GUIDELINES FOR BUILDING NATIONAL SOUTH-SOUTH & TRIANGULAR COOPERATION STRATEGIES

UNDP Country Office Guidelines for supporting National Governments

Purpose of the guidelines

These guidelines are a first step to support UNDP staff in delivering UNDP's renewed offer on South-South and Triangular Cooperation to our government counterparts. This type of support is recommended in UNDP's Strategic Plan and UNDP's South-South Corporate Strategy. The guidelines cover key technical steps to consider when developing and implementing national South-South Cooperation (SSC) policies, which can lead to the establishment of the broader national SSC institutional and policy architecture, as recommended in BAPA+40 outcome document. These guidelines are not intended to be definitive, but rather to be flexible, adaptable to national priorities and understandings and non-linear. They are intended to support countries that wish to become active partners of SSC and build on the momentum generated by BAPA+40. They are focussed primarily on technical SSC rather than economic cooperation or trade.

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1.

RATIONALE AND SCOPE OF THE GUIDELINES

South-South Cooperation (SSC) is a form of development cooperation between developing countries and based on principles of solidarity, equality, sovereignty, national ownership and non-conditionality.[1] In the past few decades, SSC has risen at an exponential rate, with many developing countries graduating from being recipients of development cooperation to providers. SSC is seen as a valuable complement to traditional North-South Cooperation.

At a global level, SSC is now believed to be a critical means of achieving the Global 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The 2030 Agenda cites Goal 17 as "Partnerships for achieving the goals", including a focus on SSC and Triangular Cooperation (TrC), which involves a third partner from a northern country. Goal 17 specifically speaks to strengthening global solidarity through mutually beneficial partnerships, including using SSC/TrC to enhance capacity building and the transfer of technologies.[2]

The United Nations (UN) has recognized the potential of SSC in contributing to the 2030 Agenda and 23 UN entities have already integrated SSC into their strategies and monitoring frameworks from 2018 – 2021 period.[3] UNDP hosts the United Nations Office of South-South Cooperation

(UNOSSC) under the oversight of the UNDP Executive Board. UNOSSC promotes SSC and TrC on a global UN and system-wide basis, while UNDP serves as an integrator, offering its technical expertise to the wider development system.[4] UNDP Strategic Plan (2018 – 2021) sees SSC/TrC as a key driver of the 2030 Agenda and aims to support SSC/TrC through with its network of country offices in over 170 countries, which can act as drivers, connectors, knowledge hubs and centres of excellence.[5]

These guidelines are targeting UNDP CO staff to support their capacities and guide them in implementing UNDP's renewed offer for SSC in order to ensure that UNDP support to SSC/TrC is systematic, targeted and effective. The ultimately goal is to support national governments in building the institutional framework for SSC/TrC, starting by the policy and institutional development needed to create the enabling environment for SSC within government structures. The underlying message is that UNDP is supporting countries in the transformational development cooperation agenda where the southern partners are development leaders to implement the Sustainable Development Goals nationally, regionally, and globally.

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[1] Source: https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/673444.
[2] Source: https://www.un.org/development/desa/disabilities/envision2030-goal17.html.
[3] Source: https://undocs.org/en/A/74/336.
[4] Source: https://undocs.org/en/A/73/L.80.
[5] Source: https://undocs.org/DP/2017/38.

2.

BAPA+40: THE OVERARCHING POLICY FRAMEWORK AT COUNTRY, REGIONAL AND GLOBAL LEVELS

The first framework for enhancing SSC was adopted in 1978 and known as the Buenos Aires Plan of Action (BAPA). This was a consensus plan of action by 138 Member States with recommendations for strengthening the SSC policy and institutional framework at national regional, interregional, and global levels.[6] It called for Member States to streamline SSC into their national development plans and to adopt policies and regulations conducive to SSC. It also called for the establishment of national mechanisms to promote SSC, with a focus on research, information systems, science and technology.[7]

Forty years after BAPA, Member States agreed in April 2019 on the outcome document (A/73/L80) for the second High-Level United Nations (UN) Conference on South-South Cooperation (SSC), known as BAPA+40. In this document the signatory countries acknowledged the role of SSC in achieving the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. As before, BAPA+40 urged developing countries to adopt or strengthen national policies to enhance SSC and to build the capacity of national or sub-national coordination mechanisms as a means of policy coordination, the sharing of knowledge, lessons learned and good practices, and the adaptation of such practices.

It also stressed the promotion of access to, and transfer of, technologies on mutually agreed terms, in line with national legal frameworks. The document further encourages countries to develop country-led systems for data collection to evaluate the quality and impact of SSC.[8] The outcome document called upon the UN development system to assist in developing these capacities, identifying potential cooperation parts and in building multi-stakeholder partnerships.[9]

In line with this thinking, Member States have made significant progress to formalize with a variety of institutional models that have been developed in order to best address country needs and capabilities. These SSC models have had different structures ranging from specific SSC or development cooperation agencies to the establishment of national focal point platforms, to wider whole-of-society platforms.

