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Valuing Possibility: South-South Cooperation and Participatory Budgeting in Maputo, Mozambique

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ABSTRACT

While the novelty or distinctness of South-South Cooperation (SSC) as a development paradigm is contestable, its relevance for urban planning is not. SSC among cities in the 21st century is growing, and with it reference to Brazil's experiences in urban reform. This is in evidence in the Mozambican capital of Maputo, where a large portfolio of SSC stakeholders – or thick cooperation – paved the way for the institutionalization of Brazilian-inspired participatory budgeting. Maputo's experience with participatory budgeting demonstrates the particular value of SSC for urban development. SSC in this case promoted a learning environment by embracing flexibility in implementation, particularly vis a vis time and organization, and by balancing diverse stakeholders with different contributions to the reform exercise. This helped evade destructive power imbalances that typically corrupt traditional development projects. Instead, SSC helped create a 'proximate-peer' learning environment, where knowledge or expertise is co-produced, contextually relevant, and recognized among cooperation partners.

Keywords:

Mozambique, Brazil, South-South Cooperation, Participatory Budgeting, Learning

INTRODUCTION

Though political, economic, and technical cooperation between countries in the global South is not a new phenomenon, the latest manifestation of South-South Cooperation (SSC) initiatives among actors at the scale of the city is of special interest to the planning community. SSC is a decentralizing and diversifying field, in line with the high-mobility zeitgeist of international urban policy and project collaboration of our times. Indeed, the start of the twenty-first century has been well marked already by the acceleration of urban policy and planning knowledge exchanges and cross-border policy adaptations. In the economic geography literature, this phenomena of 'policy mobility' or sharing lessons and implementation experiences has been well documented among countries in the higher-income bracket (McCann & Ward, 2011; Mcfarlane, 2010; Peck, 2011). However, 'fast' policy and planning mobility or diffusion is not limited to the cities of the global North. Though traditionally discussed at the national level, the nature of exchanges, and especially power dynamics therein, are of great policy and scholarly interest in both the global North and South (Alden, Morphet, & Vieira, 2010; Alden & Vieira, 2005; Braveboy-Wagner, 2009;

Chaturvedi, 2012; Robinson, 2006, 2011). This chapter concentrates on exchanges and cooperation among actors in the South – specifically between Brazil and Mozambique – at the urban level, to begin exploring and understanding their impact on urban development in such contexts. Two overriding objectives guide the following discussion: first, to outline the history and trajectory of sub-national SSC initiatives; secondly, to understand whether there are any identifiably specific characteristics or values of such SSC initiatives in urban development. This latter objective is explored through an examination of SSC between Brazil and Mozambique in the Mozambican capital of Maputo – particularly through the introduction of participatory budgeting exercises there. The chapter concludes with a discussion of the outstanding implications of SSC for urban development, contending that it promotes a productive proximate-peer learning environment. Through flexibility in implementation of reforms and through including and balancing contributions from a wide cross-cut of development stakeholders – or thick cooperation – the participatory budgeting exercise in Maputo bears testament to the value of SSC as a means of correcting for historical power imbalances in development reforms and projects.

THE MOZAMBIQUE CONNECTION

Although Mozambique, like many other Sub-Saharan African countries, is not a largely urbanized country as of yet, it is nonetheless a compelling site for the study of SSC that targets urban development. Mozambique sits in the Southeastern cone of the African continent, and continues to rank among the world's lowest-income economies after a long period of Portuguese colonial rule followed by a disastrous civil war spurred by foreign interests wary of its post-independence socialist regime (Chabal, 2002; Finnegan, 1992). However, since a more peaceful governing period began to take shape in 1994, Mozambique has been one of the more politically stable countries in Sub-Saharan Africa. It boasts a relatively high growth rate in annual GDP (Jorgic 2014; World Bank 2014), even if not making major dents in its income inequalities nor in power distribution and transparency within the political sphere.

Mozambique's stability and growth trajectory is also reflected in rapid changes to the urban landscape in Maputo, its capital and largest city with roughly 1.2 million residents, as well as its fast-growing neighbor Matola – now Mozambique's second largest city.¹ Within Maputo, the base for empirical evidence of SSC initiatives is rich. SSC in the capital represents a deeply diverse portfolio - running the spectrum from formalized cooperation agreements to informal consultations, from sector-specific projects to multiplicative cooperation interests or motivations, from delimited or qualified collaborations to open participation calls, and from older to newer alliances among development stakeholders. Of course, as is often the case within the development industry, such “Southern” cooperative endeavors also often include “Northern” players in various roles, as well as non-State actors from the private for- and non-profit sectors. This density of development-related actors – both domestic and international – in Maputo is not surprising.

¹ For a basic demographic snapshot, see http://www.indexmundi.com/mozambique/demographics_profile.html

The positive development outlook in Mozambique has for over a decade caught the attention of the international development community, where professional employment positions posted in Maputo are anecdotally looked upon with relative favor among other cities (Kugel, 2014). Yet even beyond the development community and the legacy of the Portuguese colonial presence, external or foreign interests have long held steady in the country – and particularly in its cities and resource-rich regions. Under colonial human and natural resource exploitation, the Portuguese state in Mozambique was weak and yielded to strong “third-party” foreign capital and/or political interests in Mozambique’s territorial riches (Jenkins, 2001, 2013; Sidaway, 1993). It is more of late, however, that third party groups at least nominally aspire to more altruistic interest, for example in aiding the country to improve the public management of its resources and build its capacity to govern and plan for economic and population growth (Lawson, de Renzio, & Umarji, 2006; Mastri, 2007; Warren-Rodríguez, 2008a, 2008b). In short, Maputo has a well cemented reputation as a bastion of internationally diverse peoples, and all with their own interests.

