the cooperation.

The 2010 Bogota Statement on South-South Cooperation and Development identifies the principles and approaches that characterize SSC (The High Level Event on South-South Cooperation and Capacity Development, 2010). In summary, they include: (1) Southern-led; (2) aid providers are often also aid recipients; (3) aim to respond to global and national development challenges and achieve the MDGs; (4) main areas of support include sharing of experience and learning, knowledge exchange, and technology and skills transfer; (5) demand-driven; and (6) triangular cooperation as a bridge between South-South and North-South cooperation.

When including traditional donor (country), there are four patterns of SSC as identified by Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) (2013). *First*, SSC as the starting point. In this scheme, traditional donor supports an existing SSC. An example of this is the cooperation between Mexico and Guatemala on the GIRESOL environmental network project, which is supported by Germany. *Second*, bilateral cooperation between traditional donor and emerging (South) donor as starting point. In this scheme, traditional donor and an emerging South country sign a partnership agreement to cooperate with a third, beneficiary country. Partnership between Japan and Brazil to engage with Angola in building capacity in health sector is an example of this scheme. *Third*, bilateral cooperation between traditional donor country and beneficiary country as starting point. This is the pattern where an emerging South partner joins an existing partnership between traditional donor and a beneficiary. An example of this is the "Clean Development Mechanism Project," which is originally a partnership between Germany and India, with China joining later. *Lastly*, triangular cooperation as the starting point, where the cooperation is set up jointly by the three entities (a South country, a traditional donor, and a beneficiary country). An example is the partnership between Chile, Spain, and Paraguay to build capacity in the public sector.

SSC is increasingly preferred in lieu of North-South cooperation when it comes to solving development issues in the South. Kumar (2008) offers the following reasons for defending SSC. First, skills in developing countries are typically developed in an environment where labors are abundant and capital is relatively scarce. Therefore, developing country's solutions might be more labor intensive and therefore more suitable for other developing countries compared to solutions from an industrialized country. Second, developing country's technological solutions are typically developed in an environment where infrastructure is relatively poorer compared to developed country's technology. Thus, they might be more suitable to be used in a developing country's setting. Third, similar geographic and climactic factors in the developing world-most developing countries are located in tropical region-have resulted in expertise that takes these factors into account. Fourth, technologies and expertise available in developing countries are likely to be scaled down to scales more appropriate to the size of markets in developing countries compared to mass production skills in industrialized countries. Fifth, as developing countries typically have low-income population, expertise and technologies from these countries might be more cost effective compared to developed country's solutions. Finally, these reasons also present a case for Northern partner's involvement through triangular cooperation compared with traditional North-South cooperation.

3. INDONESIA'S SOUTH-SOUTH COOPERATION (SSC)

3.1 Historical and Current Development of Indonesia's SSC

South-South cooperation has not been a new league for Indonesia. It has been introduced firstly in 1955 in Bandung as Asia-Africa Conference (KAA). Since the event, Indonesia has been through long journey to achieve what it has now. After holding the KAA in 1955, Indonesia made another role in the establishment of the Non-Aligned Movement in 1961, and to the subsequent foundation of SSC. Later, this type of engagement had been strengthened with the establishment of the Group of 77 (G- 77) and with the Buenos Aires Plan of Action in 1978, and the Caracas Program of Action in 1981. All of them are milestones of technical cooperation among developing countries. World's acknowledgement of Indonesia's economic capability through its membership of G20 also gave Indonesia privilege to take maneuver for developing countries and South-South Coop-

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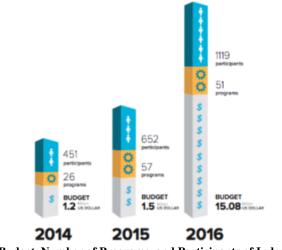


Figure 1. Budget, Number of Programs, and Participants of Indonesia SSC) Source: Indonesia's South-South Cooperation Annual Report 2016

eration, so that the efforts carried out by Indonesia could gain proper recognition in the international development cooperation and can play a greater role to increase the involvement of developing countries. A recent example of Indonesia's endeavors to play more of a leadership role in South-South Cooperation was showed when Indonesia managed to host of a high-level forum on knowledge exchange involving more than 300 policy-makers and practitioners from 46 countries in 2012 (Vickers, 2013). To emphasize its commitment on South-South Cooperation, Indonesia also agreed to contribute US\$1.5 million to the World Bank's South-South Exchange Facility.