At a regional level, organizations have also begun to develop frameworks for enhancing SSC based on the amalgamation of national experiences and data. For example, there has been the establishment of the Ibero-American Programme to Strengthen South-South Cooperation (PIFCSS) and the publication of annual SSC reports by the Ibero-American General Secretariat (SEGIB). Africa has also followed suit - the African Union (AU) recently set up the AU Development Agency (AUDA) and the first ever African SSC report was launched in 2019, supported by UNDP's Regional Service Centre for Africa. There have therefore been significant shifts towards the institutionalisation of SSC, but these efforts can continue to be systematized and enhanced.

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[6] Source: https://www.unsouthsouth.org/bapa40/documents/buenos-aires-plan-of-action/

[7] Source: Ibid.

[8] Source: https://undocs.org/en/A/73/L.80.

[9] Source: Ibid.

BAPA+40 and the Addis Ababa Action Agenda (AAAA): Establishing Integrated National Financing Frameworks (INFFs) that consider SSC and TrC

BAPA+40 recognizes the need to promote the economic, social and environmental aspects of sustainable development in pursuit of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) and notes how SSC can play a role in poverty alleviation in developing countries. The 2015 Addis Ababa Action Agenda (AAAA) is a critical document that provides a global framework for financing sustainable development in support of the SDGs by aligning financing flows and policies with economic, social and environmental policies and calling for integrated approaches to finance that are driven at national level.

It calls for the establishment of Integrated National Financing Frameworks (INFF's) to mobilize the full range of financing sources and non-financial means of implementation that are available to countries from a short, medium and longer term perspective, devise a comprehensive national financing strategy, which brings together various financing policies and instruments in an integrated manner to raise resources, manage risks, and achieve sustainable development priorities, while developing robust mechanisms to ensure effective cooperation and coordination at all levels of governments and facilitate dialogue with the private sector and other non-state actors. The AAAA firmly places SSC as a key pillar in achieving the SDGs, through technology transfer and technical assistance cooperation schemes, as well as potential trade and investment, among others. Considering SSC is a high-impact modality of international development cooperation, both financial and non-financial, and plays a pivotal role in transforming development prospects, the development of INFFs needs to take into account SSC and TrC as a core element.

UNDP uses a Development Assessment Finance tool to enable stakeholders to identify opportunities for mobilising resources and to promote the efficient use of resources to achieve the SDGs. A Development Finance Assessment Guidebook has been developed for government officials, UNDP country teams and other stakeholders that wish to engage in the DFA process, which is available at:

Link: [UNDP Research and Publications](#)

THE BENEFITS OF DEVISING AN SSC STRATEGY The development of an SSC strategy allows for the best use of available resources, that are targeted, effective and efficient. Moreover, the systematization of coherent and coordinated initiatives allows for their upscaling. Development cooperation remains an important means of building trust and enhancing regional integration. From the outset, developing countries need to consider what they see as the key reasons for developing a strategy in alignment with their national development plans.

AS A PROVIDER OF SSC, gestures of solidarity can build sustainable partnerships. Countries can also enhance their export markets for consumption by assisting other countries in their own transitions from low to middle-income status, which in turn fosters their self-reliance.

AS A RECIPIENT OF SSC/TRC, countries can attract greater foreign direct investment (FDI) and enhance the private sector. Moreover, countries can benefit from the transfer of knowledge, technology, infrastructure and skills from developing countries that may be more attuned to local conditions (such as the geography and climate), relevant for similar size markets and more appropriate for realities of middle-income consumers than northern assistance. [10]SSC can also be more cost-effective and can ensure the transfer of new and innovative technologies.

SSC for trade and investment

The United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) notes that South-South exports grew at an annual average rate of 13% between 1995 and 2016, which far outweighs the growth of world exports, which grew at 8%. FDI accounts for nearly 30% of global flows, with most of these flows going to developing countries. However, UNCTAD stresses the need for proactive policies in order to harness the potential for SSC.[a]

[a] Source: https://unctad.org/meetings/en/SessionalDocuments/tdb66_d6_en.pdf.
[10] Source: United Nations Framework Convention on Climatic Change, South-south cooperation and triangular cooperation on technologies for adaptation in the water and agriculture sectors, 2017.

3.

KEY STEPS IN DEVELOPING A SOUTH-SOUTH COOPERATION STRATEGY

As noted by BAPA+40, developing countries are encouraged to develop national policies for SSC, to strengthen the capacity of national coordination mechanisms and to develop country-led systems for data collection. A key starting element for strengthening the national enabling environment for SSC has been the development of national strategies. National SSC strategies are policies, aligned with national development plans, that aim at setting up the institutional architecture for SSC. Strategies need to consider the following six steps which are detailed below:

1. Definition of SSC/TrC to be used for the national strategy

2. Mapping and engaging the key stakeholders in SSC/TrC

3. Aligning the strategy to the country context (national priorities, vision for SSC and current status quo of partnerships)

4. Institutional architecture

5. Institutional reporting, measuring and accounting

6. Ways to scale up SSC/TrC

STEP 1:

Defining a national understanding of South-South Cooperation

The first stage in developing a national strategy is to agree on a working definition that can be refined over time. It is important to note that countries must develop their own national understandings of SSC based on the information that they gather and through engagements with multiple national stakeholders.