Several recently established consortia or initiatives bear further witness to this reality. Many – even while international in membership – very specifically target (or are specifically dedicated to) Mozambique. Groups with studies or active interventions in Mozambique include the Public Expenditure and Financial Accountability partnership, the Programme Aid Partnership, the Collaborative African Budget Reform Initiative, the Official Development Aid in Mozambique database, and the Local Economic Development Network of Africa. Another regional group with active interests in or with Mozambique is the Southern African Development Community. Finally, there is the well established presence of bilateral development groups like the Danish, Norwegian, German, Spanish, or U.S. aid agencies, as well as of course international financial institutions like the World Bank, International Monetary Fund, or the African Development Bank. However, of special interest is also the growing field of urban-level cooperation associations. The next section begins to outline this emerging landscape of urban-specific, decentralized and diversified cooperation and considers what it means for development.

BUILDING SOUTHERN CAPITAL

As aforementioned, SSC is nothing new under the sun. However, the scale of objectives, means therein, and leaders thereof have shifted since earlier initiatives were launched via the UN system.² Early SSC reflected the reaction and collaborative hopes of lower income countries in the face of post-WWII growth and mass production in higher-income countries (Chaturvedi, 2012). In this period, manufacturing in richer countries far outgrew that of what Southern-based economists like Raul Prebisch coined ‘periphery’ countries, deteriorating the terms of trade for the latter. The experience provided the impetus for the first United

² Though cooperation between countries in the Southern hemisphere precedes even the UN system, in this paper the focus is on SSC as it has emerged since the mid-20th century.

Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) held in 1964. UNCTAD helped give voice to lower-income countries' concerns about their economic and technical development vis-à-vis higher-income countries. In its first meeting in Geneva, the frustration of leaders from lower-income countries with their economic dependency was a central rallying point. Che Guevara's address to that 1964 General Assembly is remarkable for the acute articulation of such grievances not only from the perspective of Cuba, but of other periphery countries that saw the Bretton Woods system as perpetuating their 'underdevelopment' vis a vis 'capitalist developed countries'.³

UNCTAD was of course only an early step on the road of institutionalizing SSC initiatives. It paved the way for the Special Unit for South-South Cooperation (SU-SSC), established by the United Nations General Assembly in 1974, which itself was strengthened by the adoption of the Buenos Aires Plan of Action for Promoting and Implementing Technical Cooperation among developing countries in 1978. Hosted by UNDP, the SU-SSC's primary mandate is to promote, coordinate, and support South-South and triangular cooperation on a global and UN system-wide basis. UNDP describes SSC "as a broad framework for collaboration among countries of the South in the political, economic, social, cultural, environmental and technical domains."⁴ Through these institutions, SSC programming and projects further diversified over the past three decades, moving from technical sharing to platforms for political alliance and sharing lessons in social development policy, much as UI Haq predicted (Chaturvedi, 2012; UI Haq, 1980).

Indeed, the UN's role in the institutionalization of SSC remains central, though not unique. Most recently, the UN held yet another conference on SSC with the overarching theme of the "Promotion of South-South Cooperation for Development", clearly indicating that after a period of relative dormancy in the 1980s and 1990s, SSC was again on the rise. The Conference is the outcome of a United Nations decision in 2009 to convene such a meeting on the 30th anniversary of the adoption of the 1978 Buenos Aires Plan of Action. The General Assembly has described SSC as providing important and viable opportunities for developing countries in their individual and collective pursuits of sustained economic growth and sustainable development.⁵ To this end, a Voluntary Trust Fund for the Promotion of South-South Cooperation, established in accordance with General Assembly resolution 50/119 of 20 December 1995, was renamed in 2005 as the United Nations Fund for South-South Cooperation, designating it as the main UN trust fund for promoting and supporting South-South and triangular cooperation.

The UN fund, however, is now one of several resources for SSC. At the urban level in particular, SSC has found increasing financial or technical support since the turn of the last century from a number of organizations, including the Cities Alliance, United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG), and the World Bank, as well as a number of countries (and

³ <http://www.marxists.org/archive/guevara/1964/03/25.htm>

⁴ http://ssc.undp.org/content/ssc/about/what_is_ssc.html

⁵ UN SU-SSC website: <http://ssc.undp.org/content/ssc.html>, accessed August 3, 2013

municipalities themselves) sponsoring city-to-city learning exchanges (see Table 1 below for further organizations).