The Government of Indonesia has stated that South-South Cooperation (SSC) has become one of its national priorities in the National Medium-Term Development Planning (RPJMN 2010-2014). Since then, it has developed the Grand Design and Blue Print of South-South Cooperation to identify further the policy, strategy, and implementation of the cooperation. According to the Annual Report of Indonesia's SSC 2016, between 2010 and 2012, Indonesia provided more than 700 activities within SSC, involving approximately 3,800 participants from Asia, the Pacific, Africa, the Middle East, and Latin America. In Asia, partner countries of Indonesia's SSC are: Cambodia, Lao PDR, Myanmar, Vietnam, Sri Lanka, and Timor-Leste. In Africa, partner countries of Indonesia are Tanzania, Ethiopia, Kenya, and Uganda, and in the Pacific Islands they are Fiji, Papua New Guinea, and Samoa. From 2014 to 2016, Indonesia has organized 134 programs attended by 2,222 participants from Asia, Pacific, Middle East, Latin America, and Africa, with a total budget of US\$23,48 million. The growth of Indonesia SSC budget also increased from US\$1.2 million in 2014 to US\$1.5 million in 2015. Budget allocation for 2016 has multiplied tenfold the amount of 2015, up to more than US\$15 million. The significant increase in number also contributed to the number of participants, from 451 in 2014 to 652 in 2015 and to 1,119 in 2016, representing an almost 45% increase in 2015 and 71% in 2016.

Since 2010–2016, Indonesia SSC through its National Coordination Team actually have indicated progress on coordination system. The NCT managed to publish annual report, data collection and processing of demands from partner countries, data on center of excellence, and budget, and start to build development system consisting SOP (Standard Operating Procedure), information and technology, communication strategy, branding strategy, list of prioritized partner countries, and planning and budgeting. The NCT also managed to have some achievements to organize some projects in several sectors such as agriculture, artificial insemination, fiscal decentralization, and entrepreneurship. Indonesia has organized various capacity building programs in the form of trainings, workshops, experts dispatch, apprenticeships, and scholarships. From 1999 to 2016, Indonesia has conducted 783 programs and activities, with 5,091 participants, and allocated budget of US\$57.4 million. All the number of budget mentioned came from National budget, triangular party such as developed countries or development partner, and any other legal resources. Recently, the budget of the program is still separated and belongs to each implementing ministries.

The relationship between south-south countries keep growing stronger and catch global attention. Recent developments have highlighted the positioning of international development cooperation, in the form of SSC as part of national development. The current administration under President Joko Widodo (Jokowi) has identified South-South Cooperation as part of its programs, including an emphasis on the role of Indonesia as a provider of SSC (Widodo, 2015). In one of his Nine Development Priorities Agenda called Nawacita, President Jokowi has signaled the urgency to scale up SSC under its first agenda of Nawacita, the Security, Protection of Citizens and Foreign Affairs Program (Sekretariat Nasional Joko Widodo (Seknas Jokowi) (Jakarta), 2014). One landmark in this process occurred during the current administration when Indonesia hosted the 60th anniversary celebration of the Asian-African Conference (19-24 April 2015 in Jakarta and Bandung). Thirtyfour heads of state and 77 representatives from international organizations attended this conference. It highlighted the importance of the new economic international order that has opened for emerging powers, one that challenges the old modes of cooperation.

3.2 Institutionalization of Indonesia's SSC

As Indonesia SSC had become part of foreign policy under Indonesia's Medium-Term Development Plan (Rencana Pembangunan Jangka Menengah Nasional/RPJMN) 2010-2014, a decree by the Ministry of National Development Planning (Kementerian Perencanaan Pembangunan Nasional) (or Badan Perencanaan Pembangunan Nasional/Bappenas) established the National Coordination Team on South-South Cooperation (or NCT-SSC) in 2010. NCT-SSC is expected to handle and resolve the problem of multiple stakeholders and complex institutional structure of SSC in Indonesia. NCT SSC consists of four pillars of ministry with their own established functions such as Bappenas holds responsible for development cooperation and budgeting; the Ministry of Foreign Affairs for foreign policy and diplomacy; the Ministry of Finance for fiscal policy and state budget; and the State Secretariat for support and facilitation. Other line ministries, local governments, and private-sector and non-governmental organizations officially serve as the implementing agencies.

Since the absence of specific unit or institution, the member of the NCT-SSC, which consists of the four ministries mentioned above, works under their own ministerial mandate and coordinated within the National Coordination Team. The ideal expectation of a national coordination team is to synergize and organize any programs or activities of Indonesia's SSC from every implementing agencies in Indonesia through "one-gate" and prepare the establishment of special unit of Indonesia SSC as a single agency. This NCT-SSC showed the eagerness of Indonesia to start its transformation from a recipient to a donor country. As a bridging of the process, Indonesia admits that at present Indonesia still has a "dual" position as recipient and donor of foreign assistance. As stated in the Annual Report of the NCT, Indonesia SSC implements its development effectiveness concept in receiving foreign assistance while at the same time providing assistance to other countries" (NCT-SSC, 2015).