The United Nations Office of South-South Cooperation (UNOSSC) has broadly defined SSC as "an exchange of knowledge and resources in the political, economic, social, cultural, environmental or technical domain between developing countries. It can take place on a bilateral, sub regional, regional, or interregional basis and can involve two or more developing countries." Beyond the exchange of technical expertise and knowledge transfer, SSC now encompasses trade, foreign direct investment, efforts at regional integration and other exchanges.[11]

SSC can therefore encompass a wide range of flows among countries in the Global South. However, there is still a need to distinguish between different components of SSC, particularly with regards to the narrower category of development cooperation.

In traditional northern terms, development cooperation has been defined by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) - Development Assistance Committee (DAC) as "government aid designed to promote the economic development and welfare of developing countries." Thus, development cooperation is considered official finance. Loans and credits for military purposes are excluded. Aid may be provided bilaterally, from donor to recipient, or channelled through a multilateral development agency such as the United Nations or the World Bank. Aid includes grants, 'soft' loans (where the grant element is at least 25% of the total) and the provision of technical assistance. [12]

Therefore, trade and investment, including loans at commercial rates and export credits, should not fall into the category of development cooperation, unless this finance is explicitly offered at concessional rates. Indeed, the OECD non-concessional finance these as 'other financial flows.' [13]

[11] Source: https://www.unsouthsouth.org/about/about-sstc/.

[12] Source: https://data.oecd.org/oda/net-oda.htm.

[13] Source: https://saiia.org.za/research/towards-bapa40-challenges-in-defining-south-south-cooperation-and- development-cooperation-from-southern-powers/.

Development cooperation can therefore be distinguished as follows from the table below:

Table 1: Classification of Development Cooperation from Southern Providers [14]

	Development Cooperation	Non-Development Cooperation
TOOLS	Grants	Military aid
	Interest-free loans	Commercial lines of export
	Humanitarian assistance	Commercial export credits
	Volunteer programmes	Commercial export
	Technical cooperation	
	Other concessional loans	

It is important to also note that unofficial finance, for example from academia and civil society, would not be included as part of this development cooperation, though is an important part of SSC in the broader sense, given its focus on SSC partnerships.

UNOSSC states that Triangular Cooperation involves two or more developing countries in collaboration with a third party, typically a developed-country government or multilateral organization, contributing to the exchanges with its own knowledge and resources. [15] The three differential roles have sometimes been referred to as enabler (through financial contributions, convening power, technical support), provider/ contributor (through technical assistance, capacity building, training), and associate (as a beneficiary of programs, projects, events). [16]

The principles of SSC

There have been efforts to define certain principles of SSC, which have been enunciated in high-level conferences among developing countries. The Bandung International Conference (24 April 1955) was the first to bring together Asian and African countries to discuss means of enhancing their cooperation. Countries stressed mutual interest and respect for national sovereignty and agreed to provide support in the form of technical cooperation. [a] In 2009, the Nairobi outcome document defined principles of SSC as national sovereignty, national ownership and independence, equality, non-conditionality, non-interference in domestic affairs and mutual benefit. [b] The 2013 Delhi Conference further affirmed these principles and noted that "the modalities for SSC have taken different and evolving forms, which include capacity building, training, technology transfer and financial assistance. SSC has evolved in such a way that it is multifaceted engagement covering different areas, such as trade, investment, S&T cooperation, SMEs, trade facilitation, etc., with the potential to foster regional integration, which is a stepping stone for global integration." [c] However, there are still difficulties in developing a minimum shared understanding of SSC and in finding common ground on the measurement of SSC.

[14] Source: Ibid.

[15] Source: https://www.unsouthsouth.org/our-work/south-south-and-triangular-coordination/.

[16] Source: https://www.un.org/ecosoc/sites/www.un.org.ecosoc/files/files/en/dcf/brief%203_Triangular_cooperation_final_01_09_17.pdf.

[a] Source: http://franke.uchicago.edu/Final_Communique_Bandung_1955.pdf.

[b] Source: https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/673444.

[c] Source: https://www.un.org/en/ecosoc/newfunct/pdf13/dcf_delhi_conference_report.pdf.

STEP 2:

Mapping and Engaging Key National Stakeholders

As noted above, the working definition for SSC/TrC will need to be refined over time for the multiple stakeholders in SSC to find common ground on certain concepts. It will also be critical to engage multiple stakeholders in the collection of data. As such, the next step in developing a strategy is the undertaking of a national mapping process of ongoing SSC activities. This allows countries to evaluate who is doing what, the key modalities used and the key sectors. It also allows countries to assess the main bottlenecks that should be solved, which can form the basis of what to include in the national SSC strategy. This is being done in countries such as Cape Verde, Ethiopia and Uganda.