Table 1: *Diversifying SSC*

SSC Initiative	Geography of Cooperation	Urban focus	Description
Cooperacion Sur Sur	Latin America		Ibero-American program on strengthening SSC between Latin American countries, as well as with Spain.
Cooperanet	Latin America		Canadian-supported initiative to promote dialogue between high-level authorities on methods of cooperation.
South-South Experience Exchange Trust Fund	Global		Just-in-time funding from World Bank to support knowledge exchange.
New Partnership for African Development's Planning and Coordinating Agency	Africa		Cooperation capacity development among African nations.
Cities Alliance	Global	X	Promotes role of cities in sustainable development by supporting urban development programs and exchanges between city authorities and national governments.
IBSA (India-Brazil-South Africa) alliance	India, Brazil, South Africa	X	Trilateral arrangement between member countries to support SSC exchanges and achievement of MDGs, with a formal Memorandum of Understanding on Cooperation between members in human settlements upgrading.
Inclusive Cities	Global	X	World Bank Institute-supported peer-learning and knowledge platform dedicated to exchange of experiences on slum upgrading and affordable housing.
Urban Knowledge Platform	Global	X	World Bank and Cities Alliance-supported web-based platform to make knowledge exchanges a virtual on-going experience with open-source contributions.
United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG)		X	Union of municipal authorities which partners with academia, NGOs, development agencies and donors and encourages decentralized cooperation. ⁶
Global Partnership for Effective Cooperation	Global		International partnership agreement, with support from OECD and UNDP, established in the Fourth High-level Aid Effectiveness meeting in Busan, Korea to support and improve effective development cooperation, recognizing SSC as distinct form of cooperation between low-income countries.
City Future Project	Global	X	Overseen by UCLG Committee on Urban Strategic Planning, with support from the Cities Alliance and the Government of Norway, established to encourage city to city peer learning and lesson sharing.

⁶ See the following site for more on the UCLG's objectives: <http://www.uclg.org/en/media/news/decentralized-cooperation-south-effective-tool-promote-development#sthash.hYH7mDoM.dpuf>

Web of Information for Development (WIDE)	Global		Supported by UN Office for South-South Cooperation (UNOSSC), a web-enabled service platform that is part of the Global South-South Development Academy (itself an online, action-oriented service platform that facilitates access to Southern development solutions and Southern expertise for learning and application). WIDE enables institutions to build and maintain their own roster(s) of experts.
MercoCiudades	South America	X	A horizontal municipal advocacy and cooperation network between 286 cities in Mercosul countries, namely Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay, Uruguay, Venezuela, Chile, Bolivia, Colombia, and Peru.

Source: Author's compilation.

Of further interest of course is the question of who is getting involved in subnational – or what some have called ‘second generation’ SSC (Mayaki, 2010). Leaders in Brazil, South Africa, and India have all well positioned themselves for influence in the South’s political landscape by affirming the rights and interests of other countries of the South in international fora, speaking to what Nye famously coined a ‘soft power’ approach to foreign policy. These efforts are especially clear on the urban front, where these countries leverage their own experiences and challenges with urban growth as a rationale for their diplomatic outreach in other countries with upcoming urban growth poles. This reorientation of the political and economic landscape of alliances also speaks to what Australian sociologist Raewyn Connell calls ‘Southern Theory’, or the recognition of experiences in the global South as take-off points or foundations for knowledge production (Connell, 2007).⁷ This chapter then continues on that path, outlining the newly active generation of sub-national SSC initiatives emerging from ‘Southern’ experiences as an example of decentralized policy mobility. Here, the Brazilian experience (and urban reforms therein) has been a leading force behind – and model of – the shift toward Southern leadership. In the next section, the drivers and implications of the peculiarity of the Brazilian urban influence in SSC are discussed.

URBAN LEGEND: BRAZIL’S COOPERATION PORTFOLIO

The trajectory of Brazilian history in SSC is emblematic of the larger shifts within SSC projects, showing the diversification from national (and traditionally agricultural) realms to urban development, and from ministerial actors to multiple private and public development stakeholders starting SSC initiatives. Perhaps one of the greatest shifts to note, however, is

⁷ In addition to policy initiatives and knowledge production disseminating from the global South to the North, we also have growing evidence of heterarchical urban policy exchange and learning. In heterarchical exchanges, cities from all income-levels and different geographies share lessons regarding common denominator challenges, rather than categorically singularizing a vulnerability as relevant for only a sub-group set of cities (e.g., megacities). These consortia reflect in practice what Robinson (2006) suggested we call ‘ordinary’ cities, rather than cities with any hierarchical categorization (e.g., global, first-world, etc). For example, the international network of cities dedicated to addressing climate change, C40 Cities Climate Leadership Group, involves knowledge exchange and sharing lessons among its membership municipalities from every region and income-level in the world. See <http://www.c40.org/cities>.

evidenced within Brazil's federal government itself. Once only a recipient of development assistance, the country became a provider thereof by the twenty-first century. The National Commission for Technical Assistance was established in Brazil in 1950 with the objective of prioritizing different Brazilian federal agency requests for aid and of facilitating the reception of such international (or bilateral) assistance – which was mainly technical in the industrial and agricultural sectors. It was not until 1987 that the current Brazilian Agency for Cooperation (Agência Brasileira de Cooperação, or ABC) was established, in part as an effort to institutionally combine the political and the technical arenas of Brazil's relationship with other partners in the global South as well as with higher-income industrialized countries. This facilitated an uptick in Brazil's cooperation activities, including growth in the number of its partner countries, in actual projects undertaken, and of course in financing for these initiatives.⁸ Indeed, the ABC is active globally across all regions, whether through bilateral or trilateral programs and projects, and boasts programming in 37 African countries. Brazil's presence in particular is often noted in Mozambique, for both historical reasons and current political economic realities, but also because Mozambique now receives the largest volume of formal technical assistance from the ABC (Agência Brasileira de Cooperação, 2010).

