



TRILATERAL COOPERATION IN GERMAN DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION

Executive Summary

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In development cooperation, trilateral cooperation (TrC) is increasingly seen as having potential not only to achieve impacts in the beneficiary countries, but also to contribute to improved cooperation relationships and partnerships on the strategic level – especially between DAC donors and emerging countries. This evaluation of TrC in German development cooperation examines the extent to which the objectives and expectations of the stakeholders are being achieved. Alongside an analysis of the German TrC portfolio and the relevant literature, extensive case studies in Latin America and the Caribbean, Southeast Asia and sub-Saharan Africa serve as the data base.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Background, objectives and subject of the evaluation

For the last few decades, actors of international development cooperation have become increasingly aware of trilateral cooperation (TrC) as an alternative modality for cooperation in the field of development. All kinds of expectations are vested in this approach. In the wake of the aid effectiveness debate in the first decade of the 21st century and the resultant reorientation of development cooperation to improve effectiveness, TrC came to be seen as an opportunity to achieve better outcomes in beneficiary countries by involving a Southern provider of development assistance as an additional actor in a development cooperation measure. The working assumption is that a Southern provider faces similar development challenges to the beneficiary country and can therefore supply it with relevant technical expertise. Added to that, it is often socio-culturally closer than the donor to the beneficiary country.

A further advantage is that this additional actor alleviates pressure on the DAC donor's budget and carries a share of the responsibility. Global trends in recent years have heightened the importance of shared responsibility. Today, TrC is increasingly perceived as a strategic approach for forming, or strengthening, international partnerships as a basis for transferring more responsibility to other countries and jointly tackling global challenges that can no longer be solved by individual states on their own. Alongside the traditional OECD-DAC donor countries, a growing number of countries from different global regions are emerging, which are registering positive economic development. On that basis, these countries, too, have become more important partners politically and, for the most part, are increasingly contributing to international debates and assuming political responsibility.

The modality of TrC is thus considered to have particular potential for enhancing the effectiveness of development cooperation, promoting international development partnerships and cooperations, and fostering mutual learning. These are indicative of a special characteristic of the modality. In both German and international development cooperation, it is fundamentally geared towards contributing to effects on two different dimensions:

- The **programmatically-thematic dimension** covers the "classic" development effects produced in the countries in which the TrC measures are implemented, which are aimed at bringing about improvements for the target groups.
- **Political-strategic effects** are located mainly on the level of improving cooperation and partnership between the actors involved and strengthening development cooperation structures. In contrast to programmatic-thematic effects, political-strategic aspects can have an effect on all participants, not just those in the beneficiary country.

Accordingly, important international processes and documents – such as the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the Global Partnership for Effective Development Co-operation (GPEDC), or most recently, the Second High-level United Nations Conference on South-South Cooperation (BAPA+40) – point to the importance of TrC. The German government regards TrC as a useful link between South-South and North-South cooperation and shares the international community's high expectations of TrC. In its strategy paper "Triangular cooperation in German development cooperation", the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) set itself the goal to "make more use of the many opportunities for triangular cooperation, working together with its partners" (BMZ, 2013).

Due to its very numerous cooperation measures and partners, German development cooperation is one of the most important DAC donors internationally with regard to the implementation of TrC (OECD 2013). Nevertheless, as a proportion of the BMZ budget, the BMZ funding allocated to TrC has been marginal: a share of 0.047 % in the period 2006 to 2017. In geographical terms, the principal focus of Germany's engagement is currently the Latin America and Caribbean (LAC) region.

Even today, the high hopes vested in TrC by the BMZ and the international community alike are based on very little evidence. The state of knowledge concerning the modality and its actual effects has been relatively low until now, both internationally and in German development cooperation. Accordingly, the

overall objective of this evaluation is to determine the extent to which the objectives and expectations of the actors involved in TrC as a modality of development cooperation are being achieved. In this connection, the evaluation places an emphasis on the objectives and expectations of German development cooperation, specifically in its role as a donor in TrC.

The subject of this evaluation is the modality of trilateral cooperation in German development cooperation. TrC is defined **as a form of development cooperation in which German development cooperation and state actors from different countries, performing three different roles, cooperate on measures that are jointly planned and implemented.** The roles in question comprise German development cooperation as the donor, a Southern provider, and a beneficiary. The additional role of the Southern provider is the essential difference from bilateral development cooperation.

