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# **The Role of a Donor in an Emerging Power's Foreign Policy: Brazilian Solidarity Diplomacy**

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Since 2003, Brazil has been searching for efficient modalities directed at deepening ties with Latin American and African states, such as knowledge sharing and engaging in dialogue on alternative ways of tackling common development challenges. Considered by Brazilian policymakers to be expressions of solidarity diplomacy, these concepts and modalities are part of what has been coined Brazil's "autonomy through diversification" strategy. Brazilian presidents Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva and Dilma Rousseff consecutively pursued geopolitical realignments focused on the creation of a multipolar world order with a strengthened, more visible position for Brazil, an emerging world power. This paper will examine the practical and theoretical implications of Brazil's reconceptualization of its role as a donor of development aid, as well as donor-recipient relations as expressed in the two presidents' official speeches, documents of the Brazilian Cooperation Agency, and COBRADI reports. Furthermore, it will explore whether Brazil's declared role as a development partner and its practices in the capacity thereof are consistent with the expectations of other significant development cooperation actors.

**Key words:** Brazil, donor, development cooperation, role

## **Introduction**

When he took office in 2003, Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva declared that his administration would strive to redefine the country's alliances and international initiatives. The Brazilian administration would once again increase its efforts to obtain what the country's elites had been longing to achieve for over a century: a reshaped balance of world power with Brazil as one of the poles in a multipolar system (Pinheiro 308). A concentrated focus on instruments used to achieve this goal, such as South-South Cooperation – in addition to a broadening and deepening of the scope of cooperation for development with Latin American and African states was present in the inaugural addresses of both President Lula and his successor, Dilma

Rousseff.<sup>1</sup> The new initiatives were termed “solidarity diplomacy” by Brazilian policymakers, because the concept of solidarity was among the guiding principles behind Brazil’s actions on the international stage (Amorim, *Statement*). By promoting solidarity diplomacy, the Brazilian administration tried to seize the moment, which was characterized by major shifts in the global political, economic, and development architecture. These shifts required redefinition of the rules of interactions, and granted more options and flexibility to state actors.

In order to establish relationships in a changing global scenario, including relationships with prioritized African states as part of the South-South Cooperation, the country was required to define its international position by identifying its necessities, preferences, and goals. The reconstruction of national imaginary since 2003 has had a defining impact on the roles of Brazil as a country, such as its role as a donor of development aid or rather: a development partner. This has also affected the way Brazil has created and presented narratives of relationships with African states, as well as its goals in common with Southern partners. What is more, it has influenced the selection of modalities and strategies for development cooperation projects. Because its role as a donor was reconceptualized both materially and symbolically due to its attributes, identity, and objectives, Brazil simultaneously became an emerging voice in the present polyphonic debate on aid effectiveness.

This article aims to analyze Brazil’s international role as a donor and development cooperation partner. It addresses analytical questions about the way Brazil has reconceptualized its role as a donor through the discursive practices of its leaders, and aims to highlight its foreign policy goals as motivations for its engagement in development cooperation. Brazil is engaging in development cooperation activities for the sake of increasing its autonomy, yet the country’s unorthodox approach has yielded other effects. Besides establishing new alliances, thus strengthening the South-South cooperation, Brazil is contributing to the global debate on aid. Additionally, this article will assess Brazil’s effectiveness as a donor. As this study is anchored in the analytical framework of role theory, I would like to highlight the contribution this theory can make to the study of an emerging donor. Indeed, it can provide insights as to the description, organization, and understanding of development cooperation, which consists of both ideas and symbols, and concrete initiatives.

## **The Contribution of Role Theory in the Study of Development Cooperation**

A role is an analytical tool used in foreign policy analysis (FPA) by both rationalist and constructivist theory, the latter being closer to my methodological approach. FPA scholars such as Holsti (234) and Walker (2) start from the assumption that if roles are a key theoretical concept applicable to the description, categorization, and understanding of a society which, consists of members who hold certain positions and perform certain roles (functions or patterns of behaviours), then this concept can be applied at the level of FPA and international relations.