Of course much of Brazilian participation in SSC – like the foreign policy interests in any country – reflects Brazilian ambitions for global influence in international institutions and for wider economic market-share.⁹ Indeed, Brazil has been so successful at strengthening diplomatic alliances in the global South to counter-balance long domineering Northern interests that now even the World Trade Organization (WTO) is led by a Brazilian, Roberto Azevêdo, the first Latin American director.¹⁰

Nonetheless, the ABC – particularly through its program for the General Coordination for Technical Cooperation among Developing Countries – decrees that “Brazilian technical cooperation is non-profit, not assistance-oriented, does not have commercial purposes, and is centered on the institutional strengthening of... partners as a fundamental condition for effective knowledge transfer and ownership”.¹¹ To this end, the Brazilian federal government participates in both bilateral and trilateral SSC initiatives, but does not actually present itself as a donor country.¹² This ‘anti-donor’ characterization reflects the undercurrent that many global South participants in SSC initiatives aim to emphasize in their work – that their cooperation is more helpful and less paternalistic than the traditional (read exploitative) global North's development assistance projects in the South.

⁸ See the ABC website for more details about this growth. <http://www.abc.gov.br>

⁹ Indeed, some in Mozambique have questioned the nature of Brazil's cooperation presence in the country. See (Chichava, 2014; Rafael, 2011)

¹⁰ <http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2013/may/21/azevedo-head-world-trade-organisation>

¹¹ ABC website, accessed 11/1/2012. <http://www.abc.gov.br/CooperacaoTecnica/Historico>

¹² Brazil does, however, finance SSC either fully (through bilateral projects) or partially (in trilateral projects with funding from international organizations or other higher-income countries). In these latter trilateral projects, the Brazilian focus is largely on training partner/recipient countries and technical advisory, though sometimes it also provides for small-scale infrastructure works and required SSC project equipment.

Within the urban sector, Brazilian SSC is moving steadily forward with this (political) sentiment of camaraderie in the development struggle. Especially during Lula's tenure as president, Brazil's presence in Sub-Saharan Africa – and cities therein – grew. Former president Lula visited the continent on 33 trips (12 of which were formal State visits) and opened another 19 Brazilian embassies in Africa (Instituto Lula 2013). During that time, in July 2007, a bilateral cooperation accord dedicated to urban development in Mozambique was signed by Brazilian Ambassador to Mozambique, Leda Camargo, and the Mozambican Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Public Works and Housing, Fernando Macamo. Later in 2011, under Dilma Rousseff, the Brazilian Presidency's office launched the Decentralized South-South Technical Cooperation Program (DSSTCP), which allows Brazilian states and cities to apply for support to engage in cooperation programs with sub-national governments in other countries from the global South in order to share successful policies and plans.¹³ Based on its own 'decentralized' (i.e., subnational) cooperation with French city governments, and a special triangular cooperation partnership between Brazil, France, and Haiti, the Brazilian federal government launched the expanded DSSTCP to concentrate on opportunities for decentralized SSC between subnational governments in Brazil and in Africa. For example, the city of Vitória in Brazil won funding in 2012 to work with the city government of Xai-Xai in Mozambique on a proposal for a general urban improvement plan, appropriately called *Collaborating on the Construction of a Dream City* (Agência Brasileira de Cooperação & Prefeitura Municipal de Vitória, 2012). However, reflective of the diverse landscape of SSC that has emerged in the past two decades, exchange now also moves beyond the work of these traditional federal-level actors or even institutions.

Brazilian cities and the national confederation of municipalities have also specifically sought to maintain and promote 'decentralized' South-South cooperation as autonomous from the activities and mandates of national-level authorities and agencies (Confederação Nacional de Municípios, 2009). One of the largest dedicated urban development SSC projects to date is one that is led in part by the Brazilian mayors' association. This SSC, *City Future*, is so decentralized and diversified that it might be better described as octagonal, as opposed to bilateral or triangular. The project targets capacity building and SSC exchanges, most recently between six cities in Brazil and eight cities in Mozambique. The 'thickness' of stakeholders in the Brazilian-Mozambican initiative arguably mitigates the weight of influence from parties financing activities alone. Instead recent experience and familiarity of contexts, as evidenced by project leaders, trumps substantive directions. More specifically, the project is supported financially by the EU, Government of Norway, Cities Alliance and the Barcelona Cooperation Agency. However, the partner groups actually facilitating this SSC between Brazilian and Mozambican authorities and leading the substantive framework include UCLG, Cities Alliance, Architects without Borders, a global network association of intermediary cities, and of course, the National Front of Mayors in Brazil (or Frente Nacional de Prefeitos - FNP) and the Association of Local Authorities in Mozambique (or the

¹³ <http://www4.planalto.gov.br/saf-projetos>

Associação das Autoridades locais em Moçambique - ANAMM). Indeed, when the project was launched in January 2013, it clearly envisioned establishing knowledge exchanges between Brazilian and Mozambican municipal professionals and authorities through the leadership of FNP and ANAMM – as opposed to national government institutions - to help build management capacities given increasingly decentralized public sector responsibilities in each country. There are three specific areas for knowledge exchange and capacity building of local authorities in both countries: participatory budgeting, inclusive cadastral and land management, and strategic planning (Bennaton, Oliveira, Cortes, & Cumbane, 2013). Each of these areas of work is familiar territory for Brazilian-Mozambican cooperation in Maputo.