During the absence of the upcoming single agency, NCT-SSC faces so many challenges. Despite many significant achievements of its donor program during 2010–2016, we find that Indonesia's SSC implementation in general appears fragmented, falling short of achieving maximum benefit and tending to favor one-off projects. Several other studies share this observation, for example one produced by Bappenas and United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) (Bappenas-UNDP, 2014) and (Japan International Cooperation Agency/JICA), 2013). The fragmentation seems to occur because ministries and agencies carry out programs separately, without considering the importance of Indonesia's SSC aim and function at the national level (JICA, 2013).

In short, we assume that fundamental constraints of Indonesia SSC implementation can be distilled into three weaknesses: less coordinated, less organized, and less institutionalized. Less coordinated means NCT-SSC has not reached their maximum function to build a good internal coordination among ministries. Some ministries or other implementing agencies in Indonesia often conduct SSC program within their own entities under the radar of NCT SSC. This problem caused lack of synergy between projects, national priorities, and public awareness. This problem leads to the next fundamental constraint, less organized. Less organized means most of Indonesia SSC program at the level of implementing agencies have gone scattered and hard to be monitored. Some of them even didn't seem to know about the NCT-SSC. The chaotic situation often happened when the discussions with implementing agencies were conducted. NCT-SSC effort to organized all the activities related to SSC sometimes got stuck on collecting data of the activities and capturing the demand of existing cooperation. The reluctance is also often shown by implementing agencies since they organized the cooperation with developing countries under their own ministries without the involvement of NCT-SSC. One important reason of this fundamental constraint happened is due to its less institutionalized. There is no specific unit or single agencies that become a home of any development cooperation under the framework of Indonesia SSC. Uncertainty also often happened on which kind of cooperation could be included as Indonesia SSC program since there is no reference or direction from single body or unit that fully responsible about Indonesia SSC. The scattered data of activities will lead to the absence of coherent reporting and evaluation.

We also highlight the difficulties of the establishment process of unified agency for SSC, an essential step for addressing its institutional needs. The year 2016 had promised to be a breakthrough year for Indonesia's SSC. By mid-2016, the process towards to the establishment of a single agency had speed up. However, towards the end of the year, the process started to slow down and kept hanging until mid-2017. At the end of 2017, the discussion about the establishment of single agency and its funding management by BLU has been sped up again and pushed to gain final decision through the bill of Presidential Decree. Unfortunately, it still has not been cleared yet.

Many of Indonesia's continuing stumbling blocks arise from the lack of firm legal basis for regulating two issues, that are SSC implementation and its institutionalization. It is true that the draft of the Grand Design (NCT-SSTC, 2011) and Blueprint (NCT-SSC, 2011) have already listed the legal premises for SSTC activities, however, these have not, in practice, resolved the main issues of SSTC, such as the institutional structure and coordination among the pillar ministries. The premises listed in the two documents have in fact not proven useful points of reference, because they do not clearly set out requirements for SSC implementation, management, and funding. Each ministry seems to have its own Standard Operating Procedures for planning and carrying out SSC projects and activities. Ministries that implement SSC activities, including those within the four pillars of NCT, come up with their own modules and terms of reference for various issues related to SSC and may or may not align these with those of the Coordination Team. In the cases of triangular projects, the ministry would create specific terms of reference for the partner country/institution to provide them with the necessary information about the project. The existing module is flexible, the better to suit the kind of assistance required by the beneficiary countries. The initiative for these projects can come from outside the ministry, for example the State Secretariat, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, or the beneficiary countries.

The establishment of the NCT in 2010 seemed, at the time, a more plausible solution (as opposed to a single agency) for coordination issues and the growing need for clearer mechanism for SSC. There were at least two possible reasons for this. *First*, disagreements still arise among the line ministries in terms of responsibilities and functions, which continue to pose challenges for the coordination mechanism. While Indonesia remained entirely a beneficiary country, Bappenas had the authority to plan the distribution of incoming aid. Now, within the framework of SSC, incoming funds require management and disbursement to other beneficiary countries. The selection of such countries and programs takes place-as it should-in accordance with foreign policy directives. This then places SSC under the authority of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs-a role strongly emphasized by the establishment of the Directorate of Technical Cooperation in 2006, whose operations serve to define and carry out outgoing development cooperation. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs tends to view itself as having more responsibility and authority over development cooperation, especially with the apparent shift towards a triangular framework. At the other side, the BLU issue to support the funding management of Indonesia's SSC also calls for a bigger role for Ministry of Finance. However, other ministries also believe that they should retain their traditional, business-as-usual responsibilities as the focal point for these issues.