ETHIOPIA'S MAPPING PROCESS

Ethiopia's mapping process involved interviews with the following Ministries: Trade and Industry; Science and Education; Revenues; Finance; Peace; Mines and Petroleum; Agriculture; Culture and Tourism; Water, Energy and Irrigation; Urban Development and Construction; Women, Children and Youth; Innovation; Foreign Affairs and Education. Interviews were also conducted with the Public Enterprises, Sports and Planning and Development Commission as well as the Attorney General's office. The report contains data from all of these ministries and makes recommendations for the way forward.

Ideally, the data collected should be disaggregated according to the type of cooperation undertaken (see step 5 for further details). This information may not always be available at first, but generating awareness on what kind of data would be important to collect will facilitate the collection of data in the future.

There have been significant efforts to determine SSC concepts, strategies and data collection initiatives, and the benefits of this are clearly demonstrated. SEGIB has spent the last decade characterising, systematizing and analysing SSC data from Ibero-American countries. This has enabled SEGIB to identify the key tendencies of SSC that in turn, allows countries to better strategize on SSC. By creating annual reports, countries have improved their own data collection and reporting, which has allowed the construction of an online platform for regional SSC data.

Africa has followed suit with the launch of the first ever African report on SSC at BAPA+40, in partnership with the African Union Development Agency, SEGIB and the Islamic Development Bank (IsDB). Separately, the IsDB has also developed a reverse linkage and a technical cooperation mechanism where the IsDB member countries and Muslim communities in non-member countries, share knowledge, expertise, technology and resources to enhance their development and self-reliance. By forming these partnerships, SSC plays a major role in the attainment of the SDGs.

STEP 3:

Aligning the strategy to the country context

National SSC strategies take stock of the current country context and as such must be (a) aligned to national priorities as reflected in National Development Plans; (b) linked with the key regional and global development frameworks and processes; (c) survey existing partnerships and (d) define areas of comparative advantage.

NATIONAL PRIORITIES: An integral part of the development of an SSC strategy is the examination of existing national development plans, as well as other institutional and legal frameworks for the country. Some countries have used this approach to SSC – e.g. Kenya has mainstreamed SSC into its Medium-Term Plan (2018-2022) and Medium-Term Expenditure Framework (2019/2020-2021/2022).

LINKING TO REGIONAL AND GLOBAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORKS: Developing an SSC strategy means necessarily aligning South-South thematic/sector based priorities with national priorities, from the perspective of reflecting on what the key thematic areas are going to be with whom the country will partner – being an active partner, sharing its good practices, or receiving the expertise and know-how from its peers. The approach is that SSC needs to ensure vertical integration, further aligning the priorities at national to sub-regional, regional and global frameworks. For example, the Agenda 2063 M&E framework states that the implementation of Agenda 2063 should be anchored on national policy instruments.[17] It also makes provision for the alignment with the SDGs.

SURVEYING EXISTING PARTNERSHIPS: Strategies should survey the current status quo regarding existing partnerships. This allows for an examination of existing partnerships and affiliations that can then be used as opportunities for scaling up SSC initiatives. It is important to look at Memorandum of Understandings (MOUs) with international partners as these agreements are the legal basis for SSC engagements and give legitimacy to any activities. Strategies should look at partnerships that exist within:

- The Ministry of Foreign Affairs.
- Trade ministries/investment agencies.
- Sector-based ministries.
- Municipalities, trade unions and universities (for countries wishing to decentralize SSC)

BOTSWANA'S NATIONAL PRIORITIES

Botswana's SSC strategy is based on its National Development Plan (NDP 2017-2023) and Vision 2036. It takes cognizance of other frameworks under development, including the National Transformation Strategy, district and urban development plans, and the draft National Strategy for Sustainable Development. It also examines seven cluster areas, in which Botswana considers itself to have a comparative advantage:
Beef, tourism, diamond beneficiation, mining, small stock, financial services, good governance and democracy. The strategy is aligned to the African Union (AU) and Southern African Development Community (SADC) frameworks.

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[17] Source: African Union, Agenda 2036 First Ten-Year Implementation Plan 2013-2023, Draft M&E framework.

DEFINING AREAS OF COMPARATIVE ADVANTAGE FOR THE PROVISION OF SSC: As countries move from being recipients to providers of SSC, it is important to examine the areas in which countries see their comparative advantages and ways in which these can be scaled up along the value chain. These areas of comparative advantage can sometimes be found in national action plans and can be further backed up by analysing global rankings in different thematic areas or examining previously successful initiatives. This identification should then form the starting point for the thematic areas where SSC projects can be featured and shared with other countries for potential matchmaking. As countries begin to monitor and evaluate their SSC activities, they can further refine their engagements based on what has worked.