Even when the Brazilian public sector (or any level of government) is not itself an initiator of SSC, Brazilian development professionals have inspired and emphasized the use of and reference to Brazilian lessons with urban development as consultants in projects.¹⁴ Of course, part of the explanation for this weight of the Brazilian reference is linked to cultural affinities and a shared language (Martin, 2014). It was thus not surprising in 2011 to hear the fairly new (at the time) Vice Ambassador of Brazil to Mozambique, Mr. Nei Bitencourt, describe Brazil's experiences as a representation of 'the possible' for Mozambique. Freshly arrived from his last appointment in Washington D.C., Vice Ambassador Bitencourt commented that Brazil – unlike countries from the global North – represented a harbinger of "possibility" for countries similarly situated on the development trajectory. He was careful to deflect the characterization of Brazil as a model, so as to avoid the widely debunked logic of promoting the replication of historical development paths. However, Bitencourt likened Brazil to a friend or a relative of other developing countries, one which shares specific experiences with poverty, understands development challenges first hand, and wants to help others, while of course also acknowledging that such help would also naturally serve Brazil's more proprietary interests.¹⁵ While clearly a master of the art of political rhetoric, what Bitencourt espoused was not simply diplomatic shop talk or ideology. It was based on some real evidence, both from a longstanding history of Brazilian cooperation, arriving from diverse emissaries, and from current projects on the ground. The next section on Maputo's experiences with a widely acknowledged Brazilian innovative reform in urban governance, participatory budgeting, explores in more detail how the dynamics of this reform's arrival and its implementation reflect the value of possibility espoused in SSC and promote a positive learning environment for development.

DECENTRALIZED POLICY MOBILITY AND THICK COOPERATION IN PARTICIPATORY BUDGETING

¹⁴ Interview with Brazilian consultant, Mauricio Viera, a longstanding resident in Mozambique with expertise in urban development – formerly employed by Conselho Municipal de Maputo as well as the World Bank as a strategic advisor. Interview by author on August 18, 2012.

¹⁵ Author's interview with then Ministro-Conselheiro Nei Futuro Bitencourt in Maputo on September 15, 2011.

As previously noted, neither SSC nor knowledge exchanges more widely are new in the international sphere, nor within sub-national relations, as demonstrated in Maputo. In fact, the capital has over a dozen extant and several pending sister city partners with cities everywhere from Indonesia, Korea and Turkey to Switzerland, Uganda and Brazil.¹⁶ However, it is also host to a number of recently launched SSC projects, many with financial support from the global North. This new environment of “thick cooperation” – or cooperation with multiple stakeholders – at a decentralized level of policy mobility helps even potential power imbalances among actors, as reflected in Maputo’s experience with participatory budgeting.

Participatory budgeting began as an administrative reform within a recently democratized Brazil. By most accounts, it was the city government of Porto Alegre in Brazil – under the tenure of a leftist political mayor with the Workers Party – that the experiment was first launched (Avritzer & Wampler, 2008). Since that time, participatory budgeting has spread to virtually every region of the globe, though of course deep variations exist in its intent or objective, its implementation, and its popular reception in locations from China, Senegal, Italy, through to the United States. Indeed, counts of cities using participatory budgeting exercises vary between 800 and 1500. The reform is widely promoted as a means of fostering greater transparency about decisions in using the public purse, and also of facilitating civic responsibility among the populace and fiscal responsibility among public authorities. Its popularity also reflects the trend toward decentralization and devolution of financial and public service responsibilities to the most local level of government. In response to such added responsibilities, often without additional financial resources, local governments – particularly where populations are growing – have adopted participatory budgeting as a means of quelling and/or engaging citizens in balancing increased demands for services with stagnant or limited budgets (Shah, 2007; Wampler, 2010b).

The arrival of participatory budgeting in Maputo can be read from multiple perspectives and explained through different theories of diffusion. Through the documentation of several empirical cases of participatory budgeting’s institutionalization within cities across the world, scholars from various disciplines have mainly explained the spread of this reform as either a bottom-up push (from community-based social movements, political activists, or growing advocacy networks) or a top-down catalytic push (from international organizations promoting governance reforms) (Avritzer & Wampler, 2008; Baiocchi, 2001; Nylen, 2003; Shah, 2007; Sintomer, Herzberg, Allegratti, & Rocke, 2010; Wampler, 2010a). Furthermore, the African continent’s later or slow adoption of participatory budgeting has been linked to the weakness of representative democracies on the continent, indicating that where participatory budgeting has been launched, it has been largely through the efforts of international donors or NGOs to influence national governments’ governance reforms – and thereby local governments.¹⁷

¹⁶ Interview with Chadreque Lucas Massingue, an International Relations officer in the city government of Maputo (Conselho Municipal de Maputo), conducted by research assistant, Laura Martin, on July 31, 2013.

¹⁷ Indeed, in one report, scholars argue that “it is impossible to deny the existence of an element of ‘neo-colonialism’ in the way in which the idea of participatory budgeting entered the African political debate” (Sintomer et al 2010: 44).