Second, concerns have arisen that the establishment of a single agency will lead to more rigid rules for SSC implementation. It possibly will trigger some complex bureaucratic procedures, especially for ministries and institution that already have existing development cooperation long before the establishment. Therefore, some implementers fear possible new constraint to their work with the establishment of a single agency, along with new regulations and standard operating procedures.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs included the establishment of a single agency for SSTC in its formal proposal of new laws for the annual national legislation program *(Program Legislasi Nasional/*Prolegnas). By the beginning of the second quarter of 2016, the proposal had received a green light and became an official part of the Prolegnas process. On 4 May 2016, a meeting took place between the Steering Committee of the Coordination Team, led by the Director-General of Information and Public Diplomacy of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and the senior officials (first echelons) of the other three key ministries. At the meeting, the four ministries reached agreement about establishing a single agency for SSTC by the end of 2016.

On 1 June 2016, a workshop with a much wider audience sought ideas regarding several vital details of the single agency; four main areas have continued to spur discussion. *First*, the function of the single agency remains under debate. There are a few alternatives, but the most prevalent ones on the table have either an authoritative function or an implementing function. "Authoritative" means that the agency has the authority to plan and agree on projects/activities, but does not have the capacity to implement the projects on its own. In this connection, other line ministries will continue to carry out implementation. "Implementation" means that the agency will include a vast array of experts with the capacities to bring programs into effect, in addition to holding the authority for planning. As of the workshop in June 2016, no choice among these alternatives had been reached. *Second*, the issue of funding remains unsettled. Although the issue of endowment fund had been clearer lately, but since the single agency have not been established yet, the cost of every project funds will be decided by cost sharing between related ministries and triangular partner (implementing agency or development partner) at the beginning of every activity preparation. This is a sensitive issue, because it relates to the allocation of the national budget and the work performance rate (rate of programs completed) of the implementing ministries.

Third, the structure of the agency also remains to be determined, although the Ministry of Foreign Affairs has come up with a proposal that has received general approval from the workshop participants. *Fourth*, the relationship between the single agency and the line ministries and agencies that have historically implemented SSC programs has also proven a sensitive issue. At one discussion with line ministries, some of them expressed their concern if the establishment of the single agency will possibly take away their "ownership" of SSC programs.

Indonesian Vice-President Jusuf Kalla at a 2015 highlevel discussion at the United Nations, emphasized that SSC must remain relevant (Witular, 2015). At this moment, SSC cannot realize its full potential due to a number of continuing challenges at the domestic level. Indonesia has come a long way since the Asian-African Conference in 1955, and has the potential to achieve more. The country's experiences have demonstrated both good and bad practices; recently, as detailed above, it has struggled to achieve adequate institutional mechanisms to deliver on its SSC intentions. For SSC to achieve positive outcomes and impacts, it requires a strategic approach to assess needs and shape programs. Indonesia should plan and review its initiatives, not just at the tactical level of projects and programs but in a broader, strategic context. This implies that it should develop a comprehensive national policy, along with institutional frameworks, adequate budget resources, and annual reviews for its SSC. Moreover, Indonesia needs to enhance its engagement in the international agenda of SSC, and to adapt more to aid effectiveness principles -which, in turn, can provide a useful additional guideline to follow in overcoming current challenges. Adherence to these principles, along with monitoring and evaluation, hold the key to successful SSC planning and implementation, leading to improved project-management capacity and impact assessment.

3.3 Framework of Indonesia's SSC: Country Partnership Strategy (CPS)

In terms of its activities, Indonesia SSC declared its activities to be demand-driven by partner countries. In this case, there are two sides of the demand-driven coin. On one side, the demand-driven help to adjust which type of assistance mastered by Indonesia and needed by partner countries so they meet the agreement. But on the other side, since the demand comes from partner countries, it will be rather difficult to predict or built strategic planning on which type of program will be carried out for which periods and for which objectives. To tackle the challenge mentioned above, Indonesia SSC have started to initiate its Country Strategic Partnership (CPS). The CPS is expected to serve as a breakthrough of NCT-SSC to map its strategic planning on Indonesia relationship with beneficiary countries.