<sup>1</sup> By the time this article was published, President Rousseff had been removed from office by the Brazilian Senate in an impeachment process.

Roles can be defined in many ways. They can be described as dynamic aspects of statuses, or behaviours expected to be performed by subjects holding specific statuses (Linton 114). Szczepański (131) defined roles as “systems of behaviours which are reactions to the behaviours of others. These mutual behaviours are designed in accordance with norms and motives accepted and incorporated in a given group and in some cases even legally regulated”. Szczepański’s definition stresses that roles are constructed in the process of reciprocal relations, which are constantly interpreted and reinterpreted.

At the core of role theory are the trilateral relations between role, status, and identity. Ralph Linton, who contributed significantly to the study of social statuses, was the first scholar to distinguish between ascribed and achieved statuses. For Linton (113), status was “a position in a particular pattern... a collection of rights and duties”. An actor in the social or international structure will perform roles that it is expected to perform in order to maintain its status. Roles may also be selected for the express purpose of achieving a particular status (Linton 115). Role theorists stress that achievement of a status is facilitated in situations of systemic change (Sarbin, Allen 551), and today, transformation is the main feature of the international system.

The question of status is of particular interest to Brazil. The country’s foreign policy preferences can be summarized as the desire for a multipolar balance of world power, with a more prominent position and roles for Brazil. To achieve this outcome, Brazil strives to increase and maintain its autonomy, which is understood as policy independence from more powerful, Northern countries (Tickner 78). Brazilian researchers Vigevani and Cepaluni stress that since 2003, Brazil has been trying to achieve autonomy by diversifying its economic and diplomatic ties (136). Strengthening ties with countries of the global South, including African states, is an important element of this strategy. The alliances Brazil is seeking through development cooperation are key in its quest for geopolitical realignment and a more symmetrical, less hegemonic world order. Examples of institutionalized coalitions including African states, created on Brazilian initiatives include: the India-Brazil-South Africa Dialogue Forum (IBSA),<sup>2</sup> established in 2003; as well as the Africa-South America Summit (ASA),<sup>3</sup> which has been taking place since 2006.

The political rationale behind Brazil’s development cooperation activities is visible in the discourse of the Brazilian Cooperation Agency (ABC), which is in charge of managing international technical cooperation programs and affiliated with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (also referred to as *Itamaraty*). According to the agency: “The basic assumption of the Brazilian government is that technical cooperation

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<sup>2</sup> IBSA goals include restructuring of the international political and economic order, as well as sector cooperation in areas such as poverty alleviation, healthcare, education, agriculture, environmental protection, and science and technology. However, the future of the trilateral cooperation remains unclear, as country leaders have not held a summit since 2011. To date, regular meetings of foreign ministers are the main mechanism for coordinating the Forum’s initiatives.

<sup>3</sup> The Africa-South America Summit creates a space for political and economic cooperation between both regions in areas such as peace and security, democracy and human rights, trade and investment, infrastructure, energy (both regions hold approximately one quarter of global oil reserves), and healthcare. So far, three high level summits have been held (Nigeria 2006, Venezuela 2009, Equatorial Guinea 2013).

should significantly contribute to the socio-economic development of the country and to national autonomy... The same assumption applies to technical cooperation provided by Brazil to other countries" (ABC, *Histórico da Cooperação*).<sup>4</sup> The ABC also stressed that its goal is "to prioritize technical cooperation programs... with countries of basic interest for Brazil's foreign policy" (ABC, *CGPD*).

