United Nations
Office for South-South Cooperation

SOUTH-SOUTH AND
TRIANGULAR COOPERATION
SOLUTIONS
LAB

2024

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INTRODUCTION

The United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation (UNOSSC), established by the United Nations General Assembly in 1974 and hosted by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), promotes, coordinates and supports South-South and triangular cooperation both at the global and United Nations system-wide level. UNOSSC brings together governments and the United Nations system to analyse and articulate evolving and emerging trends, dynamics and opportunities in South-South cooperation. To contribute to this overarching goal, the UNOSSC currently focuses on three outcomes[1] and five services.[2]

Developing countries continue to face multifaceted challenges, ranging from extreme poverty, environmental degradation and a growing digital divide, to unsustainable debt and a slow adoption of new technologies. The COVID-19 pandemic exacerbated these challenges, undermining progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Traditional solutions are insufficient and/

or unsustainable, emphasizing the need for innovative and collaborative strategies. Constraints in legal, technological and financial areas often hinder cross-country, regional and sub-regional knowledge exchange. Successful practices are not disseminated widely enough, limiting their replication. In this context, South-South cooperation has emerged as a vital development cooperation modality, complementing North-South cooperation, fostering collaboration among developing countries by leveraging shared knowledge and resources, sharing experience with designed/tested solutions and forging and/or strengthening partnerships that cater to their specific circumstances.

Thus, the UNOSSC Strategic Framework 2022–2025 has called for the establishment of a South-South and triangular cooperation Solutions Lab to "facilitate the coordination, co-design, incubation and scaling up of initiatives that promote knowledge exchange, capacity development, and technology development and transfer while contributing to the Sustainable Development Goals" (para 38). Once operational, the UNOSSC South-South and Triangular Cooperation Solutions Lab (the UNOSSC Lab or Lab) will address intricate development challenges faced by developing countries.

By enhancing South-South and triangular cooperation among member states, United Nations agencies and partners, and harnessing local, regional and inter-regional expertise and resources, the Lab

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1 The Outcomes are: (i) advance South-South and triangular cooperation policymaking and implementation; (ii) strengthen United Nations capacity to provide South-South and triangular cooperation support; and (iii) promote South-South and triangular cooperation knowledge exchange, capacity development and technology development, and transfer to enable developing countries to pursue more resilient and sustainable development.

2 The Services are: (i) facilitation of, and reporting on, intergovernmental processes and reporting; (ii) capacity development; (iii) knowledge co-creation and management; (iv) South-South and triangular cooperation solution lab; and (v) trust fund management.

aims to foster innovative and scalable solutions that expedite the realization of the SDGs and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

By forging broad partnerships, UNOSSC seeks to develop this demand-driven Lab. Labs by nature are innovative platforms designed to tackle complex development challenges such as sustainable development issues by promoting ideation, experimentation, evaluation, learning and collaboration. There are a variety of labs on the market, many of which focus on identifying and testing solutions to complex development challenges, and some of which also focus on scaling up solutions that work and other services.[3]

The proposed UNOSSC Lab[4] represents a paradigm shift from the existing ad hoc collaborations to a more systematic strategic partnership among Southern countries and triangular cooperation partners to meet their respective development goals. The UNOSSC Lab is a timely initiative aimed at using foresight, innovation and collaboration to address complex development issues. Through experimentation, knowledge sharing and capacity building, the Lab will empower member states towards achieving inclusive, sustainable and resilient development, supporting accelerated achievement of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. It will foster innovation and collaboration among developing countries, leveraging South-South and triangular cooperation to create scalable solutions for inclusive and sustainable development, and to leave no-one behind.