Overall assessment

The evaluation found that the objectives and expectations which all actors (donors, Southern providers, and beneficiaries) associate with the TrC modality in German development cooperation are fulfilled to varying degrees in the three regions of LAC, sub-Saharan Africa and Southeast Asia. Some cooperation relationships are being newly established or consolidated; South-South cooperation is being promoted, and development cooperation structures strengthened. In this way, TrC is contributing to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda (and especially the partnerships for development called for in SDG 17). TrC is also becoming more visible internationally as a development cooperation modality. At the same time, the impacts and sustainability of the measures on the programmatic-thematic dimension are relatively low.

That said, the evaluation attests to the potential of the modality of TrC to achieve long-term impacts on the political-strategic dimension. In practice, this largely coincides with the objectives of the stakeholders, since their main motivation for the use of TrC is to achieve political-strategic objectives. For German development cooperation and for a majority of the Southern providers, the focus is on their relationship with each other and on reinforcing the Southern provider in its new role as an active co-player in development cooperation. TrC is thus an appropriate modality – at least under certain conditions – for the pursuit of political-strategic objectives. It should continue to be improved, however.

Where the aim on the programmatic-thematic dimension is to reach beyond the direct objectives of the measures and deliver long-term and sustainable contributions to development policy objectives, TrC in its current form in German development cooperation is only suitable to a limited extent. At present, it is scarcely possible to reconstruct how the outcomes of the mainly small-scale measures are intended to contribute to overarching development goals. The contributions vary enormously and are dependent on the given project and country context. This suggests that if the implementation of TrC were more impact-oriented, its strengths could better be harnessed for the pursuit of development objectives than has previously been the case. It seems advisable to strengthen the programmatic-thematic dimension in the design of TrC, since an unduly one-sided focus on political-strategic goals cannot be deemed satisfactory, given the objectives of German development cooperation and its self-commitment to implementing the aid effectiveness agenda. The indirect causal pathway, which eventually leads to improvements for target groups in the beneficiary countries as a side-effect of establishing cooperations and strengthening the Southern providers, is insufficient for this purpose.

Three major overriding challenges stand in the way of more effective and efficient use of the modality in German development cooperation on both dimensions:

1. Within German development cooperation there is no common understanding about the modality of TrC and its usage. Accordingly, there is neither systematic nor strategic pursuit of the objectives of the BMZ's TrC strategy, and in practice the use of TrC is highly heterogeneous. Depending on the region and other conditions of the context, the focus of a TrC can vary between the political-strategic dimension and the programmatic-thematic dimension. Many different approaches to TrC have taken shape within these dimensions as well. On the one hand, this flexibility is one of the modality's strengths. On the other hand, it implies that standard procedures for the implementation of TrC barely exist and the specific design has to be negotiated afresh in each new case. The lack of both a strategic

approach and a common understanding can have negative effects on joint impact-oriented implementation of TrC measures.

2. The BMZ is not in possession of sufficient relevant information from ongoing and completed measures to be able to coordinate the modality in the way that would be necessary in order to make strategic use of TrC. This adds to the difficulty of aligning the overall portfolio with the implementation of the BMZ's strategic objectives. There are neither existing indicators for measuring the achievement of strategic objectives, nor any overarching monitoring system for recording and evaluating TrC measures in terms of how they contribute to the strategic objectives; therefore the generation and dissemination of learning experiences is only possible to a limited extent.
3. In most cases, TrCs are not implemented in a systematic and impact-oriented manner because sufficient financial and human resources to do so are not available. In the coordination of the modality, the lack of information and knowledge management systems is compounded by the shortage of human resources to analyse and process the experience gained and feed it back into the development cooperation system. On the implementation level, the effectiveness and sustainability of the measures are negatively affected by under-resourcing.

Methodological approach

To undertake an adequate analysis of the subject of the evaluation and answer the overarching evaluation question, a theory-based evaluation design was applied. The analytical framework, known as the theory of change, was reconstructed and checked in consultation with relevant stakeholders. Both target dimensions of the modality were taken into consideration during the reconstruction and the data analysis phases. Some of the effects identified in the process cannot be clearly assigned to one dimension. Aspects were identified which are specific to the modality of TrC. These include joint and mutual learning as well as principles of cooperation such as horizontality. The results from all dimensions were recombined in the synthesis.

A comprehensive primary and secondary data collection was undertaken for the evaluation. Case studies in the three regions LAC, sub-Saharan Africa and Southeast Asia form its centrepiece. A total of 235 interviews were conducted in 16 case-study countries and Germany. The 16 case-study countries consist of seven providers from the South, eight beneficiaries, and one dual actor. The latter is Peru, which acts as both a Southern provider and a beneficiary in TrC with German development cooperation. Interviews in Germany were conducted with respondents at the BMZ and the two implementing organisations (IOs) Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) and Physikalisch-Technische Bundesanstalt (PTB).