From the Brazilian standpoint, alliances and approximation with Latin American or African states are required to give members of the global South more leverage at negotiating tables (Pino, Leite 21). Development cooperation, through bilateral initiatives, has given Brazil the opportunity to point out that those countries of the South have much in common; namely, goals, problems, and developmental challenges such as quality healthcare and agricultural productivity. It also provides an additional channel for dissemination of information about Brazil's development successes, which is best received by countries actively interested in implementing tried and true solutions (Cabral, Weinstock 17). The ABC confirms the objective of spreading information on Brazil's own experience by indicating that its tasks include "contributing to disseminating a modern image of Brazil and its institutions, and consolidating the country's leading role on both the regional and international level" (ABC, *Agência Brasileira de Cooperação*). This strategy has so far proven to be quite successful, considering that votes from African states contributed to the election of Brazilians Roberto Azevedo and José Graziano for the positions of Director-General of the WTO and FAO, respectively (Abdenur 15).

Role theory confirms that the diversification of relationships, understood as an increase in roles selected and performed, as well as an increase in role partners, leads to more options, thus broadening of the margins of autonomy (Coser 239). Since 2003, the Brazilian government has built new relationships with partners across the globe. Of particular interest for Lula's administration was Africa. His presidential visits to Africa, which numbered more than those of all Lula's predecessors combined, have resulted in the opening of 19 Brazilian embassies, and a fivefold increase in trade (Inoue, Vaz 518; Abdenur, Rampini 94). Along with Brazil's engagement in development cooperation, these initiatives have significantly facilitated the creation of new coalitions, and have allowed it to secure international backing for its proposals.

Another core variable analyzed by role theorists and related to the status of an actor is identity. Identity is impacted by the roles an actor plays and the statuses it holds. Identity itself has a significant – if not decisive – impact on the roles an actor selects and the way those roles are enacted and interpreted. As an independent variable, it allows us to understand how values and ideas impact the selection of a role. It also explains why a role is reconceptualized, i.e. reinterpreted and performed in a particular way (Yinger 109).

Application of these considerations to the level of inter-state relationships reveals that in order to create alliances with countries of the global South and promote a desirable image based on a constructed identity, Brazil needed to reconceptualize the role of the donor. As a post-colonial state, Brazil is constantly questioning its identity, as the dominant discourses of countries at the core of the international order may not be applicable (Guimarães 135). Therefore, if Brazil is not counted among

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<sup>4</sup> All quotations translated from Portuguese by the Author.

these core countries, then the important question for Brazilian policymakers is: what kind of country is Brazil? What should its place and roles be? These questions are accompanied by a sense of awareness of the hierarchical relationships that constitute the international order, and which are further strengthened by the success of dependency theory in Latin America (Tickner 76). The “colonial wound”, as Walter Mignolo termed the experience of colonialism, which contributed to a worldview of dichotomy (3), became visible through the discursive practices of Brazil’s leaders in Africa. The state authorities, in creating the image of Brazil as a development partner, sent the basic message to African countries that: “we are one of you – “us” versus “them” This was clearly evidenced by Dilma’s speech during the third Africa-South America Summit. She said: “The time has passed when we were part of the distant periphery – silent, silenced, and problematic” (Rousseff, *Discurso da Presidenta*). This partly explains why Brazil is so reluctant to adhere to the norms, directives, and approaches of Northern donors.

## The Effectiveness of a Role

The achievement of foreign policy goals that motivate a state to take on a given role requires its effective implementation. Justyna Zajac (50) stresses that the effectiveness of a role depends on the consistency between the way it declared, perceived, and performed by the actor, and the expectations of other, key partners. Research on role effectiveness does not only indicate the cognitive processes responsible for the construction of a sense of identity and belonging (which, in the case of Brazil, has led to the articulation and distribution of certain narratives). Indeed, constructs such as role expectations also reveal the systemic constraints that Brazil faces, as not meeting the expectations of other important players may compromise the country’s foreign policy objectives.