In addition, as recommended by the BAPA+40 outcome document it is important to develop administrative and legal arrangements on entry, employment, obligations and privileges of SSC experts and consultants. The creation of regional governance mechanisms within regional institutions can also drive uniformed technical standards on procurement, trade rules, fiscal and currency regimes that could promote SSC/TrC. In this regard, Africa has made significant progress through the African Continental Free Trade Area (ACFTA) agreement. It is also recommended that countries provide support to regional institutions for the development of common positions on key development opportunities.
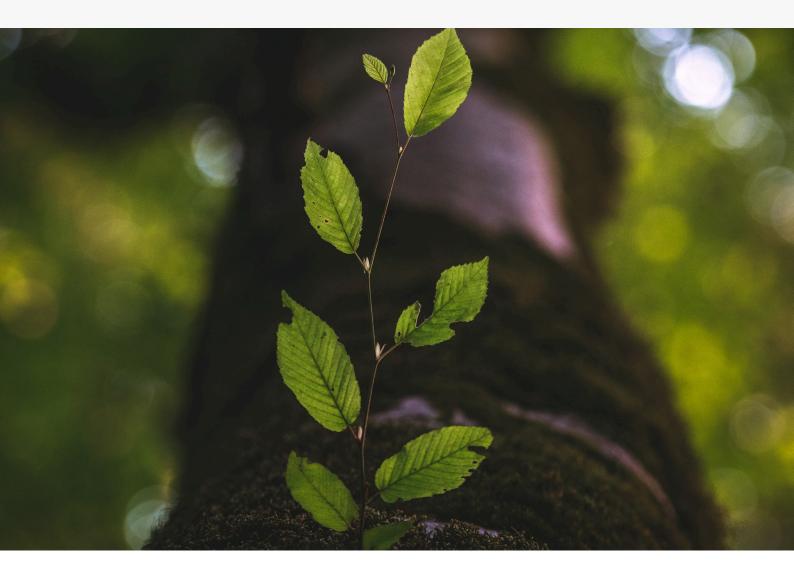
STEP 4:

Establishing the National Architecture for South-South Cooperation

ANCHORING THE SSC BROADER ARCHITECTURE

Developing an SSC strategy means determining where SSC should be located within government structures, means of institutional reporting, the establishment of knowledge management structures and developing ways of evaluating the effectiveness of the strategy. This should be detailed in the country's SSC strategy, as policies can pave the way for an institutional setting. By developing these frameworks and mechanisms, countries can encourage the establishment of network and platforms of SSC focal points for national level dialogue on SSC, to ensure coherence at the highest level and maximize its opportunity. The countries can also identify and promote their role an as active SSC partners, such as carrying out training on SSC in relevant institutions, identifying specialists to facilitate activities abroad, establishing a coordination unit that can facilitate the sending technical personnel for working abroad, enhancing cooperation among different organizations and granting of fellowships/apprenticeships for international students from other countries.

DETERMINING THE BEST INSTITUTIONAL MODEL

There are a variety of options to consider in terms of institutional location for SSC, which are detailed below.

OPTION 1: SSC AS AN EXTENSION OF AID EFFECTIVENESS

As previously noted, traditional efforts to manage the effectiveness of development cooperation have been driven by the OCED-DAC. The OECD-DAC also primarily refers to providers of aid (and therefore mainly comprises northern donors), whereas southern countries see themselves as development partners, and as both recipients and providers of assistance. However, some countries have existing aid effectiveness structures to manage incoming aid and have used this structure to add a specific focus on SSC.

OPTION 2: ESTABLISHING AN SSC AGENCY

Some countries that have adequate resources have developed stand-alone agencies that deal specifically with SSC, rather than units located within a government ministry. These agencies work in collaboration across government ministries. Such efforts have particularly been seen in North Africa, including the Egyptian Agency of Partnership for Development (EAPD), the Moroccan Agency for International Cooperation (AMCI) and the Tunisian Agency for Technical Cooperation (ATCT).

OPTION 3: SSC UNITS

One option that is widely used for institutionalising SSC is to place SSC units within existing government departments. Countries such as Djibouti and Côte d'Ivoire have decided to place their SSC units within their Ministries of Foreign Affairs whereas others have located their units within their Ministries of Finance. These are often placed under departments involved in planning and/or monitoring and evaluation.

MADAGASCAR'S AID DATABASE

Madagascar's Secretariat Technique Permanent Pour La Coordination De L'aide was created in 2008 to effectively coordinate external aid. It manages the national aid database on official development assistance and SSC has been added as a separate field of data to be collected. The platform is supervised by the Prime Minister and information is gathered by the various Ministries.[a]

THE RWANDA COOPERATION INITIATIVE

As Rwanda's model, the Rwanda Cooperation Initiative is a public company coordinating various SSC exchanges. It is attached to Ministry of Foreign Affairs, but the shareholder is the Ministry of Finance and it coordinates with the Rwanda Governance Board (RGB), the Ministry of Defence and the Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning.[b]

KENYA'S SSC UNIT

In Kenya, the SSC Unit is under the National Treasury and Planning, which is the state department for planning under the Macroeconomic and Regional Economic Directorate.[c]

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[a] Source: http://www.stpca-primature.gov.mg/.
[b] Source: http://rci.rw/.
[c] Source: https://www.treasury.go.ke/budget-fiscal-economic-affairs.html

DEVELOPING A SYSTEM OF FOCAL POINTS OR CROSS-MINISTERIAL SOUTH-SOUTH PLATFORMS

Because of the multisectoral nature of SSC, it is important to create a national network of focal points across the diverse range of government ministries and sectors. This network should then create a multi-stakeholder platform to discuss national priorities for SSC and to strategize on ways of scaling up SSC. It may be prudent to establish sectoral working groups to discuss certain thematic areas that feed into an overarching platform. Ideally, there should be engagements with academia and civil society, as affirmed by the BAPA+40 outcome document which emphasizes the importance of multiple stakeholders in SSC/TrC. Since many countries have also set up committees to monitor the implementation of the SDGs, which is also cross-sectoral, the leading government unit could consider building on these structures for SSC/TrC.