4   UNOSSC's Lab builds on research conducted on concepts and work of existing and past labs while exploring the gaps, challenges and opportunities in their development. This aims at distinguishing and carving out its own potential, unique contribution to the achievement of 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Several accelerator labs have been identified and assessed in preparing this concept note, such as (i) UNDP Accelerator Labs, consisting of a global network of labs in 91 locations support in 115 countries that focus on addressing the SDGs through innovation, collaborative problem-solving and rapid prototyping; (ii) the Global Solutions Lab, which brings together students, policymakers and professionals from around the world to collaborate on designing solutions to global challenges; (iii) the Sustainability Accelerator Lab, a multidisciplinary research forum that aims to address sustainability challenges by combining insights from the social, natural and engineering sciences; (iv) the Green Tech Accelerator, which supports start-ups and scale-ups in the cleantech and sustainability sectors; (v) the Green City Labs and other innovation solutions operating in UNDP Country Offices; and (vi) Microsoft's Artificial Intelligence for Good Labs.

3   It is also important to note here that these labs are diverse in scope, size and affiliation. Most originate from the United Nations system; some of the labs operate under periodic calls for submissions and piloting projects; and some work as knowledge-based platforms to support innovation.

OBJECTIVES

The Lab has three main interlinked *objectives*, as described below.

1	2	3
Increase the Capabilities of Developing Countries	**Incubate Existing and New Ideas and Solutions**	**Create, Assess and Implement New Policies**
Create a learning platform to enhance knowledge sharing, innovation and peer learning	Curate proven and new technological solutions that meet select criteria	Create new policies and initiatives to address emerging challenges

Source: UNOSSC

Increase the capabilities of developing countries to make sound South-South and triangular cooperation decisions based on evidence, and create novel approaches.

The Lab is set to establish a dynamic Learning Platform tailored to its main client groups, continuously adapting to connect local and regional knowledge and expertise. By harnessing South-South and triangular cooperation, it aims to bolster knowledge exchange and mutual learning. The Lab will also spearhead policy dialogues on innovation and cutting-edge technologies, and foster dialogues on inclusive digital transformation. Engaging with countries, it will foster idea exchanges grounded in evidence-based research and policy strategies, tapping into global, regional and national networks. Furthermore, the Lab will orchestrate networks of researchers and practitioners, concentrating on selected intricate and intractable development challenges.

Incubate existing and new ideas for South-South and triangular cooperation to create practical applications and replicable use cases.

The Lab will meticulously select both time-tested and novel solutions based on criteria such as technological viability, innovation, user-centricity, cost and potential for growth. It will manage active repositories of these

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solutions, encourage groundbreaking ideas, and forge partnerships to secure foundational funding and alliances for further development. The Lab's scope will cover diverse tech sectors such as ClimateTech, AgroTech, FinTech, MedTech and EduTech, connecting technology providers through tailored value propositions and knowledge-sharing. For established solutions, emphasis will be placed on those that are successful due to South-South and triangular cooperation good practices), as well as those successful at various scales, notably at national and sub-national levels, that show promise for replication and expansion through this cooperation, aspiring to be future good practices.

Join forces to create, assess and develop new policies to accelerate South-South and triangular cooperation.

The Lab will support the integration of the derived solutions and insights into national, regional and sub-regional policymaking and programmatic engagement. A core aspect of its support will be fostering collaboration in crafting new policies and regional initiatives that address current and evolving challenges affecting multiple nations, thereby deepening the impact of South-South, East-East (where applicable) and triangular cooperation. Developing guidelines and frameworks may facilitate this effort, together with collective resource gathering and the creation of related actionable strategies.