## Declared Roles

Brazil does not use the expression “donor” to describe its development cooperation practices, and it strongly disagrees with this terminology. Instead, it prefers the term “partner”. According to Brazilian authorities, this term stresses the country’s efforts to prevent hegemonic and, asymmetrical relationships with countries of the global South (Representative of Africa Department). Brazil emphasizes that it is interested in engaging in cooperation based on equality, horizontality, social justice, mutual respect, and recognition of sovereignty by commitment to non-intervention, (which also means non-conditionality) (Leite et al. 17-18). On his first visit to Mozambique, President Lula underlined: “Brazil wants to make partnerships. Brazil doesn’t want a hegemonic relationship with any country. We don’t want supremacy over anyone. We want equality in our relations” (L. Silva, *Discurso na visita do CEB*).

By affirming that Brazil is similar to its Southern partners, especially African states, the country is making an effort to diminish the gap that separates it from those partners. The initiative is further strengthened by Brazil’s effort to share images not only of common historical experience, (including common history as aid recipients), but also of cultural affinity (Representative of Africa Department). On

numerous occasions, Lula stressed that African landscapes, streets, dances, and food remind him of the Brazilian Northeast (L. Silva, *Discurso na inauguração da Embaixada*). This was in line with domestic policies that introduced classes of Afro-Brazilian culture, and the history of Africa in Brazilian schools. One of the objectives of such programs was to highlight Brazil's ties and cultural proximity to Africa, as well as elements of Brazil's symbolic and material culture that originated from Africa (T. Silva 104). These historical and cultural affinities translate into tangible outcomes for Portuguese-speaking countries – the main recipients of Brazil's development cooperation in Africa.<sup>5</sup>

Presidential speeches mainly address the creation of relationships based on mutual respect and openness to the needs of both sides. Brazil took one step further in the construction of this narrative of equal partners. Role theorists have noticed that social roles require partners of the role. The act of taking on, declaring, and performing a role also involves *altercasting*; namely, the attribution of a corresponding role, and thus a position and identity, to the role partner (Backman 312). In case of development recipients (the corresponding partner role for donors), a similarity with the social status of the poor as described by George Simmel becomes apparent: their image focuses on what they are deprived of and what they need, not what they possess (175-76). This leads to the weakened agency of the recipient who, without the help of the donor, is not capable of dealing with its problems. This role, if accepted by the recipient, will determine the features of the mutual relationship. The kind of reciprocity that defines the donor-recipient relationship has been analyzed using the concept of the gift, developed by anthropologist Marcel Mauss (7). Scholars analyzing the donor-recipient dynamic, such as Tomohisa Hattori, have claimed that aid can be seen as a modern version of a gift that is given in archaic societies studied by Mauss (636-39). Gift theory stresses that what is most important in the act of offering a gift is not the material value of the object, but the social obligation it creates. In other words: the gift is not free, and requires reciprocation. This obligation distinguishes gifts from other forms of social exchange. The act of giving creates an unequal social relationship. For as long as the recipient of the gift does not repay the donor in some way, he will remain in a position of inferiority (Mauss 11). In the same way, development assistance implies the obligation for repayment. Foreign aid thus maintains asymmetrical relationships of power. Brazil, having been an aid recipient itself, uses two discursive strategies to avoid this dynamic.

Firstly, Brazilian authorities are creating an image of Brazil as a country burdened by the past, i.e. slavery. The country received slaves as a "gift" and must now repay its historic obligation. President Lula himself said, "Every visit I make to Africa is almost like repaying a historic debt that has no monetary value, that cannot be paid in land, but that can be paid in friendship and solidarity" (*Discurso por ocasião do colóquio*).

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<sup>5</sup> The 2013 report summarizing Brazil's activities and resources channeled into development cooperation indicates that over 75% of aid donated to Africa (technical, educational, technological, and scientific cooperation, as well as humanitarian assistance) was sent to Lusophone Africa. The main recipient was Cape Verde (24,4% of African resources), followed by Guinea-Bissau (21,2%), Mozambique (13,3%), São Tomé and Príncipe (10,4%), and Angola (7,2%) (IPEA 21-22).