The process of its preparation has showed some progress at the end of 2016, several discussions with implementing agency and development partner were held to capture the demand of all parties to form a mechanism of strategic planning. Without neglecting the principal of Indonesia SSC that choose to be demand driven, the result framework was also proposed to cover all the possible demands included in Indonesia SSC flagship program that match Indonesia's center of excellence and experiences.

As a pilot project, Timor-Leste was chosen to become pilot project of this country partnership strategy. Put in consideration of long term and relationship between Indonesia and Timor-Leste, CPS initiation had been started to be discussed with Timor-Leste. The NCT-SSC has conducted several meetings and focus group discussions regarding the issue. As of recent development, the NCT-SSC has agreed on the Results Framework for CPS-Timor Leste and is pursuing to create a project design by collecting data from the line ministries.

4. EMERGING DONOR COUNTRIES IN SOUTH – SOUTH COOPERATION

Several emerging powers also have the trend to become donor countries and decided to actively join in SSC. Every country built their own mechanism and system to organize their role in SSC. Some of them are described below:

Brazil

Brazil's foreign aid program is managed by the Brazil Cooperation Agency (ABC). It focuses on helping countries with development experiences similar to its own. Brazil contributes 24 percent of its total assistance to be disbursed through bilateral partnerships (SSC) or with a traditional donor partner (trilateral cooperation) (OECD, n.d.). At the highest level are the ministries engaged in international cooperation, representing the primary focal points for policymaking and policy coordination for development cooperation (Vazquez et al., 2011). The MoFA is intended to be responsible for articulating the actions of each ministry according to foreign policy priorities, and ABC is its main executive body.

At the lower level are the various institutions involved in development assistance, with ABC acting as both a coordinating body and a financial instrument (Vazquez et al., 2011). ABC is tasked with the role of overseeing the conception, approval, execution and monitoring of the projects and programs. However, ABC's centrality in the system is fragile, and the operating system is fragmented. Evidence suggests that a range of other entities, both public and private, is involved in the design, negotiation and provision of assistance with limited ABC involvement.

India

India established a national aid agency (Taneja, 2012), the Development Partnership Administration (DPA) in March 2012, in an effort to improve transparency of its foreign aid operations and streamline the delivery process of its partnership projects with developing countries. The Indian Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) has overall responsibility for aid and technical assistance, and advises other ministries, notably the Ministry of Finance, on assistance to other countries. It mainly channels its aid in the form of grants.

The Department of Economic Affairs within the Ministry of Finance is responsible for most of the bilateral loans extended by the Government of India, and most of India's multilateral assistance. The DPA is headed by the MEA and will bring under one umbrella all agencies involved with foreign aid and development projects within the MEA. The DPA will oversee all the development partnership projects that India will undertake in developing countries around the world (Global Humanitarian Assistance, 2014).

Thailand

In October 2004, Thailand established the Thailand International Development Cooperation Agency (TICA) under the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) (TICA, n.d.). TICA is responsible for coordinating the technical cooperation received from foreign donors and coordinating the technical assistance Thailand extends to other developing countries. For its bilateral framework (SSC), TICA focuses on human resources and capacity-building. As for trilateral framework under TICA, Thailand serves as a hub for transferring technical know-how, skills, appropriate technology and best practices to third-party countries from within the region and beyond (UNDP, 2014). Similar with Indonesia, Thailand has adopted the demand-driven approach and the concept of mutual benefits in development cooperation, and development cooperation is based on the principles of 'self-help'. TICA aims to be a leading agency with high expertise in managing international development cooperation to enhance socio-economic development and promote cultural and technical ties with other developing partners. It implements the following activities: dispatch of Thai experts, provision of fellowships, allocation of technical equipment and implementation of development projects.

5. FINDING A STRATEGY FOR SOUTH-SOUTH COOPERATION

5.1 Engaging the Business: Lesson from China

Even though it is primarily conducted between governments, SSC involves other actors as well, including business interests. That said, business actors' involvement in SSC has remained limited. This is actually understandable given primary objective of business operations is to gain profit. Meanwhile, countries conduct SSC and development cooperation in general with various objectives, many of which—such as the creation of generally favorable attitude towards the aid provider—do not directly translate to economic returns. Nevertheless, there are a number of ways for companies to get involved in SSC: (1) as a source of funds, either as primary or secondary funder; (2) as an implementer or contractor for SSC programs, typically those that involve infrastructure project or procurement of goods and services; and (3) as a dialogue partner for government in program design and implementation (Anas & Atje, 2014).