However, the Maputo experience shows the gradients in between the bottom-up and top-down explanations for participatory budgeting's spread, as well as some important nuances to be considered in the evaluation of African 'readiness' for deep democratic reforms. For example, one could adopt the top-down framing of the introduction of participatory budgeting through the story of a World Bank-funded governance reform package in Maputo. The *Programa de Desenvolvimento Municipal de Maputo* – or Municipal Development Program of Maputo (known in policy circles as ProMaputo) was launched in 2007 and envisioned initiatives centered on institutional development and governance, municipal finance, and service/infrastructure planning and delivery improvements. Total support from the World Bank amounted US\$30 million, with an additional US\$14.45 million from Mozambique itself, including the Conselho Municipal de Maputo (CMM) or the City Council of Maputo. The stated objective of ProMaputo was to strengthen the capacity to develop, manage and maintain quality service delivery to citizens, and participatory budgeting was highlighted as a key tool therein (World Bank 2012).

There was, however, little participatory rationale provided in accounts of ProMaputo's origins that explain why the translation of "participation" into a development goal took form within the budgeting exercise. According to a CMM report, ProMaputo emerged after a number of studies – including ones on human resources, financial and patrimonial assets, and a citizens' report card on basic service provision, in addition to a meeting with stakeholders in November of 2005 (Conselho Municipal de Maputo, 2008). Together, the studies and meeting were to establish a prioritization of development goals and to delineate a strategy of achievement thereof. Ironically, the seminar with stakeholders was actually held 80 kilometers outside the city of Maputo itself – in the town of Namaacha, on the border of Mozambique and Swaziland. Nonetheless, ProMaputo has been an important financial if not implementing force in the launch of the participatory budgeting exercise throughout the city. And the Brazilian reference within ProMaputo programming – and sometimes in its staffing – is also noteworthy.¹⁸

Another storyline in participatory budgeting's arrival follows a different line of connection with SSC and Brazil. A technical expert serving the CMM (formerly within the budgetary section), Fernando Ngonhamo, explained that the first flirtations with the reform exercise came with former Mayor Eneas Comiche.¹⁹ Comiche's career trajectory helps clarify how SSC is relevant to participatory budgeting's launch in Maputo, and how in particular Brazil's experience with the reform played into Maputo's. Comiche arrived on the local Maputo

¹⁸ Ali Alwhati, a World Bank urban specialist, explained that ProMaputo is one of the more unique reforms programs supported by the World Bank in the implementation category. While most World Bank projects have World Bank staff placed within government institutions to champion and support project implementation (i.e., Project Implementation Units, or PIUs), ProMaputo is implemented by city government offices independently of a World Bank in-situ PIU, as such Alwhati described it as a very "locally" originated program of reforms. However, ProMaputo staff documents (WorldBank, 2012) also indicate that "local" staff were often foreign nationals (e.g., sometimes countries of origin were listed but several consultants were unidentified and classified as from 'World' – see <http://www.worldbank.org/projects/P096332/promaputo-maputo-municipal-development-program?lang=en&tab=overview>). Interview with Alwhati by author on August 18th, 2009 in Maputo.

¹⁹ Interview by author with Dr. Fernando Ngonhamo on October 3, 2011 in Maputo.

government scene with populist ideas coupled with substantial previous experience in the financial sector – as well as extensive international exposure, particularly in Brazil. Before serving as Maputo’s mayor, Comiche had (simultaneously) acted as president of the Banco Commercial and a vice-president of Banco Internacional de Mocambique. He was also a deputy in the Mozambican National Assembly, Minister of Economic Affairs, Minister of Finance, and the Governor of the Central Bank. Importantly here, Comiche also was a member of the South Commission, a group established by political leaders from the global South as an international organization in 1987 in order to solidify cooperation among countries in the South as a negotiating force within international institutions (South Commission, 1990). In short, Comiche was long an international figure before taking up mayoral leadership in Maputo, and he continued to be very active internationally during his tenure within the city government. Indeed, when he was elected Mayor of Maputo, he also became Chair of UCLG’s Local Finance Committee, as well as Vice President of UCLG’s African sub-group. It is thus not surprising that Comiche had several occasions to travel to Brazil.

When Comiche first took office in 2004, a discussion was held about implementing a participatory budgeting exercise in Maputo, similar to the exercise as executed in Brazil. According to Ngonhamo and the current Secretary of Finance in Maputo (and formerly an economist/consultant with the CMM on budgeting), Eduardo Nguenha, Comiche sent some of his staff to Porto Alegre to learn more about the budgeting reform very early on in his tenure as mayor, though this did not immediately translate into implementation in Maputo.²⁰ After another visit to Brazil in 2006, Comiche decided to again push for the implementation of an exercise in participatory budgeting in Maputo. The effort to introduce participatory budgeting in Maputo at this time, according to Nguenha, reflected not so much the new emphasis on participatory reforms through ProMaputo as much as a sense of urgency in Comiche’s efforts to secure popular support in upcoming elections in 2008 and to keep office for a second term, particularly in the face of waning political support from FRELIMO, Mozambique’s ruling political party.²¹

For the celebratory launch of participatory budgeting at last in May 2008, Comiche travelled to the outskirts of the Maputo city limits to the bairro/neighborhood of Inguide, in one of Maputo’s poorest and more isolated districts – KaTembe. There, Comiche explained to a gathered crowd of residents how they would have the power to choose representatives that would be integrated into the extant governing District-level Consultative Council, and that this was important because it would allow them to locally determine neighborhood-level needs and required investments (Agência de Informação de Moçambique, 2008). Comiche’s strategy, however, was not limited to a pilot launch of the exercise. Instead, he favored a comprehensive city-wide introduction of participatory budgeting – again, before the municipal elections in October of 2008. Nguenha reported that choosing only one or a

²⁰ Interview by author with Dr. Eduardo Nguenha in Maputo on June 18, 2010.