IDENTIFYING RESEARCH CENTRES

BAPA+40 outcome document welcomes centres of excellence as South-South platforms for sharing experiences across sub-regional and regional groupings in order to build multi-stakeholder partnerships and cross-border collaborative frameworks to scale up good practices. It also calls for continued support from developed countries and the UN in supporting these centres. The IsDB is one institution that is currently carrying out the mapping of research centres and is now collaborating with UNDP to carry out a joint mapping in Nigeria. Governments should identify if they have any relevant research centres for scaling up SSC/TrC and examine ways to include this in their strategy and in the future.

ETHIOPIA'S NETWORK OF FOCAL POINTS

Ethiopia has established a four-member ad-hoc committee in Ministry of Finance and Economic Cooperation (MoFEC) which gathers data from 27 ministerial offices and the Chamber of Commerce (an umbrella organization of more than 500 private sector organizations in the country). [a]

JAPAN'S SUPPORT TO CENTRES OF EXCELLENCE

Japan's International Cooperation Agency (JICA) has provided support to centres of excellence which has enabled technical cooperation projects in their respective regions. This has included, for example, the Asia-Pacific Development Center on Disability in Thailand; the National Center for Disaster Prevention in Mexico, which provided support to El Salvador; and the Sivas Police Training Center in Turkey that has trained Afghan female police officers through Japanese support. [b]

[a] Source: http://www.mofed.gov.et/
[b] Source: https://www.jica.go.jp/activities/issues/ssc/ku57pq00001wlrnp-att/pamphlet_en_01.pdf.

STEP 5:

Institutional reporting, measuring and accounting

In order to monitor the effectiveness of SSC and the contribution this gives to achieving national development plans, as well as the attainment of the SDGs, it is necessary to put in place tracking systems that are guided by SSC principles and to look at the process-related elements of SSC partnerships. As the data collection process develops, countries will become more empowered to collect data on performance measures. Such efforts should be detailed in an SSC strategy that provides clear guidance for implementation.

REPORTING As has been mentioned above, there have been differences over how SSC should be measured. At a regional and global level, debates are ongoing as to whether reporting can and should be harmonized and if there should be a clear measure for South-South Development Cooperation.[18] At a national level, governments must use a working definition on the scope of South-South and Triangular Cooperation and use these parameters for data collection. Data should be disaggregated so that countries can monitor and contribute to global debates on development measures while developing a whole of government stance on its own definition of development cooperation. Definitions are essential if governments wish to make their SSC more strategic and effective.

For specific projects it will be necessary to have a blend of quantitative and qualitative reporting. Quantitatively, this will include budgets, time lengths, numbers of trainings and so on. Importantly, any reporting structure should be anchored in the Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) systems created to monitor national development plans and linked to SDG planning and monitoring processes, including the Voluntary National Review (VNR)conducted by countries. These reviews form the basis of regular SDG reviews which are conducted at the High-Level Political Forum (HLPF), held under the auspices of the UN's Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), on an annual basis. [19]

It is recommended that the collection of SSC information be updated on a quarterly basis, that would allow for more analytical quarterly, bi-annual and annual reports. The collection of qualitative information will also be necessary to allow for analysis, monitoring and evaluation. Analytical reports should first analyse this data to see where projects are being well-implemented and can be improved.

However, they should also go beyond this data and specify:
1. Relevant MOUs and changes in MOUs signed with specific countries
2. Priority interests of partner countries
3. Changes in sub-regional and regional SSC/TrC initiatives
4. Additional SSC/TrC opportunities beyond regional organizations including multilaterals, donors and the UN
5. New possible development partners. It will be important that these reports are shared widely with all relevant partners.

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[18] Source: https://unctad.org/en/PublicationsLibrary/ser-rp-2019d2_en.pdf.
[19] Source: https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/vnrs/.

The UNDP reporting template

UNDP has created a template to collect a baseline of SSC/TrC activities with the following categories:

Capturing the data os SSC initiatives										
Reporting country:	Form of SSC	Cooperation Type	Sharing country:	Sharing partner	Host Country	Host partner	Title of the initiative	Obejective	SDGs	
Selelect from list	Selelect from list	Selelect from list	Selelect from list	Selelect from list	Selelect from list	Selelect from list	Selelect from list	Selelect from list	Selelect from list	
Benin Botswana Cameroon Cote d'voire Djibouti Equatorial Guinee Ethiopia Gabon	∧ ∨									

The spreadsheet should contain contributions from the focal points of different government ministries, and ideally with contributions from civil society and businesses as well. It should be amalgamated by the overarching SSC focal point/agency/unit.

