



The start of a shared learning journey

A south-south partnership between Brazilian and Ethiopian water and sanitation specialists

Fast Facts

South-South Cooperation

A development cooperation modality where two or more developing countries pursue individual or shared national capacity development objectives through exchanges of knowledge, resources and technical know-how and through (inter-)regional collective actions.

Trilateral South-South Cooperation (TSSC)

TSSC brings together developing countries, developed countries and International Organisations to share knowledge and implement initiatives with common development goals. TSSC builds on shared governance among different actors and identifiable comparative advantages.

A journey to inspire change

“Progress is impossible without change, and those who cannot change their minds cannot change anything.”

- **George Bernard Shaw**, playwright, co-founder London School of Economics

This learning note discusses the **Trilateral South South Cooperation (TSSC)** of the Brazil-Ethiopia-UNICEF Cooperation programme.

It assesses the value addition of the South-South concept, its workings and makes explicit the learning potential of the TSSC strategy based upon the personal reflections of participants from Brazil and Ethiopia.

The insights and lessons learned were gained by participants in the two exchange visits that have already taken place under the programme.

Setting course for a two-year cooperation

“Travel is more than the seeing of sights; it is a change that goes on, deep and permanent, in the ideas of living.”

– **Miriam Beard, historian, social justice activist**

South-South cooperation is a term used by policymakers and academics to describe the exchange of resources, technology, and knowledge between developing countries, also known as countries of the global South¹. The emerging Tripartite South-South Cooperation between the governments of Brazil and Ethiopia in collaboration with UNICEF is an exemplary initiative of such cooperation..

Following initial exchange visits between high level delegations between Ethiopia and Brazil in September 2014 and January 2015, efforts were made to capture the insights, impressions and shifts in ways of perceiving **urban sanitation services** experienced by the delegates from both countries following their exposure to peers working to address similar challenges in somewhat similar, and yet significantly different, contexts.



¹ [UN General Assembly Resolution A/RES/64/222](#)

Common needs, shared interests

Travelling to a new country, interacting with people from a different culture, visiting vital cultural sights or simply trying to figure out local transport options are all experiences that enrich one’s world perspective immeasurably. South-South collaboration modalities such as TSSC, with explicit learning agendas and programmes defined through iterative, participatory processes by country delegations, hold the potential to reach beyond the individual learning experience to realise learning aims, objectives and priorities with wider societal benefits.

The TSSC process starts with the intentional step of identifying the common needs and mutual benefits that form the foundation of a collaboration of this nature.

With an urbanization rate of 4.7 percent per annum, Ethiopia is predicted to become one of the most populous urban nations in Africa by 2050. The Government of Ethiopia faces complex challenges in terms of expanding access to and improving quality of WaSH services for its growing urban population, especially for the most vulnerable groups.

A strong national response is evident in several policy and strategy mechanisms. The second **Growth and Transformation Plan** (GTP II) that aims for Ethiopia to achieve middle income country status, focuses on industrialization and urbanization goals and includes increasing service norms for water supply – in urban settings from the current 20 lpcd to between 40 to 100 litres per person per day.

In 2013, the Government of Ethiopia joined efforts with development partners to increase the pace of improved WASH services nationwide. The resulting **ONE WaSH National Programme** (OWNP), the world's largest sector wide approach (SWAp), unites government and



Lasting impressions

'Institutional arrangements are different in Brazil with the Ministry of Cities dealing with centres of over 50,000 people and FUNASA¹ deals with the rest. In Brazil the latter are considered rural whereas in Ethiopia, a rural area has a population below 2000 people!'

Mr. Nuredin Mohammed, Director of Water Supply and Sanitation Directorate, Ministry of Water, Irrigation and Energy

'What really impacted me was the opportunity to become familiar with a reality that I had only seen in the media, and in becoming aware, discovering how we can contribute to change in this context.'

Mr. Alceu de Castro Galvão Junior, Manager of Basic Sanitation Sector, Ceará State Regulatory Agency

'Diving into a new culture, especially in a country as rich and diverse as Ethiopia, has been extremely inspiring. Experiences like this contribute to the formation of citizens who are more sensitive to diversity and committed to solutions designed under a holistic and comprehensive perception of problems.'