²¹ Ibid.

few sites for the reform was considered too politically sensitive and riskier than the troubles anticipated with wide-scale implementation.²²

A third narrative of participatory budgeting's arrival in Maputo could be centered on the work of advocacy networks and professional associations. In other words, even more than the *pull* of individual ambitions and local politics or the *push* of donor/multilateral promotion was at play in bringing participatory budgeting to Maputo. There was also a push from Brazil itself (through its Mayors) and from other governmental and advocacy networks dedicated to governance reform in the region. In addition to Comiche's own visits to Brazil, in 2006 a group of technical experts from the CMM, including Ngonhamo, were invited to Porto Alegre by the mayoral office there to take part in an international workshop on municipal administration – and to learn more about participatory budgeting-supported projects in Brazil.²³ In 2008, the same technical group was invited to participate in two further internationally organized workshops on participatory budgeting, one in Durban, South Africa organized in part by the Municipal Development Partnership for Eastern and Southern Africa (itself a regional association dedicated to decentralization and to improving local government capacities in Sub-Saharan Africa), along with support from UN HABITAT, the World Bank Institute, and the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation, and another in Belo Horizonte, Brazil mainly supported financially and substantively by the Cities Alliance. The purpose of these workshops was to highlight experiences with and investment results from participatory budgeting around the world – including cases from Brazil, other Latin American countries, Senegal, and even a Mozambican case from the small town of Dondo in a central province of the country. Overall, such networks have been central to keeping the participatory budgeting exercise on the forefront of municipal reforms adopted under the umbrella of good governance, and Mozambican delegates have been active participants therein. Mozambican municipal authorities have participated in numerous international conferences, workshops, and even the World Urban Forum to share their own story with the exercise, reflecting how such gatherings have been outstanding platforms for spreading the popularity and adoption of participatory budgeting, but also for building professional networks among like-minded municipal figures.²⁴

Overall, the Maputo case of participatory budgeting demonstrates well the density of actors, or thick cooperation, involved in modern-day, decentralized SSC – even when just initially examining two countries' cooperation within one project type. The exercise's launch in Maputo involved not simply the federal governments of Brazil and Mozambique, as would have cooperation projects in the past. Nor were actors just local or international but also included regional professional associations. In addition, while Mozambican and Brazilian governmental institutions were of course party to its launch, its adoption – and adaptation

²² Ibid.

²³ Interview by author with Dr. Fernando Ngonhamo on October 3, 2011 in Maputo.

²⁴ The author, for example, participated in participatory budgeting workshops in the 5th World Urban Forum held in Rio de Janeiro in 2010, alongside Mozambican delegates from Maputo. Another more recent example is the Mozambican participation, with a presentation by Dr. Simão Mucavele, at the 'Encontro Ibérico de Orçamentos Participativos' or Iberian Meeting of Participatory Budgeting, held in Portugal in November 2012.

since – also reflects the push and pulls of individual champions, research institutions, advocacy networks, and multilateral organizations.

ROOM TO LEARN: FLEXIBILITY IN THE THICK OF COOPERATION

The discussion above outlines three broad narratives of participatory budgeting's *arrival* in Maputo within the framework of SSC. However, equally – if not more – relevant in examinations of SSC's impact on urban development is the *implementation* of urban reforms – not just their launch. Participatory budgeting in Maputo has been through three methodological iterations since first being launched in 2008. These shifts in implementation were stemmed in several difficulties. For example, throughout the three different iterations of the budgeting methodology proposed, there was some uncertainty about the most effective organizational level through which to realize decision-making processes and investment prioritization (i.e., bairro/neighborhood level or District level). While the first iteration of participatory budgeting included bairro-level direct determination of investment priorities, the second iteration shifted prioritization duties to an already extant District-level Consultative Council, eliminating any direct role for residents or their bairro-level representation. In the third and current edition of budgeting methodology, the bairro returns to power as a prioritization-setting, budgetary, and plan-setting authority (Conselho Municipal de Maputo, 2012).

Consecutive shifts in decision-making powers reflect the stability challenges typically associated with weak democracies. Questions regarding the readiness of the population or its willingness to engage also abound, as noted in a recently made video about participatory budgeting in Maputo. The video highlights the challenges of participation in budgeting meetings within two bairros of Maputo. A young narrator explains that residents at a budgeting meeting complained about the time the participatory budgeting meeting was taking, a complaint that has been well noted in literature about the 'tyranny' of participation. The video's narrator also noted that it was only when the neighborhood elder and representative spoke to residents about the importance of the meeting and participation in the budgeting vote that they understood and their complaints were calmed.²⁵

In addition to these aforementioned organizational challenges, the participatory budget process met with difficulty in project cycle completion as well. More specifically, the calendar or timeline of budget decision-making did not always align well with the reality of the calendar of project implementation and completion requirements (e.g. investments agreed upon in 2008 were only being completed in 2011, causing skepticism in the next round of decision-making about the value of the exercise) (Conselho Municipal de Maputo,