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CLIENTS, PARTNERS AND BENEFICIARIES

The main clients, partners and beneficiaries of the Lab are as follows:

National goverments

National development cooperation institutions

United Nations agencies

Regional organizations

International organizations and international financial institutions

Academic and research institutions

South-South cooperation networks

Private sector and technology providers

Philanthropic foundations

Civil society organizations

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DISTINCT FEATURES

Demand-driven and specialized

Built based on existing in-house competencies and comparative advantages of UNOSSC

UNOSSC office-wide platform

A platform that provides public good for member states and the United Nations system

Focused on partnerships

Maximizing the gains from existent and new partnerships

Focused on new evidence

Use of new types of evidence and data on complex development challenges

Specialization in a few selected thematic areas

Identified in consultations with main clients

Platform for incubation of existing and new solutions

Source: UNOSSC

The Lab boasts several distinct features that makes it a 'unique value proposition' for main clients. First and foremost, it is crafted to cater specifically to the demands of its stakeholders, drawing also upon the comparative advantages and capacity of UNOSSC. Instead of being just an internal tool, the Lab also serves as a public good, offering its resources and insights to member states, the United Nations system and other partners. It actively seeks to optimize the benefits derived from both existing and emerging partnerships. A key attribute of the Lab is its commitment to employing novel types of data and therefore evidence, providing insights into both intricate development issues and nascent challenges. While the Lab's scope is broad, it specializes in a select few thematic areas. Additionally, it functions as an incubation space for both tried-and-true and innovative solutions. To ensure that its message and mission resonate widely, the Lab invests heavily in raising its profile and championing results, best practices and crucial partnerships.

MAIN SERVICE LINES

Focused research
Demand-driven research in prioritized areas based on resolutions, reports and trends

Evidence platforms
New data collaboratives on innovation, trade, technology transfer, sustainability and digital inclusion

Expert pool
Experienced practitioners and thought leaders specializing in South-South cooperation

Solution incubation
Incubating innovative, high-impact and scalable solutions

Capacity development
AI-assisted learning platform tailored for the Global South

Integration support
Supporting integration and scaling up of successful innovations

Popularization and communication
Ensuring visibility and popularizing incubated solutions

Source: UNOSSC

The UNOSSC Lab will provide the following specific service lines through three types of 'windows' at the global, regional and country levels. These windows are important to underline the demand-driven and client-oriented specifics of the Lab, as well as its capability to capture regional, inter-regional and global emerging trends.

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Focused research – prioritized thematic areas

The Lab will routinely assess pertinent intergovernmental resolutions, reports and outcome documents to discern and delve into the intricate development challenges of developing countries. Through foresight techniques and other methodologies, it will identify evolving trends, obstacles and prospects for member states. In collaboration with key stakeholders, the Lab will spotlight specific policy challenges as primary research subjects. Capitalizing on initiatives such as the South-South Global Thinkers Initiative – a coalition of global think-tank networks and the recently established Data to Policy Network for Policymakers, with UNDP and the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ), on the margins of the 2023 United Nations General Assembly session – the Lab will champion policy dialogues, collaborative research, and knowledge exchange among think tanks worldwide. It will also harness resources from the UNOSSC trust funds and the South-South Galaxy online platform to enhance knowledge sharing and partnerships brokering. This service will generate practical insights and policy guidance, highlighting budding and over-the-horizon opportunities for nations and South-South cooperation. Furthermore, it will assist clients in conceptualizing innovative policy alternatives and solutions for upcoming development challenges.

Evidence platforms: new data collaboratives

The Lab will establish and oversee select data collaboratives, encompassing a mix of both conventional and contemporary data types, such as big data and thick data. These data will be processed into evidence and actionable insights for its clients and beneficiaries. These collaboratives, together with their associated machine learning tools, will not only offer insights for innovative solutions to be developed by the Lab, but will also provide content for the Lab's learning platform. Additionally, the Lab will source supplementary data from member states, national development cooperation agencies, regional institutions, United Nations agencies and other partners, specifically focusing on the multifaceted and qualitative facets of South-South and triangular cooperation, thus enriching the data pool.

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Potential ideas for future data collaboratives may consist of the following:

- South-South cooperation outcomes data collaborative – will aggregate data on the results and impacts of South-South and triangular cooperation initiatives. It can provide insights into crucial indicators such as economic growth, social development, technology and knowledge transfers. This could further facilitate the generation of detailed cooperation profiles, be it country-specific or regional.