Secondly, Brazilian leaders stress that the contemporary exchange is reciprocal, that gains and interests at stake are mutual, and that obligations of the role partner are not suspended. During his first trip to Africa in São Tomé e Príncipe, President Lula referred to “mutual interests and gains” which made it clear that Brazil’s motivation for engaging in development cooperation was not merely symbolic and moral (Silva, *Discurso na inauguração da Embaixada*). Brazil openly admits that, in return, it expects diplomatic support and economic opportunities. Lula’s and Dilma’s discourses reflect the entrenchment of development activities in foreign policy objectives. By such declarations, Brazilian officials are strengthening the agency of their African partners that are given the possibility to offer something in return.

The relationship between partners and the increasing agency of Brazil’s development cooperation recipients undoubtedly serve Brazilian foreign policy objectives. At the same time, by highlighting the importance of an increased visibility of development cooperation recipients Brazil makes a valuable contribution to the development cooperation regime.

The power relations behind traditional development cooperation should not be seen as the only reason for Brazil’s reluctance to the mainstream aid regime based on the principles and rules of the OECD Development Assistance Committee (DAC). Brazil’s attitude towards the role of a traditional donor can be likened to what has been described by sociologist Erving Goffman as *role distance* (87).

One of the reasons for the attitude of distance is an actor’s concern about not possessing the resources or capacity to perform his role proficiently (Goffman 88). Currently, traditional donors engaged in improving the aid regime – by setting new standards and rules through high-level forums on aid effectiveness, emphasize the importance of transparency, and monitoring and evaluation of outcomes (OECD.org). For Brazil, a country struggling with fragmented development cooperation characterized by a vast number of government agencies engaged therein, a weak mandate of the ABC (which is responsible for coordinating development cooperation), and a lack of legal framework and methodology for aid assessment adjusting to DAC standards will undoubtedly be a major challenge (Abdenur 15). Additionally, DAC members have agreed to provide development assistance of at least 0.7% of their GNI, which is currently impossible for Brazil, especially given the deteriorating condition of its economy.

Distance towards its role as a provider also allows the country to avoid commitments. Traditionally, Brazil has stressed its distinctiveness from traditional DAC donors. Nonetheless, a Brazilian delegation participated in the 2011 DAC meeting in Busan<sup>6</sup>, South Korea. Brazil agreed to the principles of development cooperation established in the Paris Declaration;<sup>7</sup> however, a “differential commitment” disclaimer

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<sup>6</sup> The fourth High Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness, held in Busan in 2011, was attended by DAC members and other important actors, including providers of South-South cooperation, civil society representatives, and private funders. An important outcome of the meeting was the *Busan Partnership Agreement*, which established a framework for development cooperation that was accepted by traditional donors and other actors participating in development cooperation (OECD.org).

<sup>7</sup> The Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness, signed at the second High-Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness held in Paris in 2005, established five principles of development cooperation, as well as indicators and benchmarks for donors and recipients (Cabral, Russo, Weinstock 4).

in the declaration, applicable to non-traditional donors, makes it unclear to what extent Brazil is willing to adhere to these principles (Cabral, Russo, and Weinstock 197).

## Role Performance

Initiatives aimed at strengthening the agency of recipients are also visible in Brazil's material practices. The country focuses on offering development cooperation modalities, which contribute to capacity building in partner state. Technical cooperation programs are one of seven modalities described in the 2013 official report on Brazil's development cooperation; namely, the COBRADI report, published by the Institute for Applied Economic Research (IPEA), a government think-tank (IPEA 25). By engaging in technical cooperation, Brazil has established direct partnerships between its domestic institutions, which have knowledge of previous policy implementation in Brazil and its partner countries. Technical cooperation leads not only to the transfer of knowledge, but strengthens partner institutions by improving their human resources skills. Much attention is paid to strengthening educational institutions, personnel training and advising, including training of specialists in areas such as public health and agro-technology (e.g. biofuel production) (ABC, *Cooperação Técnica*). A focus on capacity-building projects is visible in Mozambique. The country stands out not only as the main recipient of technical cooperation, but also because one of Brazil's most unorthodox development cooperation initiatives have been implemented there.

