

## **Interview with ACP delegates to BAPA+ 40 South-South and Triangular Cooperation conference**

South-South and Triangular Cooperation (SSTC) have emerged as important sources of finance and technical expertise for many in the global south. But how significant is it? And what is the ACP doing to help?

We spoke with Pendo Maro, Intra-ACP GCCA+ Team Leader and Henrique Banze, Assistant Secretary General for the ACP Secretariat who attended BAPA+40, the United Nations Office for South South Cooperation conference, forty years after 138 UN Member States first agreed to a plan of action on South-South development assistance.



### ***Q: How useful has this conference been for the ACP and its Intra-ACP Programme?***

Henrique Banze:

Countries of the South have so much to offer each other, not just in terms of finance and investment, but also in terms of knowledge and experience.

For me, this conference has been a useful reminder of just how much countries in the global south can help each other. It has provided useful insights into how the ACP can best facilitate that vital South-South Cooperation. At our joint side event, we saw the need to strengthen partnerships among ACP countries and to focus on the regional dimension. Finally, this conference has helped us to build some of the relationships that will be vital to getting things done.

### ***Q: Is South-South cooperation an important tool when it comes to the global efforts to address climate change?***

Pendo Maro:

Critical! SSTC emerged as important solution when it comes to climate change issues and development challenges. It is also a key component of our programme, the Intra-ACP GCCA+. We have dozens of examples showing that facilitating dialogue and sharing knowledge among our Member States can advance the climate change agenda. As Mr. Banze already mentioned, the fact that we are spread around the world is a major strength. Climate change knows no boundaries and it is incredibly powerful to see a country in Africa learning from an experience in the Pacific region and the other way around. We are committed to build on that in years to come.

***Why is it important that Southern states work together and what are the most urgent areas of cooperation?***

Henrique Banze:

The emergence of new powers in the global south opens up a whole new set of opportunities and challenges old development models. The growing political and financial influence of Brazil and China are good examples. These opportunities cannot come too soon, however, because the world has some major challenges on its hands!

Many ACP members are small island developing states (SIDS), who are already profoundly affected by the changes to our climate and oceans. Remember also that we have many Least Developed Countries (LDCs) among our members for whom these are extremely urgent issues.

***Q: What are the examples of such cooperation and will we see more in the future?***

Henrique Banze:

South-South cooperation comes in many shapes and sizes. At one level, we see more south-south investment flows. In 2010, emerging economies accounted for 50 percent of global GDP, up from 36 percent in 2000, and we expect this trend to continue.

At another level, we're impressed by the south-south technical assistance programmes that we see already. The Nigerian Technical Aid Corps (TAC) have thousands of professionals in more than 30 ACP countries. More than 50,000 Cuban medics are working in more than 30 ACP countries too. And South African peacekeepers are playing critical roles around the region.

We're sure that we're going to see more of this. We'd like to see more knowledge management and sharing, however. We think this will help to unlock further south-south cooperation.

***Q: What role can the Intra-ACP and the ACP play in boosting the South-South cooperation?***

Henrique Banze:

We already play a significant role. The ACP and Intra-ACP help Member States negotiate at the global level as a collective unit. Together we are stronger, especially on such vital issues as climate change, ocean governance, and trade.

Given the importance that we attach to knowledge sharing, the ACP has just set up a new knowledge hub in Malabo, Equatorial Guinea.

***Q: What is the importance of data in SSTC?***

Henrique Banze:

Data provides the statistics that facilitate our measurement, reporting and definition of policies and strategies. When we understand the environment around us, when we know what is going on, then we can make the right decisions. Big data and increased computing power allow us to do more with larger amounts of data too. The key challenge will be to put the right mechanisms in place that we can systematically collect data on SSTC.