Furthermore, a literature analysis and a portfolio analysis were carried out based on project documents from the IOs. For these purposes, the evaluation team analysed 86 documents relating to 30 TrC measures in LAC, ten in Southeast Asia and three in sub-Saharan Africa.

Main findings and conclusions – Conceptual framework of the modality

Objectives, strategy and roles

All actors in the three roles attach a large number of explicit and implicit goals and expectations to TrC, on both dimensions. The objectives of the Southern providers and the beneficiaries are largely in accordance with those of German development cooperation. However, some discrepancies exist; for example, regarding the establishment of a common understanding about cooperation principles and impact mechanisms, such as transparency and impact orientation. Implicit goals of German development cooperation are frequently focused on the Southern providers; for example, strengthening development cooperation structures or using TrC to consolidate political-strategic cooperation relationships. In part, these objectives are stated in the TrC strategy of the BMZ, but they are not explicitly formulated as objectives for TrC in German development cooperation. It is extremely rare for Southern providers and beneficiaries to have a TrC strategy of their own.

German development cooperation in the donor role contributes to TrC measures with financial resources and in-kind inputs (especially taking charge of project management) and usually also with specialist technical expertise. In addition, German development cooperation tends to take on a brokering role via its

worldwide network of staff, with GIZ in particular setting up contacts between the institutions of the Southern providers and those of the beneficiaries. Only a subset of providers from the South perform the role of cultural broker that is ascribed to them. Most of the Southern providers share technical expertise based on their experience but usually also benefit themselves from the expertise of German development cooperation, particularly on project management methods and procedures. The beneficiaries make their contribution by providing logistical support and knowledge about the context. Most Latin American beneficiaries, in particular, also transfer financial resources and knowledge in line with the principle of joint implementation and learning. They increasingly operate as dual actors, i.e. they are no longer exclusively beneficiaries but increasingly take on the Southern provider role in TrC and pass on their own knowledge and experience. An example of this is Peru.

Use of the modality

TrC also enjoys relatively high political attention among Germany's development cooperation partners in relation to SDG 17 (Global Partnership for Sustainable Development). Among other things, this is evident from the fact that some development cooperation departments in the relevant ministries are being restructured and oriented more strongly towards TrC. Within German development cooperation, TrC often operates below the radar of political decision-makers, despite the strong engagement of most staff responsible for TrC. Similarly, some BMZ officials responsible for steering the measures and some coordinators within IOs do not perceive TrC as a relevant development cooperation modality. In some cases, a different understanding of the different participants' remits is found, along with a fundamentally different perception of TrC as a modality. This lack of awareness is explained largely by the fact that German development cooperation lacks systematic knowledge management and a joint monitoring and evaluation system for the modality of TrC. For this reason, so far it has not been possible to carry out any overarching evidence-based assessment of how the modality is being implemented.

It is usual for the implementation of TrC to rely on existing bilateral structures, including resources, local staff and administrative procedures, since procedures and local structures for TrC in its own right have not been developed. Use of the modality can be affected by challenges arising from this, in terms of efficiency, for instance. While (trilateral) resources are saved, on the one hand, the approach places a heavier strain on (bilateral) resources that are not geared towards a trilateral perspective – when coordinating the actors in the three roles, for instance. This very often leads to delays. In German development cooperation, only the LAC Fund (Regional Fund for Triangular Cooperation in Latin America and the Caribbean) offers an alternative financing model: it uses regional funding, does not make any bilateral commitments to individual countries, and personnel are not tied to bilateral structures.

Main findings and conclusions – Impacts of trilateral cooperation

Cooperation relationships

For German development cooperation and providers from the South, in particular, the establishment and consolidation of cooperation and cooperation relationships are in the foreground on the political-strategic dimension. TrC is often used by donors and Southern providers to maintain and reinforce cooperation between a DAC donor and a Southern provider, such as Chile or Brazil, that has already graduated or is about to graduate.¹ To pursue the stated aim of promoting South-South cooperation through TrC, the BMZ considers it necessary to strengthen the role of the given Southern provider as a kind of hub in its region. In the effort to intensify the cooperation relationship, topics from previous bilateral development cooperation or another TrC involving the Southern provider are often taken up and replicated in a TrC measure in a beneficiary country.