- Innovation ecosystems data collaborative – will consolidate thick data concerning the innovation ecosystems of developing countries. Elements such as start-ups, research entities, funding avenues and regulatory structures for cooperation will be highlighted. The aim is to map these ecosystems, pinpointing avenues for cross-border collaboration and tech transfers.

- Trade and investment flows data collaborative – will be centred on the financial dynamics among developing countries involved in cooperative efforts, and the platform will examine trends in imports, exports, foreign investments and joint ventures, helping countries identify new markets and collaboration potentials.

- Digital technology transfer data collaborative – will be dedicated to tech transfers within cooperative frameworks, and will list available technologies, success stories, and the related challenges and opportunities. It will also draw from datasets managed by partners (e.g. Microsoft's Artificial Intelligence for Good Labs in locations such as Kenya and Egypt) and will serve as a knowledge reservoir for member states.

- Sustainability initiatives data collaborative – will accumulate information on sustainability efforts in the developing countries, covering areas such as renewable energy uptake, environmental conservation, and social development projects. The goal is to provide a perspective on the outcomes of sustainable development collaborations among member states.

- Digital inclusion data collaborative – will focus on the digital landscape and will gather data on efforts to widen internet access, boost digital literacy, and employ technology for societal inclusion. It is designed to allow member states to share and learn from collective experiences, aiding in narrowing the digital gap and fostering inclusive digital communities.

Incubation of existing and new solutions

The Lab will focus on two distinct categories of solutions:

- existing solutions that are tested by a member state, United Nations entity or other partners, and reflect South-South and triangular cooperation aspects;

- new solutions that are generated in consultation with member states, United Nations entities and partners.

Specific criteria will be generated for the selection of the existing and new solutions. The incubation of specific solutions will, in most cases, be delivered at the national level through the national 'window'. Typically, these criteria will include: degree of innovation; potential impact on South-South and triangular cooperation; technological feasibility; cost; scalability; and relevance to end-users and their needs. Depending on the nature, type and complexity of the solution, the Lab may outsource its incubation and/or testing to external interested partners to leverage their expertise and resources.

Capacity development – a learning platform

The Lab will establish a cross-cutting service provided through an interactive learning platform (possibly artificial intelligence-assisted) tailored for member states and partners, and pool existing and selective new resources. Through partnerships with think-tanks, academia and research institutions, this platform will offer a focused curriculum designed to foster dynamic learning and collaboration, based on the identification of priorities from the participants.

Support to integration and scaling-up

The Lab will support member states, United Nations entities and partners in defining specific action plans for scaling up successful innovations by providing technical support as well as support for mobilizing financial resources. It will collaborate with governments, development partners and stakeholders to integrate these solutions into national, regional and sub-regional policies and programmes, as applicable.

Expert pool

The Lab will establish a diverse and dynamic consortium of seasoned practitioners, thought leaders, and experts with proven expertise in South-South and triangular cooperation. This consortium will serve as a 'sounding board', offering the Lab valuable insights, guidance and collaboration avenues. Their expertise will aid in deciphering intricate issues, optimizing data collaboratives, leveraging artificial intelligence and machine learning tools, and fostering solution-oriented discussions. Based on specific demands, these experts can also be deployed to assist member states, the United Nations system,

and other partners with pertinent South-South and triangular cooperation efforts, such as policy formulation, programme development, institutional reinforcement and partnerships.

Popularization and communication

The Lab will ensure proper visibility of its activities and popularize the incubated solutions, research work and other specific outputs. This will be achieved through:

- the development and popularization of the Lab's brand and that of the members states and United Nations agencies, and through other partners' engagement on the Lab's platform;

- active engagement in online presence, via a dedicated Web-platform for the Lab, linked to UNOSSC's South-South Galaxy platform to host all of the different services;

- social media engagement through existing platforms, including via regular blog posts, newsletters and news, etc.;

- content creation, in particular, the development of articles, policy and position papers, infographics and videos to showcase solutions and research outputs;

- the positioning of the Lab experts in public events, workshops, policy dialogues, etc.;

- partnerships with visible institutions, including think-tanks, academia, United Nations agencies, the private sector and others;

- outreach initiatives, such as sharing lessons learned, results and impacts.

