



Concept Note for Panellists

Financing the SDGs Dialogue: Advancing Country-Led Approaches

Panel 3: Maintaining a Focus on Country Leadership: Development Cooperation after Sevilla

Date and time	Tuesday 27 October 2026, 12:30–13:30
Location	Hotel Meliá – Avenida América
Organisers	Government of Spain - UNDP
In-person registration	Link
Livestream link	Webinar Registration - Zoom

Background

Financing the SDGs Dialogue 2026: Advancing Country-Led Approaches to Financing Sustainable Development will take place in Madrid, Spain, hosted by the UNDP Sustainable Finance Hub together with the Government of Spain.

The **Sevilla Commitment** responds to a development and financing landscape undergoing profound change. Tighter public budgets, intensifying geopolitical competition, growing conflict, pressure on multilateralism and persistent financing gaps are reshaping the context in which development cooperation operates and raising fundamental questions about its future role, instruments and partnerships.

At the same time, the development financing ecosystem is becoming more diverse. Traditional development cooperation increasingly sits alongside South-South and triangular cooperation, decentralised cooperation, multilateral development banks, development finance institutions,



philanthropic capital, private investment, technology and knowledge partnerships. These shifts create new opportunities to mobilise a broader range of resources, capabilities and partnerships for sustainable development, while also increasing the risk of fragmentation and coordination burdens for countries.

The Sevilla Commitment reflects this changing landscape by placing renewed emphasis on country ownership and leadership, stronger national systems, improved coordination and more effective use of the full range of public, private, domestic and international finance. In this context, development cooperation has a role that goes beyond the provision of concessional resources, including supporting institutional capacity, knowledge and innovation, developing pipelines, sharing and mitigating risk, and helping countries connect with a wider set of financing partners.

Against this backdrop, the session will explore how development cooperation is evolving in response to a fundamentally changed context, what new forms of cooperation and financing partnership are emerging, and how this broader ecosystem can be organised more coherently around country-defined priorities.

Positioning within the Dialogue

Thematic area / sector	<i>Development cooperation</i>
Related SPA initiative(s)	<i>N/A</i>

Objectives

The primary objectives of this session include:

- Explore how the changing development cooperation landscape recognised in the Sevilla Commitment is reshaping the role, instruments and partnerships of development cooperation.
- Examine how South-South and triangular cooperation, decentralised cooperation, development finance institutions, philanthropy and private sector partnerships are contributing to a more diverse development financing ecosystem.



- Consider how development cooperation can better catalyse, mobilise and align public, private, domestic and international finance around nationally defined priorities.
- Discuss how development and finance institutions can collaborate more systematically to advance country leadership, strengthen national systems and reduce fragmentation in line with the Sevilla Commitment.

Proposed Speakers

- **Retselisitsoe Adelaide Matlanyane**, Minister of Finance and Development Planning, Lesotho
- **Martin Francos Rodriguez**, Vice Minister, Ministry of Finance, Dominican Republic.
- **Elijah G. Mwandumba**, Deputy Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Finance
- **Sergio Colina Martin**, Director-General for Sustainable Development Policies, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, European Union and Cooperation, Spain
- **Andrea Costafreda**, Director-General for Development Cooperation, Government of Catalonia, Spain

Moderator: Marcos Neto, Assistant Secretary-General, United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)

Guiding Questions

Round 1 – Introduction. Perspectives on the changing development cooperation landscape (5 minutes per panellist). In the context of tighter public budgets and a more diverse financing ecosystem, how should development cooperation evolve to support national priorities, and where can it add the greatest value beyond traditional aid?

- **Retselisitsoe Adelaide Matlanyane (Lesotho)** From Lesotho's perspective, what are the main challenges in mobilising and aligning financing with national priorities, and where can international development cooperation add the greatest value while strengthening country leadership?



- **Martín Francos (Dominican Republic):** How can development cooperation help advance trade and private sector development, and what lessons can be drawn from the Dominican Republic's experience?
- **Elijah G. Mwandumba (Tanzania):** As Deputy Permanent Secretary for Economic Management, you have helped Tanzania move from designing its integrated financing strategy to implementing it. What are the main challenges in turning national priorities into financed projects, and where can development cooperation add the most value?
- **Sergio Colina Martin (Spain)** As Spain expands its development cooperation while other providers face budget reductions, what opportunities and challenges do you see for Spanish cooperation?
- **Andrea Costafreda (Government of Catalonia, Spain)** Where can decentralised cooperation add distinctive value through territorial expertise and local partnerships, while remaining aligned with country and local priorities?

Round 2 – From Sevilla to practical country leadership (2 minutes per panellist). What one concrete change in the way development and financing partners work would better align support with country priorities, strengthen national systems and reduce fragmentation?

- **Andrea Costafreda (Government of Catalonia, Spain):** What practical contribution can decentralised cooperation make to implementing the Sevilla Commitment and strengthening coordination around country-led strategies?
- **Sergio Colina Martin (Spain):** How is Spanish development cooperation currently ensuring country ownership and coordination with other partners?
- **Elijah G. Mwandumba (Tanzania):** If you could ask development and financing partners to make one practical change after Sevilla to strengthen Tanzania's development finance and reduce fragmented support, what would it be?
- **Martín Francos (Dominican Republic):** What is one concrete change development partners could make to better support trade and private investment in line with national priorities?
- **Retselisitsoe Adelaide Matlanyane (Lesotho)** If you could ask international development and financing partners to make one practical change after Sevilla to strengthen Lesotho's leadership and reduce fragmented support, what would it be?



Proposed Agenda

60 minutes – five panellists, two rounds of interventions, moderated exchange and audience discussion.

Time	Session	Speakers
5 min	Opening and framing. Introduce the Sevilla Commitment, the changing cooperation and development-financing landscape, and the central role of country-defined priorities. Includes brief speaker introductions.	Moderator
25 min	Round 1 – Country perspectives on the changing development cooperation landscape. Each panellist has 5 minutes to respond to a tailored question on country priorities, the evolving role of development cooperation and where it can add the most value.	Five panellists (5 min each)
2 min	Moderator bridge. Highlight connections and tensions emerging from Round 1 and introduce the practical focus of Round 2.	Moderator
10 min	Round 2 – From Sevilla to practical country leadership. Each panellist has 2 minutes to identify one concrete change that would align cooperation and financing with nationally defined priorities and reduce fragmentation.	Five panellists (2 min each)
15 min	Exchange with the room. Selected short interventions and responses focused on practical country-led cooperation and financing (if time allows).	Audience and panellists
5 min	Closing takeaways. Summarise actionable implications for country-led development cooperation and financing after Sevilla.	Moderator

Participants (audience)

- Senior government representatives from ministries responsible for foreign affairs, finance, planning, economy and development cooperation.
- Heads and senior officials of bilateral and multilateral agencies, including providers of South-South and triangular cooperation.
- Representatives of multilateral development banks, development finance institutions and other public and private financial institutions.



- Representatives of foundations, philanthropic organisations, the private sector and investment partners.
- UN leadership, other international organisations, Sevilla Platform for Action initiatives and relevant partnerships.
- Technical practitioners, academics, think tanks and civil society experts in development cooperation and development finance.