In terms of business involvement in development cooperation, perhaps China provides a fine example. China has long been a provider of development assistance so that technically it cannot be considered an emerging donor. According to China's White Paper on Foreign Aid released in April 2011, China has provided a total of 256.29 billion yuan (US\$37.5 billion) of aid since 1950. Several estimates state that China's annual aid spending ranges from US\$1.5 to 2 billion (Lancaster, 2007), and between US\$10 billion (Chin & Frolic, 2007) and US\$25 billion (Lum et al., 2009). Despite the size and history of its assistance, China's pragmatic approach to development assistance as well as the country's historical proximity to the South cooperation regime-its participation in the Bandung conference changed its list of aid recipients to include non-socialist countries (OECD 2012)-has earned China its name as a champion of South-South cooperation.

Chinese development assistance is special compared to other South-South aid due to its role as a trade enabler. The concept of development to enable developing countries' capacity to use trade in order to promote economic growth and reduce poverty, or "Aid for Trade," is not new as the trade performance of developing countries has been the focus of international trade regime since the Doha Development Agenda. That said, the close proximity of Chinese development relations with trade relations is still remarkable. Chin & Frolic (2007) even states that the OECD would find it unclear where the development assistance ends and commercial cooperation begins. The distinction between China's aid, investment, and trade is also often found to be blurred as aid is often delivered as part of a larger package of investment and trade, and blended with even larger non-concessional loans and export credits (OECD, 2012).

According to an OECD-WTO (2009) survey, China's trade-related development assistance consists of the following elements: (1) duty-free and quota-free market access for products from Least Developed Countries (LDCs), (2) large-scale infrastructure projects (e.g., roads, ports, factories), and (3) capacity development programs and sharing of Chinese knowledge and experience in economic and trade development. The survey also found several factors that determine China's trade-related cooperation activities, i.e., (1) relevance to ongoing bilateral, regional, and multilateral trade negotiations and agreements; (2) economic, cultural, linguistic, or historical ties; and (3) request for assistance from recipient countries.

Much of China's trade-related assistance, such as in infrastructure and public works, has gone to Africa and Latin America. In Africa, these include constructing highvoltage power transmission lines connecting countries in Southern Africa, building mass transit system in Nigeria, establishing new lines of mining developments in Gabon and Mauritania, and rolling out a national communications network in Ethiopia (Schiere & Rugamba, 2011). Aid to Africa made up 45.7% of total China's aid in 2009, which has jumped to 52% by 2012 (Meja, 2014). In Latin America, China has planned to support the construction of two hydroelectric dams in Patagonia with loans of US\$47 billion and US\$2.1 billion. It is also involved in the ambitious construction of Nicaragua Canal, which is expected to link the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans and is promoted by the Hong Kong-based private company, HKND Group (Contipelli & Picciau, 2015). Aside from promoting its firms and labors in large projects-China is known to use its own capacity in the delivery and implementation of its aid (OECD, 2012)—Contipelli & Picciau (2015) also noted that many of these projects are strategically positioned to secure access to natural resources, such as oil (Venezuela), meat (Argentina), soybeans (Brazil and Argentina), and copper (Chile and Peru). Infrastructure projects in Patagonia mentioned above, for example, are related to the establishment of a railroad connecting Argentina's agricultural plants and its ports, which is expected to contribute to efficient transport of grains, since China is the largest buyer of Argentina's soybean.

Despite its success at integrating trade interest and engaging its firms in SSC, it is worth noting that China is a socialist market economy. The implication of the system is that private business operations are acknowledged and supported, but the state maintains its close control and involvement in the economy. Also, as shown in the Fortune Global 500 list from year to year, most of China's biggest companies are state owned and operate in finance, energy, or engineering—sectors that are most likely to be involved in Chinese development assistance programs.

5.2 Finding a Niche for Indonesia's Development Cooperation

Another good strategy that Indonesia can adopt to improve its development cooperation is provided by the concept of niche diplomacy. As former Australian Foreign Minister, Gareth Evans, put it, niche diplomacy is conducted by concentrating resources in specific areas best able to generate returns worth having, rather than trying to cover the field (Evans & Grant, 1991). It is an exercise of diplomacy characteristic of middle power countries which, due to their limited military and economic powers, should choose which fields to focus on in the international community. Unlike great powers such as United States and China who can unilaterally influence other countries on a wide range of issues, middle powers often rely on multilateral forums and coalition making to voice their opinions and try to influence the international agenda on a given issue. Therefore, finding "niche" agenda to focus on constitutes a decisive opportunity for the projection of a middle power's foreign policy.