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MAIN PROPOSED THEMATIC AREAS

In the incipient phase of the Lab, and based on UNOSSC's analysis of trends and opportunities, the following areas have been identified where the added value of the Lab can be better demonstrated. This, however, does not preclude considering any additional areas.

Renewable Energy and Green Growth

Data and case studies on renewable energy adoption, green projects and sustainable financing

Agricultural Productivity and Food Security

Data case studies and best practices in agricultural productivity and technology

Technological Innovation and Entrepreneurship

Data on startups, innovation ecosystems, tech transfer, ICT and digital innovation

Digital Skills and Inclusive Digital Transformation

Data case studies and trends in digital literacy, e-governance and emerging tech

Financial Inclusion and Fintech

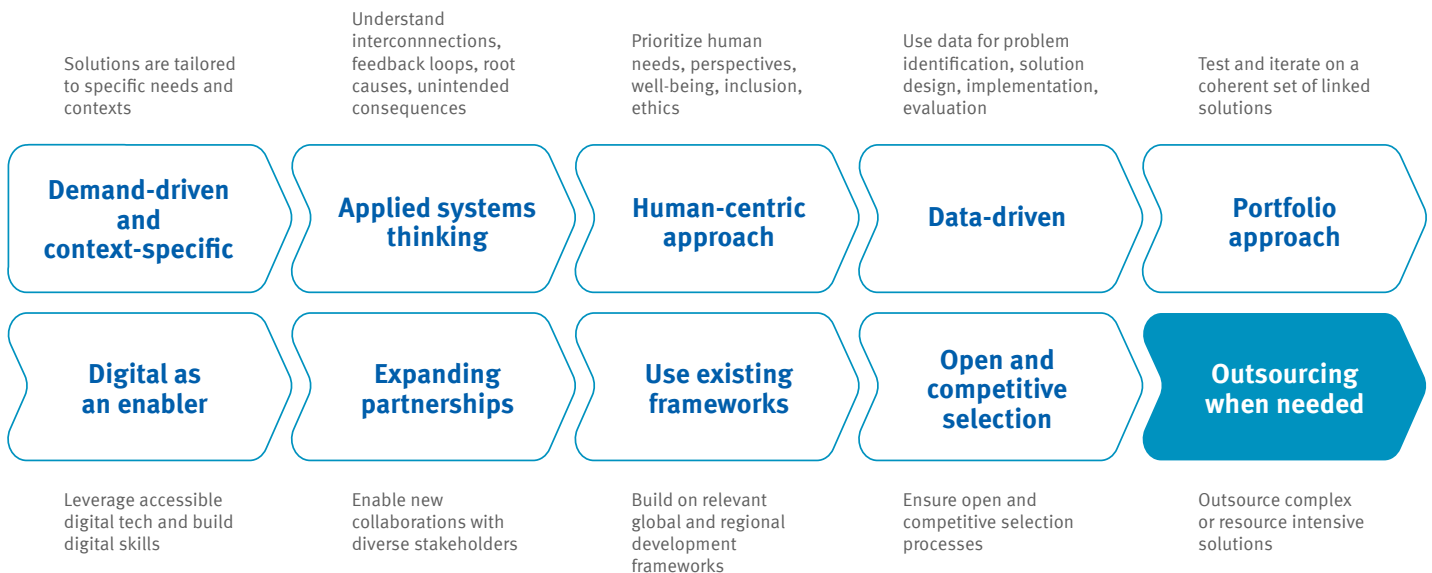Data case studies and trends in financial inclusion, fintech and digital payments

Source: UNOSSC

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METHODOLOGICAL APPROACHES

Main principles applied

The Lab will be guided by the same core principles of South-South cooperation such as respect for sovereignty and ownership, non-conditionality, mutual benefit, complementarity, demand-driven and context-specific, equality and solidarity.