¹ Graduation is determined on the basis of per capita GDP, including expected graduations (Eurostat, n.d.).

Learning and principles of cooperation

German development cooperation's objective of strengthening the development cooperation structures of the Southern providers is achieved through a learning-by-doing approach in the course of joint coordination and implementation of development cooperation measures. The focus here is on generating development cooperation experience and applied project management expertise (including coordination, impact-oriented planning and monitoring). Although strengthening is not mentioned as an explicit objective in the BMZ strategy and is not systematically addressed as part of TrC measures, it is nevertheless the case that TrC measures funded by the BMZ make this contribution in practice. Generally speaking, it occurs as a side effect of TrC measures. Neither targets and indicators nor specific, regular capacity development activities are incorporated into the design of TrC measures in order to track or explicitly promote learning of this kind. Hence, effects are often accidental products. This entails the risk that if conditions change, the objective of strengthening the development cooperation structures of Southern providers may no longer be achieved. The exception here is the Regional Fund for Triangular Cooperation in Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC Fund), which finances the German contribution to joint TrC measures in LAC and, with its offering of human capacity development courses (HCD courses), trains the participating partners in the modality of TrC and in project management.

The aim of strengthening the Southern providers' development cooperation actors is addressed to the principles and standards of development cooperation. In its implementation of TrC, the German side focuses on the OECD-DAC standards and the principles of the Paris Declaration.² However, German development cooperation and providers from the South refer to different principles and understandings of cooperation. For some Southern providers, including Brazil, Indonesia and South Africa, the so-called South-South cooperation principles are part of their understanding of cooperation in the development sector. Accordingly, they also pursue these in TrC. Explicit exchange of learning and experience, and communication between the actors on impact mechanisms and principles of cooperation, are not systematically established. Nevertheless, in many TrC measures, informal dialogue takes place on impact mechanisms and principles (particularly on the impact orientation of measures), which marks a first step towards achieving German development cooperation's objective.

Mutual learning (learning from one another) and joint learning (learning together) by all the actors – including the donor – is an important component of TrC. Joint learning is evident in the learning about the modality that takes place, whereas on the technical level, mutual learning mainly occurs between the Southern provider and the beneficiary. By comparison, the learning experiences of German development cooperation on this level are only weakly in evidence. Furthermore, the logic of German development cooperation contains no conceptual premise that German development cooperation will learn from its partners. Learning experiences are barely ever documented, so that there is no clarity about what German development cooperation learns in TrC. Insufficient consideration of mutual learning is one reason why horizontality between the three roles is only partially achieved, even though it is a fundamental principle of cooperation in TrC. Overall, both Southern providers and beneficiaries perceive TrC with German development cooperation as being more horizontal than bilateral cooperation. Horizontality is dependent on particular individuals, however, and – since the principle is not incorporated systematically – is present (or not) to varying degrees in the measures. Horizontality is primarily achieved between German development cooperation and the Southern providers, while the relationship between German development cooperation and the beneficiaries is still often vertical in nature. The beneficiaries' involvement in TrC can better be described as participation than as horizontality.

² The evaluation understands these to comprise the following principles, to which German development cooperation is committed (BMZ, n.d.a, n.d.b). Apart from transparency, participation and the do-no-harm principle, it also takes into consideration the principles of the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness: ownership, alignment, harmonisation, management for results, and mutual accountability (OECD, 2005).

Development impacts of trilateral cooperation measures

Despite all the challenges in the implementation of TrC in German development cooperation, the evaluation attests to the potential of the modality to make relevant contributions to development impacts in the beneficiary countries. This potential arises inter alia from the fact that the Southern provider, an additional partner, is available and able to provide resources in the form of financing, expertise and personnel to achieve the objectives of the measure. This potential is not fully utilised in the form of TrC currently practised in German development cooperation, however. TrC measures produce a large number of outputs that can be achieved in the short term, including in the areas of capacity development and the production of technical documents. The objectives of the measures are largely being achieved; however, it was impossible to reconstruct with plausibility whether and how the identified outputs of the measures contribute to medium- and long-term development effects (outcome and impact level). Long-term effects that go beyond the objectives achieved by the measures are nevertheless noted in joint learning and in the building and consolidation of technical cooperations and networks. Mutual learning takes place particularly on the specialist technical level. Both the achievement of the outputs as well as the unsatisfactory contributions to the outcome and impact level must be set in relation to the often-low level of input to TrC measures in terms of resources. Against this background, the efficiency of the measures can be assessed more positively than their effectiveness.