Since 2003, Brazil has overseen the construction and operation of a public pharmaceutical plant in Matola, located on the outskirts of Mozambique's capital, Maputo. Brazilian state agencies participating in this project include the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the ABC, the Oswaldo Cruz Foundation (Fiocruz – a leading public institution focusing on scientific research and biomedical technology development), and Farmanguinhos (a branch of Fiocruz responsible for pharmaceutical production and development). The estimated cost of the project for Brazil so far has been \$21.6m. This was made possible in part by a financial contribution of \$4.5m from Brazilian company Vale. Mozambique provided \$8.5m for construction of the factory. The Mozambican institutions responsible for the project's implementation are the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Finance, and a branch thereof called the Institute for the Management of State Holdings (IGEPE) (Rossi, "Depois de 10 anos fábrica de remédios contra Aids começa a produzir na África").

The project entails the transfer of technology and equipment for packaging and manufacturing pharmaceuticals, quality checking, and training local technical and management staff (Ministério de Saúde et al. 26). The factory is supposed to produce 21 types of medicines, and its output capacity should allow Mozambique to export some of its products once it obtains the required international certifications (Ministério de Saúde et al. 11, 14). Despite many challenges, production started in 2013. Mozambique was pressured by Northern donors and international organizations not to engage in its own drug production; and in 2010, representatives of Fiocruz reported that, shortly before training and the transfer of technology were supposed to start, most of the factory's employees were functionally illiterate (Cable no 969).



The generic drug factory project is based on Brazil's strategy to promote its own development models characterized by an original yet controversial stance on pharmaceutical production, especially regarding antiretroviral drugs. Brazil is known for challenging the Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights by making use of flexibilities established with the Doha Declaration, such as compulsory licensing and support for the national pharmaceutical and biotechnology sector (Abdenur 14). Brazil's engagement in a healthcare cooperation initiative in Mozambique reflects the political goals of its independent policies, assertive stance in the debate on intellectual property rights, and self-sufficiency in public healthcare programs. It is noteworthy that one of the objectives of the Matola drug factory was to strengthen Mozambique's technological sovereignty (Ministério de Saúde et al. 28). Until recently, the country only had access to antiretroviral drugs whose import was financed by foreign governmental and non-governmental development agencies (Russo et al.). If Mozambique does not privatize the factory and the project is successful, it will be the first state-owned drug factory on the African continent (Russo et al.).

## Role Expectations

Meeting the expectations that other countries have for Brazil when it engages in development cooperation is challenging for two reasons. Firstly, due to shifting paradigms of aid effectiveness and good practices (Mawdsley, Savage and Kim 35), it is difficult to provide policymakers with clear, commonly accepted, and uncontested guidelines. Secondly, the actors interested in Brazil's role performance are many, and may have contradictory expectations.

Brazil is neither a member of the DAC, nor is it interested in joining the organization. It therefore does not adhere to the rules and guidelines established by DAC members (Representative of Africa Department). It was not until recently that the country participated – with differential commitment – in the Busan High Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness, which established dialogue between traditional and emerging donors. This position was again taken in 2014 when the ABC representative taking part in the first high-level meeting of the OECD's Global Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation in Mexico made it clear that Brazil was only participating as an observer (Fues, Klingebiel 2). Despite declarations of rules and values at the core of Brazilian development cooperation, it will be difficult for Brazil in the coming years to avoid criticism from the community of traditional donors, NGOs, scholars observing the country's activities, civil society, and partner countries whose interest in Brazil's activities is growing. Discursive practices may be insufficient in the face of growing expectations, especially due to Brazil's ambiguous attitude towards engaging in high-level dialogue with traditional donors who are actively interested in cooperation with non-DAC actors and their adherence to standards outlined in the Paris Declaration. Former DAC chair Richard Manning summarized the fears of traditional donors, stating that the preference of non-DAC members for alternative ways of engaging in development cooperation could lead to "undercutting standards to which traditional donors aspire and encourage unsustainable policies" ("Will 'Emerging Donors' Change the Face of International