Key methodological aspects

Solutions are tailored to specific needs and contexts

Understand interconnnections, feedback loops, root causes, unintended consequences

Prioritize human needs, perspectives, well-being, inclusion, ethics

Use data for problem identification, solution design, implementation, evaluation

Test and iterate on a coherent set of linked solutions

Demand-driven and context-specific	Applied systems thinking	Human-centric approach	Data-driven	Portfolio approach

Digital as an enabler	Expanding partnerships	Use existing frameworks	Open and competitive selection	Outsourcing when needed

Leverage accessible digital tech and build digital skills

Enable new collaborations with diverse stakeholders

Build on relevant global and regional development frameworks

Ensure open and competitive selection processes

Outsource complex or resource intensive solutions

These methodological aspects are:

- Demand-driven and context-specific.

- Applied systems thinking – understanding interconnections, identifying feedback loops, mapping system dynamics, understanding root causes, considering unintended consequences and a long-term perspective, and collaborative decision-making, etc.

- A human-centric approach to designing and implementing the solutions – prioritizing needs, perceptions and perspectives, and the well-being of individuals and communities, context-specific, and promoting social inclusive and ethical and gender considerations.

- Data-driven – identifying problems, prioritizing and co-designing solutions, testing, implementing based on data, evaluating the impact, learning and iterating, sharing data and generated insights, and using data to establish new partnerships.

- A portfolio approach – testing a coherent and linked set of solutions, and constantly updating dynamic repositories with new and complementary solutions.

- Digital transformation as an enabler – mainstreaming accessible and user-friendly digital technology, focusing on digital competencies and skill-building, engaging with private sector companies from the information and communications technology (ICT) sector, focusing on mainstreaming digital technology for public services delivery, and using artificial intelligence and machine learning for data analysis and visualization.

- New and/or expanding partnerships for innovation and capacity building.

- Use of existing development frameworks (global and regional).

- Open and competitive selection processes.

- Outsourcing when needed or required due to the nature, type and complexity of the planned solutions or resource constraints.

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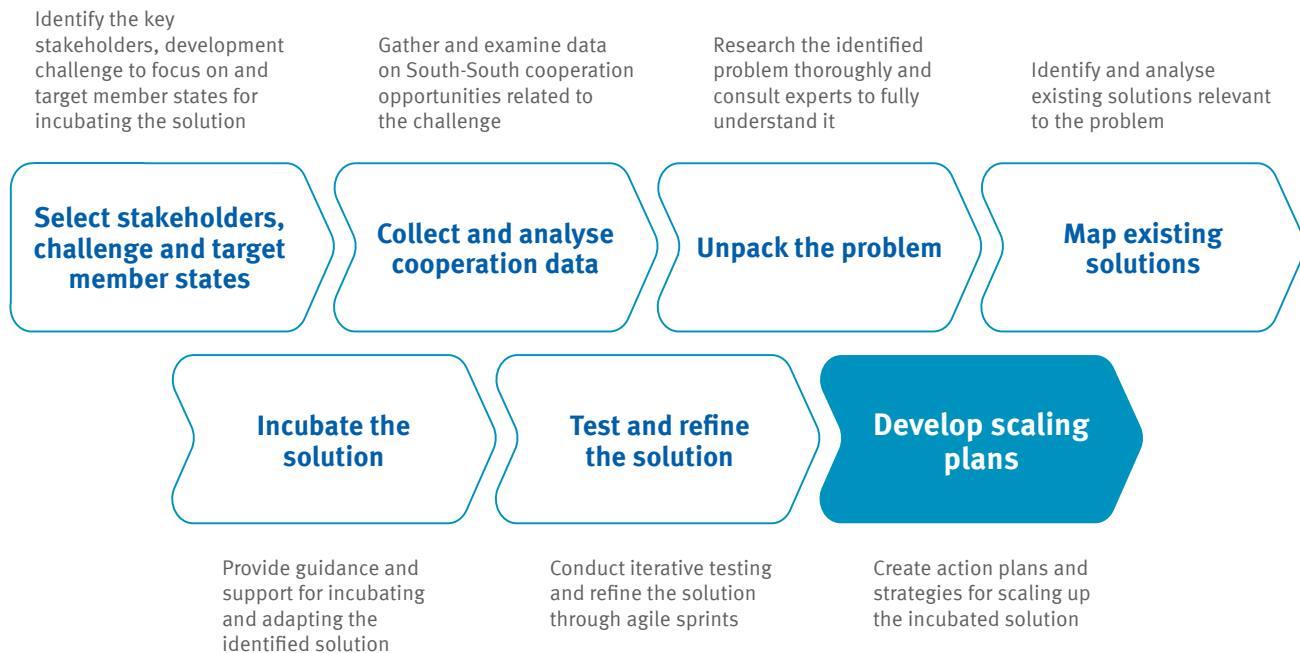
PROPOSED WORKFLOW