Marcelo de Paula Neves Lelis, Infrastructure Analyst and Project Manager, National Secretary of Environmental Sanitation, Ministry of Cities

development partners for the implementation of WaSH services in rural and urban areas. The OWNP, with its consolidated processes of WaSH planning, budgeting and reporting is unique for its comprehensive, inclusive, cost effective and progress-oriented approach.

Through the Department for International Development (DFID)-financed **One WaSH Plus** programme, UNICEF was requested by the Government of Ethiopia to support the development of a **national integrated urban sanitation strategy**.

UNICEF prompted sharing between Brazil and Ethiopia to stimulate exchange and learning about tried and tested models for urban sanitation. Brazil has good examples of urban WaSH regulation, policy frameworks, services planning and management (at central and local levels), and condominial² sewerage (technology and management components). Ethiopia has a developing enabling environment with examples of local leadership and management of services delivery within a federal system, a key similarity between the two countries and their federal structure.

This UNICEF-brokered connection was established with the aim of sharing knowledge, experience and technical know-how on these areas. The Brazil-Ethiopia-UNICEF TSSC, relates to One WaSH Plus through the programme results of "enhanced sector governance" and "improved Urban WASH service delivery". The two-year cooperation will result in expert inputs that enable the finalisation of Ethiopia's national integrated urban sanitation strategy and the implementation of the related Urban Sanitation Action Plan.

² A condominial sewerage system is a low-cost sewer system that is notable for the emphasis on community participation in all aspects of planning, management and maintenance of the system at housing block level. This shallow system collects wastewater in small-diameter pipes laid at fairly flat gradients that are located under front or back yards or the pavement rather than under a road as with conventional sewerage.

Exchange Visits

The TSSC programme started with two exchange visits – one in September 2014 and one in January 2015.



Members of the Ethiopian delegation included:

- Dr. Kebede Worku, Minister of Health
- Mr. Kebede Gerba Gemoso, Minister of Water and Energy
- Mr. Wanna Wake, General Director of the Water Resources Development Fund and Member of the Parliament
- representatives from:
 - Ministry of Urban Development, Housing and Construction
 - Oromia Water, Mines and Energy Bureau
 - Amhara Water Resources Development Bureau
 - Water Resources Development Fund
 - Tigray Water Resources Bureau
 - Somali Water Resources Development Bureau
 - World Vision Ethiopia
 - DFID Ethiopia
- Samuel Godfrey, WASH Section Chief,
- Michele Paba, Urban WASH Manager of UNICEF Ethiopia.

Members of the Brazilian delegation included:

- Marcelo de Paula Neves Leles, Infrastructure Analyst and Project Manager, National Secretary of Environmental Sanitation, Ministry of Cities

- Maria Cristina de Sá Oliveira Matos Brito, Specialist in Hydric Resources, National Agency of Hydric Resources, Coordinator of PRODES Watershed Decontamination Programme
- Anna Maria Graziano, Project Analyst, Trilateral South – South Cooperation Department, Agency for Brazilian Cooperation (ABC), Brazilian Ministry of Foreign Affairs
- Cláudia Elisabeth B. Marques, Engineering Coordinator, Department of Public Health Engineering, National Health Foundation
- Ms. Dayany Schoecher Salati, Infrastructure Analyst, Ministry of Public Planning, Budgeting and Management, National Health Foundation
- Alceu de Castro Galvão Junior, Manager, Basic Sanitation sector, Ceará State Regulatory Agency
- Helder dos Santos Cortez, Rural Sanitation Manager, Integrated System for Rural Sanitation (SISAR), Ceará State Water and Sewage Company (CAGECE)
- Michelle Barron, Programme Manager for Horizontal/South-South Cooperation, UNICEF Brazil focal point, Humanitarian Cooperation and Gender

In **September 2014** the high-level delegation **from Ethiopia visited Brazil**. The Government of Brazil hosted the five-day high-level mission comprised of federal, regional and local government representatives of Ethiopia, UNICEF, DFID and World Vision. The objective was to get insights into how Brazil has advanced in providing Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WaSH) in urban areas given its rapid urbanization in the last 50 years, and which has significantly reduced child mortality.