Along the same lines as the effects, the sustainability of TrC measures is found to be mostly unsatisfactory. TrC is often implemented as a one-off measure with a low budget and a short duration, and is often not tied in with the bilateral programmes in the beneficiary country. This lack of tie-in and resultant ad hoc planning processes partly explain the omission to plan for sustainable use of the results once the project term is over. Follow-up of this kind, which need not necessarily mean continuation of the TrC with the participation of German development cooperation, would be the basis for ensuring that all those involved have clarity about who will carry forward the activities and the initiated changes after the TrC ends, in what form, and what resources are available for this purpose.

Possible reasons for the non-achievement of effects and limited sustainability, on the one hand, are insufficient resources in terms of personnel, time and, in some cases, financial resources. On the other hand, the additional workload generated by coordination and communication among a large number of partners, who are often still inexperienced with TrC, poses a further major challenge.

The considerable need for coordination means that, especially at the beginning of a TrC, transaction costs are relatively high, which negatively affects the efficiency of the measures. However, the high transaction costs must be assessed against the background of TrC-specific benefits – such as learning and cooperation – which ideally arise in addition to the direct results of the measure. Accordingly, a certain additional administrative overhead is quite justified and is a logical element of the measures to achieve the TrC-specific benefits.

Regional differences in the conception and implementation of trilateral cooperation by German development cooperation

In the three regions analysed, marked differences are noted in the framework conditions, structures and objectives of TrC. In LAC, for example, there are significantly more Southern providers and more up-and-coming beneficiaries than in other regions with more diverse programmatic-thematic and political-strategic interests. Accordingly, 73 % of the measures in the German TrC portfolio are indeed located in the LAC region.

The modality is mostly assessed positively by the partners in LAC and is seen as an option that makes a positive contribution to regional integration, knowledge transfer and the 2030 Agenda. TrC is better anchored conceptually in LAC than in the other two regions, thanks to its longer tradition, broader reach and the HCD courses of the LAC Fund. The HCD courses integrated into the Fund create a common understanding of the potential of TrC and the implementation of TrC measures. The measures are not financed from bilateral funds but through a regional fund (the LAC Fund). Currently, the fund faces the challenge that, while its budget remains static, the partners' interest in TrC is constantly growing.

In Southeast Asia, Southern providers in particular show an interest in using the modality. In addition to political-strategic interests, their focus is on strengthening their development cooperation agencies and increasing the visibility of their contributions to the SDGs. The potential that exists in the region for greater use of the modality is constrained primarily by low levels of beneficiary commitment, but also by dependence on bilateral funding and processes.

In sub-Saharan Africa, German development cooperation's engagement in TrC ended in 2015, with the focus for German development cooperation having been on implementing its anchor country concept with South Africa, the only Southern provider in sub-Saharan Africa in the German portfolio, and on setting up the development cooperation agency SADPA. This also included the generation of development-policy field knowledge by means of TrC. Since South Africa's political priorities shifted, however, the agency was not founded in the end.. A further obstacle in the region was found to be that African beneficiaries were unaware of the aims and potential of the modality of TrC and of South Africa's role. Therefore they continued to favour bilateral development cooperation. As a result, the BMZ is not promoting any TrC measures in sub-Saharan Africa at present.

Recommendations

The evaluation has identified the potential of the modality of TrC on the two impact dimensions of programmatic-thematic and political-strategic objectives. If substantial contributions are to be made to the intended objectives by means of TrC, however, in view of the limited effects of the modality observed on both impact dimensions, it seems necessary to substantially increase the effectiveness and efficiency of TrC. Otherwise, the modality will stop far short of its potential, especially in terms of its development effects in the beneficiary countries. TrC would not then be in a position to make significant and appropriate contributions to addressing global development challenges.

The evaluation identified five areas with potential for improvement. This should be utilised to enable TrC to contribute effectively and efficiently to achieving the intended objectives.

Trilateral cooperation strategy and objectives

Recommendation 1: The BMZ should sharpen its TrC strategy and decide which objectives, on which impact dimension, it wants to prioritise and achieve by means of TrC.

1.1 To this end, the BMZ should explicitly name high-priority but as-yet implicit objectives in the TrC strategy. In addition, the strategy should describe the specific benefit of the modality for the achievement of each given objective in concrete terms.

1.2 The BMZ should align the selection of partner countries with its strategic objectives. In doing so, the BMZ should make even greater use of the possibility of flexible application of the roles within TrC.