In collaboration with external partners, experts and practitioners, the Lab will establish a mechanism to collect data from member states and partners, and use them in order to obtain a more accurate overview of South-South and triangular cooperation opportunities for further engagement, both directly and indirectly. Possible activities might include the development of South-South and triangular cooperation and regional 'snapshots' and 'opportunity cards' (sets of current and emerging opportunities for South-South and triangular cooperaiton that will be generated with the support of a pre-trained AI algorithm). The Lab will develop an action plan and specific activities for collecting and systematizing requests from end-users. Based on the repositories of solutions, including from the UNOSSC-managed trust funds and the UNOSSC South-South Galaxy platform, the Lab team will conduct regular analyses of the solutions from which it will generate insights and/or baselines.

In response to specific needs, the Lab will engage in unpacking the identified problems. If required, the focused research service line will be activated to form relevant data collaboratives and potentially gather and analyse new data. With evidence at hand, idea-generation sessions will be facilitated to transform data into actionable insights for partners in order for them to have a better understanding of the problems. Once determined, existing solutions (e.g. from the South-South Galaxy platform) will be mapped first, and when a viable solution is identified, the Lab will guide its incubation, providing support through other relevant service lines.

With regard to the incubation of existing solutions, the Lab will undertake specific steps towards their identification, evaluation and improvement, and will support their implementation of an existing ones in a new context. This will be implemented in short sprints (of up to six months), each focused on a specific step, as shown in the figure on page 19.

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Proposed workflow of incubating an existing solution

Identify the key stakeholders, development challenge to focus on and target member states for incubating the solution

Gather and examine data on South-South cooperation opportunities related to the challenge

Research the identified problem thoroughly and consult experts to fully understand it

Identify and analyse existing solutions relevant to the problem

Select stakeholders, challenge and target member states

Collect and analyse cooperation data

Unpack the problem

Map existing solutions

Incubate the solution

Test and refine the solution

Develop scaling plans

Provide guidance and support for incubating and adapting the identified solution

Conduct iterative testing and refine the solution through agile sprints

Create action plans and strategies for scaling up the incubated solution

When the Lab's repositories do not contain proven solutions, the Lab will incubate a new solution based on available resources, shift to ideation, prioritization, co-designing and adaptation. If necessary, the Lab can delegate testing and execution to external collaborators. For comprehensive problem-solving, interconnected solutions can also be trialled concurrently. While direct implementation is not within the Lab's primary remit, it will orchestrate the essential processes and collaborations to ensure the successful deployment and evaluation of vetted solutions, including through United Nations system entities.