A niche is a specific policy area in which a state has a specific knowledge, a developed network, and sustainable activity (van Genderen & Rood, 2011). This idea of "niche" is similar to market niche, where the success of a company that chooses to focus on specific market segment depends on its expertise and demands for such expertise. Therefore, van Genderen & Rood (2011) argued that two things are important in the identification of a country's niche. *First*, international demand for the country's knowledge. *Second*, a niche should be defined as specifically as possible—a country can only claim a niche based on the uniqueness of the product, service, or knowledge due to its scarcity or competitive position. An example of successful niche diplomacy can be seen in the foreign relations of Nordic

countries, such as Norway, Sweden, Denmark, and Finland. These countries have long built a reputation in the field of peacebuilding, as shown by their involvement in numerous peacekeeping operations and expertise in peace studies and conflict resolutions. As a result, assistances in conflict mediations and peace negotiations are often expected by the international community from these countries, which reflects the international acceptance of the niche branding of Nordic assistance.

To find the niche fields in which to develop Indonesia's aid capability, it is logical to start from Indonesia's foreign policy. Rosyidin (2015), for example, suggested to develop niche diplomacy by investing on the role as a peacemaker on the ground that Indonesia is constitutionally committed to world peace and has ample experience in dispatching peacekeeping troops. However, we argue that this is not enough as Indonesia never had specific expertise in the field, in contrast with the Nordic example above where peacekeeping contributions are supported by deep institutional commitment and entrenched capacity for peacebuilding. Similarly, it is also insufficient to use President Joko Widodo's emphasis on maritime security and infrastructure development as a basis for concentrating aid resources and branding in those fields. Not only are these areas too broad to develop specific technical expertise in, the administration's focus on them are also mostly domestic and inward looking, especially with its maritime vision mostly concerning preservation of territorial sovereignty. Thus, it is more helpful to start from Indonesia's aid-giving history to identify its technical strength rather than starting from its official policy.

In its promotional publications, the NCT has reiterated a number of flagship programs, grouped into three flagship areas: development issue, good governance, and economic issue. Despite the "flagship" designation, the programs include all sorts of areas of assistance—from poverty alleviation to education, to local and regional development, as well as microfinance. Meanwhile, a look at a mapping of Indonesia's SSC capacity conducted by CSIS (2014) would reveal that not all capacities in these fields are robust enough to deserve a flagship label. Law enforcement and local and regional development, for instance, are included in flagship programs but not recognized as significant capacities in the CSIS study. Without a clear definition of what makes a program flagship, it is easy to imagine one-off activities in a "flagship area" being included in the list.

Nevertheless, there are several areas agreed by both the government publications and CSIS study as demonstrating noticable capacities. Among them is the agriculture sector, particularly in artificial insemination and training for farmers. The CSIS study identified advanced level of capacity in this area, as indicated by strong track record, amount of budget allocated, area of coverage or number of countries where programs have been implemented, and number of supporting donors or partners. In support of this evidence, we also argue that aid capacity in agriculture sector is a good niche to develop. As mentioned earlier, developing countries solutions to development problems are more suitable to the social and economic characteristics of other developing countries. In this case, focusing on the provision of technical assistance in specific agricultural techniques, such as dryland farming, and agricultural tools suitable for smallscale farming might be a good idea to develop Indonesia's niche branding in agricultural assistance.

Interestingly, the CSIS study also identified disaster risk reduction as an area of expertise, albeit with a "to be improved" level of expertise. Nevertheless, disaster risk management (DRM)-especially concerning tsunami and earthquake risk-might be posed as a focus of Indonesia's assistance since the government itself has turned its attention to DRM capacity improvement following the 2004 tsunami in Aceh and 2006 earthquake in Yogyakarta. Given the geographically-shared nature of tsunami and earthquake risks, a niche can be built by complementing technical assistance in DRM with advocacy of the agenda in regional diplomacy, such as through the ASEAN and Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA). Although perhaps a bit late as Indonesia has recently stepped down from the chairmanship, a push for DRM cooperation in IORA is always necessary as the organization has identified DRM as one of its priority areas. Also worth noting is the fact that Indonesia hosted and implemented the "International Training on Disaster Risk Management for IORA Member Countries, Southern American and Caribbean Countries" in Aceh in 2015. Provided by the Aceh-based Tsunami and Disaster Mitigation Research Center (TDMRC), the training signaled Indonesia's focus in DRM cooperation among the Indian Ocean states, which is an important first step towards getting a niche recognition and institutional responsibility in the field of DRM.

