

Project # 2: Brazil in South-South Cooperation: South America, Africa and the BRICS Group

The field of international relations has been marked since its onset by the dualism of cooperation versus conflict. The major controversy surrounding this field of study can be summed up by the following question: given the specific conditions of the international environment, characterized by the absence of a central state and a common government, to what extent can states cooperate? The focal point of this study is Brazil's position in this scenario, because there is a knowledge deficit regarding the growth of Brazilian cooperation activities abroad, which indicates the country's need for greater systematization and reflection on the subject. Unlike the cooperation activities of countries of the North, which take place under OECD regulations, in Brazil there are still gaps in the official policy guidelines regarding the objectives, priorities, and criteria (e. g. thematic, geographic or temporal) for the distribution of resources for international development cooperation.

A well-known trait of Brazilian cooperation is the segmented nature of its institutional framework. Brazilian cooperation has developed over time in a decentralized way, with more than a hundred institutions of the Brazilian federal government operating and providing expertise in different sectors, as the demands from developing countries arose. In order to respond to the thematic and territorial complexity of this research project, the project components have been conceived around four axes, namely:

- 1) Studies about the cooperative relations within South America. The aim is to analyze the integration of Latin America in the context of post-1990 international politics changes;
- 2) Brazil's cooperative relations with Africa. The aim is to study several policies of Brazilian diplomacy in the last decades regarding the country's relations with that continent;
- 3) The relations between Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa (BRICS). The aim is to produce knowledge about this geopolitical articulation of increasing relevance, while focusing on education;

4) Studies about the performance of emerging countries in international organizations, especially the United Nations. The aim is to examine the UN negotiations, deliberations and agendas regarding human rights and the environment at the multilateral level.

The four axes contribute towards a theoretical and methodological integration, which will help to develop a more systematic and detailed knowledge about Brazil's capabilities to interact with such diverse international actors.