²⁵ The video details the participatory budgeting exercise in two bairros of Maputo in April 2013. It was taken by a youth organization, Observadores Cidadões, and uploaded on June 5, 2013. The video can be accessed at: <http://vimeo.com/67728875>

2012).²⁶ The calendar cycle of the participatory budget has thus changed three times, moving from first being an exercise envisioning just a one-year cycle of decision-making and project implementation to a bi-annual cycle, allowing more time for sponsored projects to be completed. In its latest iteration, determined in 2012, the schedule was shifted again, this time by delimiting the number of bairros or neighborhoods that would be included in decision-making process by establishing a rotation schedule. There are 63 bairros (or neighborhoods) in seven districts within the city of Maputo – too many, according to CMM authorities, to include all in a yearly or even bi-annual participatory budget at once.²⁷ As such, the 2013 participatory budgeting cycle included only 16 bairros from four districts of Maputo, with an investment budget of 25 million Mozambican Meticaís (or roughly US\$750,000), while the 2014 budget exercise envisions the participation of another 16 bairros from the same four districts with the same budget allocation. The idea here is to allow the inclusion of all bairros in the participatory budgeting exercise, but to rotate which bairros are provided with the opportunity to choose and to realize their capital investment priorities each year, thereby easing implementation challenges (Conselho Municipal de Maputo, 2012).

After adaptations in both calendar cycles and with the organizational levels involved in identifying bairro priorities, in defining projects and of budgeting them, Maputo seems to be settling in to a groove with its participatory budgeting. An evaluation meeting is to be held in 2014 to assess the overall impact that participatory budgeting exercises are having on the quality of life for residents (Conselho Municipal de Maputo, 2012). Promisingly, the city's experiences with struggles in the reform process have not been suppressed from public discussions, as is often the case within weak democracies. Indeed, Mozambique's public sector representatives spoke about the weaknesses of Maputo's experience with implementing participatory budgeting at the most recent Conference of the International Observatory on Participatory Democracy (IOPD), a network established in 2001 by the European Commission's URB-AL program for decentralized cooperation.^{28,29} In their reporting to a meeting on participatory budgeting in the CMM upon their return to Maputo, the Mozambican representatives noted that Maputo's experience encouraged other cities from the global South present at the IOPD conference to experiment with the exercise and to gain from exchanges about experiences.³⁰ The Brazilian experience was also repeatedly highlighted as cases from which lessons could be learned. A municipal official noted that given Brazil's similar (urban) environment, it makes sense to have partnerships with Brazilian cities from which they can learn about property tax systems, land mapping, and management, highlighting that smaller cities in Brazil were most helpful partners in this

²⁶ Interview by author with Valdo Cruz, Economic Affairs officer in the Maputo Municipal Government District Office in KaTembe, on June 28, 2010, also confirmed that the implementation lag of 'elected projects' was a problem in working to establish popular trust in the exercise.

²⁷ Interview by author with Eduardo Nguenha on September 27, 2011 in Maputo.

²⁸ For further information about the OIPD, see <http://www.oidp.net/en/about-iodp/about-us/>

²⁹ Presentation by Dr. Ananias Couana. Mozambican public representative to conference in Barcelona. Presentation given on July 30, 2013 in CMM, Maputo.

³⁰ Ibid.

regard given their greater similarity to Maputo.³¹ Different videos of experiences with participatory budgeting in Brazilian cities were also presented at the CMM meetings.³² Repeated reference was especially made to Porto Alegre, which was celebrating its 25th year of participatory budgeting.

A dense web of SSC – largely inspired by if not always implemented or promoted formally by Brazil – facilitated its arrival, but also importantly its stay. Maputo’s experience with participatory budgeting might have been considered an implementation ‘failure’ by traditional donor organizations when participatory budgeting proved anything but participatory or implementable in its first or second iteration. However, the thick cooperation surrounding its arrival – and the example of Brazilian staying power with the exercise – played and plays a role in participatory budgeting’s institutionalization in Maputo.

CONCLUSION: COOPERATION AND LEARNING IN URBAN DEVELOPMENT

Maputo’s experience with SSC, and specifically participatory budgeting, serves to remind us that the slow uptake of democratic reforms is not necessarily detrimental to implementation sustainability. Indeed, an easing of time-specified assessments or evaluations of ‘success’ and ‘failure’ might be desirable in the opportunity that less time constraints allow for true contextualization and local investment in an idea. The case also reflects that the involvement and buy-in of several stakeholder groups, rather than simply complicating reform implementation as might be argued, can actually help mitigate potential power imbalances between development partners in implementation decisions.

These two characterizations of Maputo’s experience with participatory budgeting – regarding thick cooperation and flexibility in implementation – point to what we can argue is the real value of SSC for urban development: the cultivation of shared power and sense of ownership. Knowledge production or expertise within SSC initiatives is shared and can encourage an iterative reform process and adaptive flexibility that leads to a deepening of improvements and democratic change. This finding deserves more attention within urban development policy research, and particularly calls for a further exploration about whether who city authorities learn from or cooperate with matters – and why. Beyond the political rhetoric of South-South relationship building, there may be genuinely optimal reasons to encourage what we might call *proximate peer* learning exchanges – where both parties gain from the experience of experimentation without severe judgment or the conditionality of support that so dominated previous generations of donor relationships with targeted communities in the global South.

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³² One video link of interest was from one community in São Paulo’s experience: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hL9ZWF30Ejc#t=26>

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