6. POLICY RECOMMENDATION

In the above sections, we have discussed the rising popularity of SSC and the arguments for promoting SSC as an emerging model of development cooperation that utilizes the specialized skills of developing countries for the benefit of other developing countries. Specifically, we look at Indonesia's SSC-its history, recent development, and recent institutional improvements. We identify several issues that need to be addressed to further improve Indonesia SSC, i.e., less coordinated, less organized, and less institutionalized as three fundamental constraints of the existing Indonesia SSC as well as issues surrounding the establishment of the single agency. From there, we turn our attention to SSC practices of other emerging donor countries (Brazil, India, and Thailand) and discuss alternative strategies for SSC. In this concluding part, we present our conclusion as policy recommendations to improve the institutional and strategic aspects of Indonesia SSC.

First, as we learned from other emerging donor countries mentioned above, all of them have certain mechanism and guidelines, even independent body to organize their participation as donor countries. Those requirements are still missing from Indonesia SSC. Strengthening of the legal framework could be one of Indonesia's best start to guide Indonesia SSC into a clearer and neater path. The issue of Presidential Regulation/decree uncertainty should be one urgent matter to be tackled before we move on to the establishment of the upcoming single agency. Strong base of legal framework will guide Indonesia SSC to establish a firm single agency to arrange better coordination towards the integration of programs, planning, and budgeting. So,

the upcoming single agency is expected to synergize all Indonesia SSC activities from all implementing partners through one gate. It will be a better way to arrange and monitor the Indonesia SSC activities.

Second, there have been few publications related to the Indonesian SSC programs, especially within the country. Only small circle of parties are familiar about Indonesia SSC and how potential it is. Not only the public, even some of line ministries and implementing agencies don't seem to understand well what Indonesia's SSC is and what to do with it. So that, disseminating Indonesia's SSC role and gather bigger support domestically are required. As we also found some reluctancy about Indonesia SSC, Indonesia need a better communication strategy for promotion and publication. Such efforts should take place through public outreach programs, wider dissemination of SSC information, and public awareness/education programs targeting members of Parliament, political parties, media, the private sector, civil society, and the general public. These activities should clearly demonstrate the benefits of Indonesia's SSC both for the country and the wider international community.

Third, since the absence of specific unit or entities to be a home for all Indonesia SSC program and activities still prevails, the Government of Indonesia should initiate a better monitoring and evaluation system for all its programs and activities. Even though NCT-SSC has managed to publish annual report, better monitoring and evaluation process is needed to track down not only the real number of activities, participants, and budget that is still scattered so far, but also the real impacts to gain lesson learned for a better Indonesia's SSC.

Fourth, business sector's involvement in SSC needs to be improved. Generally, there are three ways by which businesses can be engaged in development cooperation: (1) as a source of fund, (2) as implementer or contractor of SSC programs, and (3) as dialogue partner. As China has shown, integrating businesses into SSC programs may become an alternative strategy for market expansion and investment. Moreover, China heavily utilizes its companies in infrastructure works in beneficiary countries, which are strategically positioned to build the supply side in order to facilitate and secure access to natural resources. With its huge capital power, it is admittedly difficult to replicate the Chinese conduct in Indonesia SSC. However, Indonesia can still improve the contribution of businesses and private sector in its development cooperation by leveraging its expertise. For example, Indonesia can start engaging its micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs) in relevant technical assistance programs. Such activities may also be used as a platform for matchmaking between Indonesian and South countries' MSMEs with a goal of establishing international networking and partnership. Also, in order to allow businesses to identify development programs relevant to their interests, the government can build an online platform that enlists current and future development programs.

Fifth, a strategy for Indonesia's SSC can be made by finding and subsequently focusing on "niche" fields. Utilizing the concept of niche diplomacy, a niche is a specific area that is best able to generate returns worth having and therefore necessitates the concentration of resources in developing the area. Based on a study conducted by CSIS,

a niche is identified in agriculture sector, specifically in artificial insemination and training for farmers, where an advanced level of capacity lies. We also recommend focusing on assistance that considers geographic and economic characteristics of agriculture in developing countries. Providing training on specific agricultural techniques, such as dryland farming, and agricultural tools suitable for smallscale farming might be a good idea to develop Indonesia's niche branding in agricultural assistance. Another field worthy of being developed as a niche is disaster management, particularly concerning tsunami and earthquake. This is an area where technical expertise has substantially improved following several catastrophic events in Indonesia. Opportunity to focus on tsunami and earthquake management is provided by the geographically-shared nature of the risks, therefore necessitating Indonesia's active advocacy of the issue and promotion of its capacity in regional bodies such as ASEAN and IORA. Provision of technical assistance and agenda setting in relevant regional or multilateral forums together guarantee international recognition of a country's institutional responsibility in a certain area, which is a key ingredient of a successful niche building.

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