The Brazilian Ministry of External Relations, through the Brazilian Agency for Cooperation and the Brazilian ministries responsible for the planning and implementation of the national WaSH policy including the Ministry of Cities, the Ministry of Health through the National Health Foundation, the Ministry of National Integration, the Ministry of Environment and the National Water Agency, worked with the UNICEF Brazil Country Office to prepare the agenda including high-level meetings and field visits to provide the Ethiopian Delegation with

an overview of the water and sewage systems in Brazil at the national, state and municipal levels.

The opening session, a two-day seminar on 15th and 16th September 2014, focused on exchanging knowledge and ideas about how the Ethiopian and Brazilian WaSH sectors are structured, key similarities and critical differences.

Field visits were to Fortaleza - the capital of the northeastern state of Ceará - and nearby municipalities Sobral and Santana, where the Ethiopian delegation was welcomed by the Mayors and the community. They opened their homes to show how water and sewerage systems are installed at household level and how these systems benefit citizens.

The delegation visited the water treatment plant of the Water and Sewage Company of the State of Ceará (CAGECE) and met with its President who explained the state's strategy for providing services through public-private partnerships. This meeting was followed by a presentation and discussion with the Ceará State Regulatory Agency (ARCE) for these services.

The mission was accompanied by Mr. Marcelo Lelis, Project Manager of the National Secretariat of Environmental Sanitation of the Ministry of Cities, and Ms. Michelle Correia, Coordinator of Technical Cooperation of the National Health Foundation of the Ministry of Health, and in Fortaleza by the Superintendent of National Health Foundation, Mr. Regino Antônio de Pinho Filho.

In **January 2015**, a reciprocal exchange visit was paid by a high-level **mission from Brazil** comprised of a nine-person delegation travelling **to Ethiopia**. The mission objectives were:

1. To collect first-hand accounts of national priorities, plans of action, capacity needs in respect to development challenge and issues with particular focus on the three main areas identified in the draft roadmap, namely urban sanitation; regulatory frameworks for urban WASH service delivery, and river basin/ watershed management

2. To jointly identify priorities, goals, strategic underpinnings and key elements for project design, including vertical components of the future project results framework (impact, outcomes, outputs and main activities) as well as means of implementation.

The Brazilian delegates visited four regions of Ethiopia in three teams: Adama and Gonder in Oromia and Amhara regions with a focus on the establishment of independent water regulation for urban settlements; Tigray with the objective of sharing technology, experiences and expertise of condominium sewerage for high density population areas; and the Awash basin in Afar Region to exchange ideas on water resources management.



A main outcome of these two initial exchange visits was the formalisation of a two-year South-South collaboration on Water Supply and Sanitation between the Governments of Ethiopia and Brazil slated to run from mid-2015 until mid-2017.

In addition to the exchange visits, innovative means for keeping the TSSC dynamic and alive include an online tool for exchange by participants as well as the use of audio/video tools for maintaining the connection, sharing learning in real time and creating virtual feedback links.

Lasting first impressions

“One’s destination is never a place, but a new way of seeing things.”

– Henry Miller, author

The TSSC is a **learning exchange** between two countries with vastly different and possibly synergistic issues and challenges.

Following these initial exchanges, delegation members wrote collective reports detailing what they saw, who they met and how the experience started to inform the TSSC strategies for the two year programme plan. Of equal, yet somehow less tacit, importance are unstated learning outcomes, (personal) paradigm shifts and changes that emerged from delegate’s initial exposure to another country context, its people, its approaches to providing WASH services, its visions, priorities, plans and challenges.

‘On an issue as “essential as basic sanitation...it is not enough to “replicate” what has worked in Brazil... it is necessary to build strategies and measures that can be assimilated by Ethiopian managers and validated by Ethiopian citizens to move towards solutions that are efficient, effective and lasting.’

– **Marcelo de Paula Neves Lelis**

National Secretary of Environmental Sanitation, Brazilian Ministry of Cities

‘We were impressed by the achievements of Brazil on wastewater management in small towns, and most of all by the high levels of awareness among its citizens.’

