

GLOBAL SOUTH-SOUTH DEVELOPMENT EXPO 2017

South-South Cooperation in the Era of Economic, Social and Environmental Transformation: Road to the 40th Anniversary of the Adoption of the Buenos Aires Plan of Action (BAPA+40)

27-30 November 2017

Antalya, Turkey

(Concept Note – draft 1.15 1 Sept 2017)

I. The Global Development Context

The world is in a period of economic, social and environmental transformation. At the global level, in 2015 the international community agreed on the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The 2030 Agenda, with its 17 goals and 169 targets, builds on and expands the Millennium Development Goals, which had guided international development cooperation since the year 2000. It is the most ambitious, far-reaching development agenda ever negotiated.

Recent years have also seen agreement on a number of complementary development frameworks. These include the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030, the Addis Ababa Action Agenda of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development, the Agenda for Humanity, and the Paris Agreement. In these complementary development frameworks, Member States have continued to emphasize the importance of South-South and triangular cooperation for action.¹

Additionally, countries and regions are developing their own strategies, plans and cooperation initiatives to facilitate sustainable development. Examples include the Belt and Road Initiative championed by China, Agenda 2063 of the African Union, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) Community Vision 2025, and the Initiative for the Integration of Regional Infrastructure in South America. In his remarks at the Belt and Road Forum for International Cooperation in May 2017, United Nations Secretary-General António Guterres stressed the importance of strengthening linkages between these strategies and the 2030 Agenda to develop a shared vision for global development.

Taken together and working in concert, these agreements and strategies strengthen each other and pave the way towards eliminating all forms of poverty and creating the equitable, peaceful, prosperous and sustainable future that we want.

II. The Changing Global Landscape

The global landscape has shifted significantly in recent decades. Since the 1990s, the world has seen important economic and demographic changes, a rise in global conflict and refugee flows, and rapid advancement in the availability and use of digital technologies. These developments

¹ United Nations Secretary-General (2017). Secretary-General's remarks at the opening of the Belt and Road Forum [as delivered]. Available from <https://www.un.org/sg/en/content/sg/statement/2017-05-14/secretary-general%E2%80%99s-remarks-opening-belt-and-road-forum-delivered>. Accessed 19 July 2017.

have fundamentally changed the way that populations live, work, connect and socialize. They offer new challenges but also provide new opportunities for human development.

Overview

The global community has made noteworthy advances in human development over the past few decades. In 1990, nearly half the global population in the developing world lived on less than \$1.25 per day. That proportion dropped to 14 per cent in 2015. Rapid, significant advances have also been noted in areas such as improving literacy rates, achieving gender equality and reducing child mortality.²

These achievements have occurred alongside rapid demographic changes. The world now has the largest-ever generation of young people. Adolescents and youth, those people between 10 and 24 years of age, accounted for 28 per cent of the global population in 2010. Many of them are concentrated in developing countries.³ At the same time, advances in health and technology mean that the world is getting older. People over the age of 60 are the world's fastest-growing age group. The number of older persons increased from 490 million in 1990 to 765 million in 2010.⁴

General population trends mask considerable differences between countries. The world's least developed countries (LDCs) continue to have high fertility rates; according to some predictions, the population of the LDCs will double by 2050. On the other hand, high-income and rising-income countries are experiencing slow or no population growth.⁵

In addition, there have been significant changes in the composition of the global economy. Countries of the South now account for 40 per cent of world gross domestic product (GDP), which is estimated to rise to 55 per cent by 2025. South-South trade as a share of world merchandise rose from 8.1 per cent to 26.7 per cent between 1980 and 2011.⁶ The rise of Southern countries as global economic players can be seen in numerous examples, such as:

- the recent launches of the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank and the New Development Bank, both Southern-led financing institutions, each with \$100 billion in initial capital;
- the Islamic Development Bank more than tripling its authorized capital to approximately \$150 billion in 2013, reflecting the growing economic clout of its 56 member countries; and

² United Nations (2015). *The Millennium Development Goals Report 2015*. Available from [http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/2015_MDG_Report/pdf/MDG%202015%20rev%20\(July%2015\).pdf](http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/2015_MDG_Report/pdf/MDG%202015%20rev%20(July%2015).pdf). Accessed 24 July 2017.