MONITORING AND ACCOUNTING: Monitoring and accounting/evaluation (M&E) is a fundamental imperative to ensure that SSC/TrC initiatives have a tangible effect in terms of promoting development. This is done by ensuring their effectiveness and impact. An M&E framework reinforces a culture of planning and managing for results; and fosters value-for-money in resource allocation and use.[20] This is because it allows for evidence-based learning and analysis that can inform policies and programmes. It also enhances a culture of accountability and shared responsibility among the various participants and stakeholders, as well as their alignment and coherence.[21]

Importantly, any reporting structure should be anchored in the M&E systems created to monitor national development plans and linked to the SDG planning and monitoring processes, including the Voluntary National Review (VNR) conducted by countries. These reviews form the basis of regular SDG reviews which are conducted at the High-Level Political Forum (HLPF), held under the auspices of the UN's Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), on an annual basis. [22] Qualitative examples could then be used to illustrate the effectiveness of SSC.

In line with current efforts at M&E, it would be wise for the countries to develop monitoring and evaluation systems that use a theory of change (i.e. why a desired change will happen in a particular context. Ultimately, the project will also have to look at outcomes – the measurement of the impact that a project has had. In order to ascertain this, a project will have to specify objectives (achievement goals), outputs (activity results) and inputs. The theory of change will examine how the objectives are influenced by outputs as a result of activities.

A good M&E framework will also identify potential risks posed to each project that will allow for risk contingency planning and corrective action. There are also questions over who information should be provided to. Some have argued that SSC projects are accountable to the recipient government or the development partners involved.[23]

If better information was available in recipient countries on SSC projects, then providers would arguably enhance their reputation and support. TrC projects involve an extra layer of accountability, i.e. the developed country providing the support would want to ensure that it is effective.

DETERMINING MEXICO'S EVALUATION POLICY

In 2014, the Mexican Agency for International Development Cooperation (AMEXCID) developed a strategy to help shape its evaluation policy. AMEXCID organized pilot evaluations and experience exchanges between partner agencies. The pilots were designed to evaluate management processes, quality of services and products, as well as relevance and results.

The final report can be found at:

https://https://www.gob.mx

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[20] Source: Agenda 2063 Draft M&E framework.
[21] Source: Ibid.
[22] Source: https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/vnrs/.
[23] Source: Mariella di Ciommo, Approaches to measuring and monitoring South–South cooperation, February 2017.

IMPLEMENTATION

An SSC strategy will also require outlining the means of its implementation. This requires matching outcomes, outputs and activities to timelines and making cost estimates of activities. The implementation plan should be initially short-medium term and reviewed when possible.

It will also be important to keep a focus on awareness raising through a variety of activities, including explanatory workshops, press releases, outreach social media. There will be a need to consider how to upscale SSC in the future, based on a continued stocktaking and analysis. This will include a greater debate among stakeholders on changing needs and priorities, a reflection on the utility and effectiveness of a flexible SSC/TrC fund, and an SSC/TrC strategy for the years to come.

FINANCING

In order to effectively implement an SSC strategy, countries will have to determine a domestic resource mobilization and financing strategy. This should involve a wide range of stakeholders and consider a blend of public and private finance. The strategy will have to make allowances for the budget decision-making process, and tie this into the envisaged activities. One option is to consider the establishment on an SSC fund that can be flexible as priorities shift.

LINKAGE WITH SDG REPORTING MECHANISMS

Many countries are in the process of developing SDG reporting mechanisms and conducting NVRs of their achieved SDGs. Where possible, countries should record how SSC engagements feed into achieving the SDGs. Recorded SSC data should also feed into SDG reporting mechanisms, both qualitatively and quantitively, such as linking to statistical SDG reports and showcasing innovative and transformative case studies.

The NeST Framework for measuring the quality of SSC

Building on the Nairobi principles[a] mentioned earlier, there have been efforts to measure the quality of SSC/TrC. The Network of Southern Think Tanks (NeST), a forum of academics and think tanks from south regions, on measuring the quality of SSC based on agreed SSC principles. These principles, and the NeST indicators can be used as a rough guide for Member States in developing quality projects. SSC/TrC projects should consider the partner countries' national priorities, carry out projects in a demand-driven way and enable the partner country to become self-reliant. However, these principles should not be used exhaustively.[b]

[a] Source: https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/673444.
[b] Source: https://saiia.org.za/research/a-monitoring-and-evaluation-framework-for-south-south-cooperation/.

Step 6:

Scaling up SSC/TrC

An SSC strategy should outline ways in which a country can scale up SSC/TrC in order to provide guidance for the relevant stakeholders. Ways in which this can be done are detailed below.