– **Mr. Nureidin Mohammed**

Director, Water Supply and Sanitation, Ethiopian Ministry of Water, Irrigation and Energy

Only parting that we may meet again

“We can’t find the truth listening to our own voice’s echo. We can find ourselves only in someone’s mirror”

– Rumi, 13 c. Persian poet, jurist, theologian

Following the second exchange visit, both country delegations undertook to conduct detailed participatory planning to develop agreements and plans for follow up.

As concrete results, by the end of the high level visit to Brazil, representatives of the Ethiopian Government identified key areas in which technical assistance from the Government of Brazil would benefit Ethiopia. These included sharing knowledge and building capacities of policy makers, managers and technicians on **how to develop WASH integrated policy, implement management models and regulatory schemes for service provision**, drawing on Brazilian models like the Integrated Rural Sanitation System (SISAR) and social tariffs. The parties identified two key priorities: Regulatory support in selected regions (Oromia and Amhara) and piloting condominium sewerage in Wukro town in Tigray Region.

The Brazilian delegation identified the following as priorities for further exchange and joint learning through the TSSC initiative:

1. capacity building of local authorities staff on planning and management of WASH services;
2. health education; and,
3. joint research project carried out by Brazilian and Ethiopian Universities.

The main elements of the implementation strategy of TSSC therefore include:

- **Transfer of technology:** Direct hands-on technical support and development and implementation of a condominium sewerage facility pilot project in Wukro town. Direct technical support will be provided to define design and other specifications for the facility and choice of material site location. Support will be provided to put the most suitable management system in place in order to recover O&M costs. The technical expertise to be transferred to local authorities and operators will also be used by the regional and federal governments to scale the approach in other areas.
- **Capacity development:** Peer review of key documents such as Urban Sanitation Strategy, sector policies and proclamations to lead to the definition of the regulatory framework and on-the-job training events aimed at improving skills of local

administrations and selected operators (to be identified)

- **Knowledge Sharing:** exchange of best practices, documents/manuals, best practices and implementation arrangements

Key actions – areas of interventions

1 - Urban Sanitation:

- Brazilian experts to provide a peer review of the national integrated urban sanitation and hygiene strategy & sanitation action plan
- Brazilian experts to provide technical assistance for the launching of a pilot project for condominium sewerage in Wukro town, Tigray region. The technical assistance will focus on: project design, technical drawings and bills of quantities, site selections, monitoring and trainings for the establishment of appropriate management system

2 - Water and Sanitation Regulatory Framework:

The Brazilian government will provide technical assistance to establish independent water/WaSH regulatory systems in Amhara and Oromia region

The Government of Ethiopia's draft Growth and Transformation Plan II (GTP II), currently under formulation, portrays clearly Governments desire to *“establish independent regulatory agency responsible for improved and standardized provision of rural and urban*

water supply services” justifying this component as one key pillar of the South-South collaboration between the Governments of Brazil and Ethiopia. The Brazilian government is expected to provide technical assistance to the Ethiopian government to establish this independent water regulator in Amhara and Oromia regions.

‘I will contribute the experience of CAGECE on basic sanitation through training local technicians so they can replicate a condominium sanitation model and thus contribute to the improvement of life of Ethiopian citizens.’

– **Helder dos Santos Cortez**

Rural Sanitation Manager, Integrated System for Rural Sanitation, Ceará State Water and Sewage Company (CAGECE), Brazil

‘At FUNASA we hope to contribute our experience in the area of basic sanitation. We will provide technical support, in partnership with CAGECE, to consultation processes, construction and implementation of a simplified sewerage system in the selected residential area in Ethiopia.’

– **Cláudia Elisabeth B. Marques**

Engineering Coordinator, Department of Public Health Engineering, Brazilian National Health Foundation

About...

One WaSH Plus learning notes promote the sharing of experiences from innovations within the One WaSH Plus Programme.

This learning note focuses on the South-South concept and makes explicit the learning potential of the TSSC strategy based upon the personal reflections of delegates from Brazilian and Ethiopian who took part in two exchange visits in 2014 and 2015 in preparation for a two-year Cooperation programme.