³ Office of the Secretary-General's Envoy on Youth (2015). "10 things you didn't know about the world's population". Available from <http://www.un.org/youthenvoy/2015/04/10-things-didnt-know-worlds-population/>. Accessed 20 July 2017.

⁴ United Nations Population Fund (2014). "How Has the World Changed in the Last 30 Years?" 7 April 2014. Available from <http://www.unfpa.org/news/how-has-world-changed-last-20-years>. Accessed 24 July 2017.

⁵ Ibid. (2017). "World population trends". Available from <http://www.unfpa.org/world-population-trends>. Accessed 24 July 2017.

⁶ United Nations Development Programme (2013). *Human Development Report 2013: the Rise of the South – Human Progress in a Diverse World*. New York: United Nations Development Programme.

- the pledge by Turkey of \$200 million annually to support development in the LDCs as well as its offer to host the Technology Bank for the LDCs, as called for in the Istanbul Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2011-2020.⁷

The global economy has also seen a significant shift in the types of products being created and traded. As a result of the “third industrial revolution”, there has been a rapid increase in the availability of cost-effective data and technology. In fact, flows in data now account for a larger share of increased world gross domestic product (GDP) than global trade in goods.⁸ It is predicted that the “digital universe”, referring to the data created and replicated each year, will reach 180 zettabytes (180 followed by 21 zeros) by 2025.⁹

New and Emerging Challenges

These changes to the global landscape have resulted in new and emerging challenges that will need to be addressed in the coming decades. Failure to address them may result in halting or even reversing recent gains in human development.

There are a number of challenges relating to global demographic changes, for example. As populations age, many countries will struggle with supporting this growing group, including providing access to employment, social protection and age-appropriate health services.

At the same time, countries will need to ensure that youth populations have access to productive employment opportunities. It has been estimated that nearly 500 million new jobs will need to be created by 2020 to provide opportunities for those currently unemployed and for young people entering the workforce.¹⁰ This situation will be exacerbated by the technological revolution. As the development of automation and artificial intelligence continues, it is likely that machines will come to replace workers across a wide range of industries, with a disproportionate impact on low-skilled workers. If the global community fails to effectively engage youth and address their unique needs, this failure has the potential to lead to increased violence, instability, unrest and migration.

Growing global inequality is already threatening to undermine development achievements. According to a report released by Oxfam, 62 billionaires hold the same amount of wealth as the

⁷ United Nations (2011). Istanbul Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2011-2020 (document A/CONF.219/3/Rev.1). Available from www.undocs.org/A/CONF.219/3/Rev.1. Accessed 14 July 2017.

⁸ McKinsey Global Institute (2016). *Digital Globalization: The New Era of Global Flows*. Available from <http://www.mckinsey.com/business-functions/digital-mckinsey/our-insights/digital-globalization-the-new-era-of-global-flows>. Accessed 10 July 2017.

⁹ *The Economist* (2017). *Fuel of the Future: Data is Giving Rise to a New Economy*. Available from <https://www.economist.com/news/briefing/21721634-how-it-shaping-up-data-giving-rise-new-economy>. Accessed 10 July 2017.

¹⁰ Hunt, R. (2016). *World Economic Forum Blog: What are the 10 Biggest Global Challenges?* Available from <https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2016/01/what-are-the-10-biggest-global-challenges/>. Accessed 24 July 2017.

3.5 billion people who make up the poorest half of the world population. This number has fallen from 388 people in 2010 and is predicted to shrink further by 2020.¹¹

Recent years have also seen an increase in the impact of armed conflicts. More than 1.5 billion people now live in countries affected by fragility and violent conflict. More violent conflicts lead to increased refugee flows. By the end of 2014, there were 59.5 million displaced people, the highest number on record.¹²

Furthermore, the international community will need to mitigate and adapt to climate change, which will likely lead to shifts in agricultural production, expansion of disease-carrying vectors, and more frequent and severe extreme weather events. As just one example, by 2050, demand for food will be 60 per cent greater than it is today, requiring agricultural sectors to become more sustainable and productive.¹³

Opportunities for Development

While global transformations are creating new challenges, they also have enormous potential for development. It is vital that the global community discuss how best to leverage these changes towards the achievement of the 2030 Agenda.