Cooperation?"). Despite Manning's emphasis that non-DAC donors can be valuable contributors to the ongoing changes in development cooperation through the mutual exchange of experience and information, the overall opinion in his report is that non-DAC donors should adjust to established OECD standards.

Brazil seems more interested in creating the image of a trustworthy development partner capable of presenting alternatives to DAC standards; however, increasing internal difficulties may become serious obstacles to the projection of such an image. The main challenges Brazil needs to address are the lack of sufficient project monitoring and evaluation, the ABC's weak capacity to rotate upper-level staff, the budgetary restraints of recent years, insufficient transparency, and the lack of proper legislation (Leite et al. 41-43).

Recently, the issue of monitoring and access to information has not only been raised by traditional donors and members of academia, but by civil society organizations (CSOs), who are demanding participation in Brazil's development cooperation initiatives. In Brazil, CSOs have traditionally been active in preparing and implementing social policies in areas such as healthcare or education through official, institutionalized channels. Despite the general lack of public interest for the country's foreign policy agenda (Souza 2), development cooperation initiatives advocating the export of solutions implemented earlier in Brazil are generating growing interest among Brazilian citizens, who are demanding the creation of public spaces, as well as formal and institutional participatory mechanisms for discussing external development cooperation (Leite et al. 56). CSOs are also interested in establishing networks with similar organizations in countries where Brazil implements projects. In Mozambique such cooperation is particularly visible due to controversies surrounding the Prosavana Brazil's biggest program in Africa. A triangular initiative carried out in cooperation with Japan and Mozambique, the program focuses on agricultural development in northern Mozambique aimed at increasing food security and exports of agricultural commodities (*Prosavana.gov.mz*). Brazilian CSOs and their Mozambican counterparts have strongly criticized insufficient consultation and information provided to local stakeholders, i.e. mainly small farmers from the region and expressed concerns over the risk of land grabbing (Schlesinger 44). So far, pressure from CSOs and official statements (GRAIN, *Open letter*) has prompted coordinators of the project to increase the number of public hearings organized for local Mozambican farmers, and led to redefinition of a regional development plan, focusing more on opportunities for small scale family farmers. Listening to the voices of CSOs (especially those of advocacy groups that represent the interests of partner country societies) may be one of the main challenges for Brazil. To date, the country has only been interested in government to government cooperation that is in line with its political agenda. The compatibility of the expectations of partner governments with those of the CSOs remains an open question.

## Conclusions

This paper has analyzed Brazil's performance as a development partner in Africa by applying role theory to the country's symbolic and material practices. Emphasis was placed on its use of development cooperation as an important foreign policy

instrument for leveraging its international status. Norms and values that define Brazil's role in development cooperation as a partner willing to strengthen the agency of its counterparts *via* numerous initiatives were identified as a valuable contribution to the ongoing debate on the future of development cooperation.

The prospects for Brazilian development cooperation – and especially its image as a trustworthy partner free from the flaws of traditional donors – may be compromised if it fails to address internal challenges. Among the most urgent of these challenges is the creation of a legal framework to regulate Brazil's external developmental activities, a strengthening of the coordination capacities of the Brazilian Cooperation Agency through reform, and an increase in access to information on the country's activities and the effects thereof. These steps may be even more important if Brazil maintains its position of limited receptivity towards the long-standing dialogue on aid effectiveness with the DAC.

Finally, the effectiveness of Brazil's role as a development partner will depend on the extent to which it meets the expectations of its core role partners. The increasing number of actors interested in its activities may make this task particularly challenging.

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