Strategic steering and guidance in the use of trilateral cooperation

Recommendation 2: The BMZ should strengthen its strategic steering capacity with regard to the modality of TrC.

2.1 For the effective use and strategic steering of TrC, the BMZ should establish or improve information and knowledge management systems, and particularly

- generate a distinct TrC policy marker and apply it in German development cooperation,
- develop indicators for the strategic objectives, track these during the measures, and compile and analyse them in a superordinate and practicable monitoring system,
- carry out systematisation of the portfolio and of lessons learned in relation to the modality of TrC.

2.2 The BMZ should link up its strategy and its usage of TrC by ensuring that measures are geared towards achieving the strategic objectives of the modality.

2.3 The BMZ should strengthen its internal coordination and advisory function for TrC, which performs the tasks mentioned in 2.1 and 2.2 in continuous exchange with the regional and global divisions involved and ensures coherence with other forms and strategies of development cooperation. This requires adequate resourcing of the coordination and advisory function.

2.4 The BMZ should examine whether TrC can be connected to existing regional structures and procedures, or whether it makes sense to establish such structures and procedures to increase the effectiveness and efficiency of the modality. In either case, coherence with the bilateral portfolio should be ensured. The financing structure of the LAC Fund can be consulted for good practice on this matter.

Development impacts of trilateral cooperation measures

Recommendation 3: The BMZ and the IOs should plan and implement TrC more strategically to enable better utilisation of the potential of TrC to achieve development impacts and better valorisation of TrC-specific benefits such as mutual and joint learning.

3.1 Specific benefits of TrC, such as the fostering of an exchange of experience and of mutual and joint learning, should be incorporated into planning as distinct objectives of a measure, and tracked accordingly in the monitoring and evaluation system.

3.2 The sustainable use of the results after a measure comes to an end should be planned from the very start of a measure. This follow-up should clearly identify which actors, with which resource inputs, will be responsible for carrying forward the activities and the changes initiated during the measure.

3.3 In order to improve effectiveness and sustainability, to reduce transaction costs and for reasons of portfolio coherence, the content of TrC measures should be linked to the bilateral programmes of German development cooperation in the given beneficiary country.

3.4 To ensure that TrC measures can be designed in accordance with these recommendations, they should be planned on the basis of sufficient financial, personnel and time resources.

Cooperation with Southern providers

Recommendation 4: The BMZ and the IOs should systematically strengthen the Southern providers in their role as active development cooperation actors.

4.1 The strengthening of development cooperation structures should be explicitly listed as an objective in the BMZ's TrC strategy. In addition, the IOs should develop indicators for the strengthening of development cooperation structures as an overarching impact of TrC, and anchor them in the individual TrC measures.

4.2 The BMZ should increasingly engage in a policy dialogue with its partners on principles and standards of development cooperation in joint TrCs. On the implementation level, the German IOs should discuss standards and principles with their partners and specify those to be applied when implementing joint TrCs.

4.3 The BMZ should support up-and-coming beneficiaries by strengthening their development cooperation structures within the framework of TrC so that in future they can act as Southern providers of development cooperation themselves.

Context-adapted use of trilateral cooperation

Recommendation 5: The BMZ and the IOs should do even more to adapt their engagement in TrC to the specific contexts in the regions and partner countries.

5.1 Germany's engagement in TrC should be more closely aligned than before with the capacities and competences of the respective Southern providers and beneficiaries. This calls for thorough clarification, prior to TrC, of the regional and country-specific differences in framework conditions and the interests of the actors in the three roles, and for incorporation of these aspects into planning and implementation, e.g. by means of comprehensive needs and stakeholder analyses and an assessment of the political and legal framework conditions.

5.2 In concrete terms, what this means for the three regions considered in the evaluation, taking account of BMZ regional strategies, is that

- the positive experiences of TrC in LAC should be utilised and scaled up even more, and past learning experiences should be systematised and made accessible to other regions and measures, as ways to improve effectiveness.
- more HCD courses (similar to those offered by the LAC Fund) should be implemented in the Southeast Asia region in order to generate a better understanding of the modality of TrC and its potential among all participants, thereby also ensuring better inclusion of the beneficiaries in the conception and design processes. Furthermore, the BMZ should examine the use of alternative financing models for TrC.
- in sub-Saharan Africa, it should be examined whether the prerequisites are in place, either with countries other than South Africa, or with different South African actors in the role of Southern provider, to develop a common understanding of TrC and, if viable, to pilot individual TrC measures. Only if these preconditions are satisfied should TrC be continued in sub-Saharan Africa.