Demographic changes, for example, hold great potential. Educated, healthy, employed and civically engaged youth drive economic growth, democracy and prosperity. Many countries of the South, in particular those in Africa, will be able to take advantage of this demographic dividend to propel economic growth.

Increasingly, there are calls to rethink how the international community addresses armed conflict and humanitarian situations. Although levels of humanitarian aid have been growing, humanitarian needs grow faster, resulting in a widening gap; more often than not, however, funding is focused on addressing the impact of crises rather than prevention efforts. Secretary-General António Guterres has highlighted the importance of recognizing the links between sustainable development, peacebuilding and humanitarian assistance and has stressed the need to focus on prevention.

Finally, the rise in the availability of data, data analysis tools and cost-effective technology has the potential to inform and empower decision makers in governments, development organizations, non-governmental organizations and the private sector. Data solutions and analytics are already being used to drive tourism, contribute to smart city planning, monitor the tax revenue base, and increase the efficiency of public financial management. Examples include the following:

¹¹ Oxfam International (2016). *210 Oxfam Briefing Paper: An Economy for the 1%*. Available from https://www.oxfam.org/sites/www.oxfam.org/files/file_attachments/bp210-economy-one-percent-tax-havens-180116-en_0.pdf. Accessed 24 July 2017.

¹² Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (2015) *Worldwide Displacement Hits All-Time High As War and Persecution Increase*. Available from: <http://www.unhcr.org/en-us/news/latest/2015/6/558193896/worldwide-displacement-hits-all-time-high-war-persecution-increase.html>. Accessed 24 July 2017.

¹³ Hunt, R. (2016). Op. cit.

- Public service innovations in countries such as Bangladesh and India are serving to better connect governments with citizens, increasing efficiency, transparency and accountability.
- During the Ebola outbreak in 2014, hundreds of local health workers submitted surveillance data via text messages, creating a robust, comprehensive data set more rapidly and cheaply than if paper forms had been used.
- For farmers in Africa, aerial images from satellites and drones, weather forecasts and soil sensors are making it possible to manage crop growth in real time and improve yields.
- Technological advances have resulted in cheaper, more efficient solar panels, wind turbines and other forms of renewable energy technologies to assist with climate change adaptation and mitigation.

III. The Transformation of South-South Cooperation

Achieving the ambitious targets of the 2030 Agenda and adapting to the changing global context outlined above will require engagement from all stakeholders at all levels and in all countries, leveraging their diverse and unique advantages. South-South cooperation and triangular cooperation remain important cornerstones of development activities and will be vital modalities for action as complements to North-South cooperation. Secretary-General António Guterres highlighted the ongoing importance of these modalities in his report to the Economic and Social Council entitled *Repositioning the UN development system to deliver on the 2030 Agenda: Ensuring a Better Future for All*.¹⁴ In that report, he stated:

The rapid evolution of alternative forms of development cooperation, including the scaling up of South-South cooperation, is beginning to suggest bold, innovative means to strengthen cooperation to deliver the Sustainable Development Goals (para. 24).

[...]

We must also step up capacities to support and leverage South-South cooperation, as a complement to traditional development assistance. This form of cooperation among developing countries is a unique asset for knowledge-exchange, transfer of appropriate technologies, and tested development solutions – as valuable to developing countries as financial resources (para. 42).

Just as the global landscape has been transformed in recent years, so, too, have the avenues for South-South and triangular cooperation. As outlined in the 1978 Buenos Aires Plan of Action (BAPA), South-South cooperation is an expression of solidarity between countries of the South. Initially focused largely on technical cooperation, capacity-building and knowledge exchange, recent developments in South-South cooperation have included increased volumes of South-South trade, South-South flows of foreign direct investment, movements towards regional integration, technology transfers, sharing of solutions and experts, and other forms of exchange.

¹⁴Guterres, António (2017). *Repositioning the UN development system to deliver on the 2030 Agenda: Ensuring a better future for all*. Advance unedited version, 30 June 2017. Available from <https://www.un.org/ecosoc/sites/www.un.org.ecosoc/files/files/en/qcpr/sg-report-on-unds-qcpr-june-2017.pdf>. Accessed 18 July 2017.

These changes have mirrored those seen in the transforming global development context and economy that were outlined earlier.¹⁵

As the international community commemorates the fortieth anniversary of the adoption of BAPA in 2019, there will be a unique opportunity to review the enormous contributions of South-South and triangular cooperation to development.

IV. The Global South-South Development Expo 2017

The Global South-South Development (GSSD) Expo is an annual event organized by the United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation (UNOSSC) in its capacity as the General Assembly-mandated global and United Nations system-wide coordinator and facilitator for South-South and triangular cooperation. It is designed to showcase evidence-based successful development solutions and initiatives. The Nairobi outcome document adopted at the previous High-level United Nations Conference on South-South Cooperation, held in Nairobi, Kenya, in 2009 and endorsed by the General Assembly in its resolution 64/222, refers to the Expo as a source of support for closer links among South-South centres of excellence, institutions, and regional and subregional groupings, among others.

The GSSD Expo 2017 will be hosted by the Government of the Republic of Turkey and will take place from 27 to 30 November in Antalya.

Theme

South-South Cooperation in the Era of Economic, Social and Environmental Transformation: Road to the 40th Anniversary of the Adoption of the Buenos Aires Plan of Action (BAPA+40).

Objectives

Specific objectives of the GSSD Expo 2017 include the following:

1. To facilitate and promote discussion on South-South and triangular partnerships, including:
 - a. How can these partnerships best be supported and scaled up, given the changing global economic, social and environmental context?
 - b. How can these partnerships leverage new and emerging technologies?
 - c. What are the best methodologies for information and data collection and data analysis in order to provide the evidence base needed to support decision-making and planning?
 - d. How can the development community maximize the impact of South-South and triangular cooperation for evidence-based decision-making and policy planning?
2. To identify and promote specific South-South cooperation and triangular cooperation initiatives that have the potential to contribute significantly to the achievement of the 2030 Agenda;

¹⁵ United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation (2017). *About South-South and Triangular Cooperation*. Available from <https://www.unsouthsouth.org/about/about-sstc/>. Accessed 10 July 2017.

3. To facilitate the creation and strengthening of multi-stakeholder South-South cooperation and triangular cooperation partnerships for sustainable development;
4. To review and discuss development policies and capacity-building efforts, identifying impediments and remedial measures to be introduced through South-South and triangular cooperation methodologies at the national, regional and global levels;
5. To share experiences with respect to the institutional arrangements for the promotion of South-South and triangular cooperation in developmental matters at the national level.

V. Programme and Organization

Each day will be divided into plenary discussions, thematic sessions and other forums based on specific themes that may include the following:

Digital Ecosystem for Development	
Indicative Focus Questions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>How can South-South and triangular cooperation evolve given the shift to a globalized and knowledge-based economy?</i> • <i>How can the global South best leverage the potential of the digital revolution?</i> • <i>How can South-South and triangular cooperation programmes take advantage of advancements in science, technology and innovation?</i> • <i>How can big data, data solutions and analytics inform South-South decision-making processes and address regional integration and cross-border development challenges?</i>
South-South Cooperation for People and Planet	
Indicative Focus Questions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>What do South-South cooperation and triangular cooperation mean in the context of the evolving global development landscape?</i> • <i>How can South-South cooperation and triangular cooperation make a unique contribution to the achievement of the 2030 Agenda and related development frameworks?</i> • <i>How can South-South cooperation and triangular cooperation address issues faced by historically marginalized populations such as women, youth and the disabled?</i> • <i>How can practitioners of South-South cooperation and triangular cooperation ensure that their programmes are more inclusive and address the inequality issues faced by many countries of the South?</i> • <i>How can South-South cooperation and triangular cooperation contribute to climate adaptation and mitigation activities?</i>
South-South Cooperation for Peace, Prosperity and Partnerships	
Indicative Focus Questions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>How do South-South cooperation and triangular cooperation contribute to humanitarian development and peacebuilding process?</i>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>How does the United Nations development system consolidate the lessons learned in this regard and find new way of working: from humanitarian aid to sustainable development and resilient societies?</i> • <i>How can South-South and triangular cooperation leverage and benefit from the growing economic importance of countries of the South?</i> • <i>How can the private sector be engaged for sustainable development through South-South and triangular cooperation?</i> • <i>What are some of the challenges that countries, regions and the international community face in enhancing and scaling up South-South and triangular partnerships for development?</i>
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Full-day Session on Capacity Development for South-South and Triangular Cooperation

Indicative Focus Questions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>How have South-South cooperation and triangular cooperation capacity development programmes evolved over the past 40 years?</i> • <i>What role can regional organizations play in supporting capacity development for SS/TC?</i> • <i>As we head towards the fortieth anniversary of the adoption of BAPA, how can South-South cooperation and triangular cooperation adapt to social, economic and environmental transformations?</i> • <i>A workshop on critical reflections on methodological challenges in researching South-South development cooperation: The workshop will feature a cross section of active researchers on and practitioners of South-South cooperation that will explore innovative metrics, data sources and practices in assessing South-South cooperation and triangular cooperation and their development impact.</i> • <i>Private-sector engagement seminar: A peer-learning event that will showcase successful private-sector partnerships in development cooperation as well as facilitate training and the exchange of frameworks, knowledge, tools and best practices in engaging with the private sector in the South.</i>
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The following sessions will be organized under these daily thematic focus areas:

1. High-level Opening Ceremony

Featuring distinguished and powerful champions of South-South and triangular cooperation. Prominent dignitaries and senior officials will deliver keynote statements to launch the Expo, set its tone and agenda, and share their ongoing commitment to innovative and inclusive South-South and triangular cooperation partnerships.

2. Leadership Round Tables

Interactive dialogue held each morning in the main conference hall, intended to be held Davos style. An experienced moderator will facilitate an informal dialogue, with time available for questions from the audience.

The discussion will serve to set the tone for the day's sessions. High-level representatives from the United Nations development system, Member States and key stakeholders will discuss South-South and triangular cooperation in the context of the daily themes:

- Digital Ecosystem for Development;
- South-South Cooperation for People and Planet;
- South-South Cooperation for Peace, Prosperity and Partnerships; and
- Capacity Development for South-South and Triangular Cooperation.

3. Thematic Solution Forums

Daily forums arranged by thematic focus and organized by Expo partners such as Member States or United Nations entities. Each Solution Forum will have a concrete outcome such as the signing of a memorandum of understanding, the launch of a report or the announcement of a new partnership. Solutions Forums will last 1.5 hours.

4. Side Events

Opportunities for Member States, United Nations entities and other interested stakeholders to host smaller and more informal sessions. These are intended to complement the substance and outcomes of the other sessions and to focus on in-depth exchanges between solution providers and potential interested partners.

5. Exhibition Space

As in previous years, the GSSD Expo 2017 will provide an exhibition space to enable stakeholders to showcase their innovative and successful development solutions.

6. Informal Networking Space and Cultural Events

The Expo secretariat, in partnership with the host government, will provide informal networking space and organize cultural events (TBD).

7. Directors General/Heads of National Coordinating Authorities Forum and Regional Capacity Development Workshops

Annual forum that brings together Directors General from cooperation agencies of national governments of the South and the North who are working on South-South and triangular cooperation initiatives. It is intended to facilitate learning exchanges on policy, strategy, institutional and financial arrangement, and tools for these partnerships. The Forum also serves as a space to facilitate innovative partnerships.

8. Closing Ceremony

The Closing Ceremony will be a celebration of the successes of the Expo. Eminent leaders in South-South and triangular cooperation, including government officials, Heads of United Nations entities and intergovernmental organizations and other prominent Southern leaders, will share their impressions of the Expo and their future commitments to South-South and triangular cooperation.