DEEPENING PARTNERSHIPS Having developed an implementation plan and M&E system for implementation of an SSC strategy, national governments can begin to become more strategic in their efforts by surveying the status quo and seeing new areas for engagement. One primary way of doing this is to consider how national efforts can feed into sub-regional, regional and global efforts. This can be done by examining strategies, mandates frameworks of these organizations for alignment with national priorities. Should priorities align, the countries can then consider how to make use of these organizations to extend their assistance beyond bilateral initiatives, and to explore ways of cost-sharing, making use of existing funds and bringing-in TrC partners and/or additional donors.

National governments should analyse their existing key country partners, including those from the Global South and Global North. Existing MOUs should also be considered as well as their implementation and reasons why they have or have not been effectively implemented, as well as SSC strategies that these partners may have developed. Possibly partners from the Global North having specific interests matching bilateral southern partnerships and may be willing to consider providing funding for triangular projects in the future.

It will also be important to consistently redefine priority areas for country partners as to continue matching these to priorities in constant evolution.

ENHANCING LEGAL FRAMEWORKS TO FACILITATE PARTNERSHIPS As detailed in BAPA+40 outcome document, countries should consider enhancing their legal frameworks to facilitate SSC/TrC and Member States are encouraged to share their knowledge, experience and good practices on public-private partnerships including risk assessment, and regulatory frameworks.

Countries should also establish cross-border collaborative frameworks, including through regional and sub-regional organizations.

ORGANISING NATIONAL MATCH-MAKING FAIRS Countries should consider holding national match-making fairs to facilitate horizontal knowledge exchanges. They could showcase their good practices in becoming providers of development cooperation to peer countries, as well as donors and potential triangular partners. Countries could consider seeking support from organizations such as UNDP, which has already facilitated numerous successful match-making events.

EXPLORING NEW PARTNERS Leading government entities should explore new markets by clearly sharing their strategy and priority areas with their embassies in other countries' embassies for potential matches on new priority areas with partners. As mentioned earlier, the IDB has begun to provide support to research centres and the exchange of development solutions. In addition, several UN agencies, including UNDP, FAO, UNICEF and WFP, have now begun to mainstream SSC/TrC in their strategies and there are also opportunities to strengthen partnerships.

UNDP'S RENEWED OFFER FOR SSC

UNDP's strategic plan gives the agency the mandate to serve as the operational branch of the work on SSC. UNDP has extensive country presence and works in more than 170 countries to develop country-led exchanges, partnerships, financing and transfer of expertise.

UNDP's six signature solutions focus on the SDGs implementation through keeping people out of poverty, strengthening governance, enhancing crisis prevention and recovery, promoting nature-based solutions for development, closing the energy gap and advancing gender equality. UNDP has worked with country offices to use and develop them as centres of excellence, to become global drivers, connectors and knowledge hubs for SSC/TrC. UNDP has now an emerging network of up to 50 Country Support Platforms and 60 Country Accelerator Labs which are used to scale up SSC, where UNDP works as an integrator. [24]

UNDP offers support in creating an enabling environment at country and regional level for SSC by assisting with policies; financing and investment strategies; legal and administrative frameworks; and regulations to facilitate engagement around development solutions. It can also assist in developing institutional capacities, tracking M&E systems and facilitating relationships.

UNDP also promotes southern development solutions and exchanges. In this regard, it brings to the fore local solutions that work in different contexts, ensues country platforms are operationalized and supports the systematic knowledge codification of southern development solutions. UNDP has created the SS Mart[25] and the African Solutions Platform [26] which will be linked to other South-South knowledge repositories and the UNOSSC-led South-South Galaxy (SS Galaxy), which intends to be a 'one-stop-shop' for the UN system.[27]

National governments should engage more deeply with partners such as UNDP and also begin to explore thematic platforms, such as the Climate Technology Centre and Network (CTCN), the operational arm of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) Technology Mechanism, hosted by the UN Environment Programme (UNEP) and the UN Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO).

The IsDB: A key facilitator of SSC

The Islamic Development Bank (IsDB) is a key stakeholder that has been providing support to research centres and the exchange of development solutions. It has also developed a reverse linkage mechanism, a technical cooperation mechanism where the IsDB member countries and Muslim communities in non-member countries, share knowledge, expertise, technology and resources to enhance their development and self-reliance.[a]

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[24] Source: Ibid.
[25] Source: http://global-ssmart.org/.
[26] Source: http://africa.southsouthworld.org/.
[27] Source: https://news.un.org/en/story/2019/03/1035001.
[a] Source: https://www.isdb.org/sites/default/files/media/documents/2019-03/RL%20Policy.pdf.

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CONCLUSION

Developing an SSC strategy and implementation plan is a good start to scaling up SSC/TrC. As these become further institutionalized, national governments can generate greater awareness and visibility as to their activities and scale these up with support from a variety of partners. As SSC grows, countries can contribute to regional discussions on subjects that will further enhance a southern agenda and increase southern voices in global agendas. SSC can be a means of achieving national priorities and the 2030 Agenda. But for this to happen the countries and leading government entities must be efficient and strategic.

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS