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United Nations Development Programme

DEVELOPMENT IMPACT GROUP



SCALING-UP SOUTH-SOUTH COOPERATION FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT



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Resilient nations.*

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ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

AIIB	Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank
ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
BRICS	Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa
CSOs	Civil Society Organizations
DRR	Disaster Risk Reduction
FDI	Foreign Direct Investment
LDCs	Least Developing Countries
ODA	Official Development Assistance
ROK	Republic of Korea
SAARC	South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation
SADC	Southern African Development Community
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SEECF	South-East European Cooperation Process
SIDS	Small Island Developing States
TFM	Technology Facilitation Mechanism
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
WTO	World Trade Organization



I. INTRODUCTION

A major trend of the past two decades has been the transformation of growth and development performance and prospects in the global South. Increases in economic output and major improvements in key human development indicators as well as the rapid expansion of trade, investment and financial, technological and other flows between developing countries have been remarkable. Along with this trend, the global development cooperation landscape is changing rapidly. Emerging economies and other developing countries have become key actors in the new development architecture through their contribution to overcoming pressing development challenges. In addition, the diversity and richness of the shared practices and experiences, the lessons they offer for building common agendas at global and regional levels, and the leadership they promote, particularly at the local level, have also played a major part in the global transformation. South-South and Triangular Cooperation has emerged as an important vehicle to accelerate human development and will assume greater importance in the future. It has increasingly demonstrated its contribution to development results through a variety of flexible cooperation modalities, including knowledge exchanges, technology transfers, financing, peer support, and neighbourhood initiatives, as well as countries forming common development agendas and seeking collective solutions. Often under-reported and sometimes hard to quantify, the estimated value of South-South Cooperation has exceeded US\$20 billion in 2013.¹

While being important complements to but not substituting North-South cooperation, South-South and Triangular Cooperation has led to more diverse opportunities for development assistance and cooperation. The Third International Conference on Financing for Development (FfD) encouraged “developing countries to voluntarily step up their efforts to strengthen South-South cooperation, and to further improve its development effectiveness in accordance with the provisions of the Nairobi outcome document of the High-level United Nations Conference on South-South Cooperation”² in the context of poverty eradication and sustainable development. The Outcome Document also committed countries to “strengthening triangular cooperation as a means of bringing relevant experience and expertise to bear in development cooperation.”³

Additionally, the newly adopted Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) stress the importance of South-South cooperation in implementing the 2030 agenda. Goal 17, “Revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development,” particularly places emphasis on the critical role of South-South and Triangular Cooperation in achieving this ambitious development agenda. It also set targets for South-South and Triangular Cooperation that target both technology⁴ and capacity-building⁵ in which all countries have committed to achieve. Last but not least, the Paris Agreement on Climate Change also emphasized the importance of South-South and Triangular Cooperation in tackling climate change.

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