With partner backing, the Lab will co-craft action plans to replicate and expand effective solutions. These plans will facilitate the adaptation of successful solutions to meet the unique needs of interested member states.

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Proposed workflow for incubating a new solution

Ideation and research	Solution design	Pilot and testing	Scaling
Identify the issue with stakeholders and conduct research with experts on the problem	Design and develop new solutions that address the issue based on research	Pilot and iteratively test new solutions at a small scale	Refine solutions based on feedback and scale successful ones

Source: UNOSSC

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PILOT PHASE SELECTIVE OUTPUTS

During the first 12–24 months of the implementation of the Lab, it will tentatively deliver the following proposed specific outputs:

- A digital engagement and learning platform (artificial intelligence-powered) – an interactive platform for member states, United Nations agencies, development agencies, the private sector and academia to learn, share and collaborate online.

- A collaborative solutions guide – a succinct framework for generating and testing collaborative solutions through member state engagement.

- The first edition of the Virtual Innovation Days – the highlighting of innovative policy solutions that have been successfully tested and/or scaled in partnerships at the local or regional levels.

- A new dynamic solutions catalogue – a compilation of existing/new and analysed evidence-based policy options addressing complex challenges, combined with impact evaluation reports.

- A policy advocacy plan – a succinct vision for advocating the adoption of Lab-generated solutions within member states and relevant agencies.

- Evidence-based policy workshops and training – capacity-building workshops on evidence-based policymaking for Lab participants highlighting innovative policy solutions that have been successfully tested and/or scaled in partnerships at the local or regional levels.

- Impact measurement guidelines and an initial assessment – development and popularization of a short guide on measuring the impact of policies and solutions on development challenges, and co-generation of an initial assessment of 1–2 incubated solutions.

- Data visualization tools – generation of country- and region-specific snapshots and visualization of available evidence and data collaboratives on South-South, East-East and triangular cooperation.

- New partnership agreements – formalize new partnerships with United Nations agencies, development organizations and academia for the implementation of the Lab.

- A resource mobilization plan to sustain and expand Lab initiatives.

ANTICIPATED BENEFITS

Accessing context-specific and innovative solutions is vital for enhancing development outcomes. Thus, it is essential to assess diverse scaling approaches, such as scaling out, scaling up and scaling deep, while rigorously evaluating the impact and outcomes of these adaptations. Thoroughly evaluating these changes is critical to ensure effectiveness and efficiency.

The Lab will generate multiple benefits for governments, United Nations entities, development actors and stakeholders, including:

- strengthened capacities for collaborative problem-solving, policy formulation and implementation;

- enhanced knowledge sharing and technology transfer among member states and development actors;

- successful scaling of innovations through resource mobilization;

- increased visibility of South-South cooperation as a viable pathway for sustainable development;

- enhanced understanding of foresight development issues and broader global/regional policy decisions affecting member states, leading to more informed decision-making and targeted interventions;

- a stronger culture of innovation and experimentation among member states, resulting in the identification and implementation of effective solutions to complex development challenges.

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TEAM

The Lab will make use of the available internal UNOSSC capacity, but will also tap into external capacities from the established pool of experts, practitioners and secondments from member states and institutions.

Lab coordinator/manager

Oversees operations and manages partnerships

Policy/innovation specialist

Leads identification and scaling of solutions

Research and data lead

Conducts research and provides insights

Capacity-building and training specialist

Designs and delivers training programmes

Communication and outreach lead

Develops, consults and implements advocacy strategies

Knowledge exchange and collaboration facilitator

Facilities collaboration and earning

Source: UNOSSC

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The main types of competencies required for the Lab are presented below:

- Lab coordinator/manager – oversees the Lab's operations, ensures alignment with objectives, manages partnerships with various stakeholders, ensures the generation of value propositions and 'sells' the concept of the Lab to new potential beneficiaries.

- Policy/innovation specialist – leads the identification, testing and scaling-up of impactful policy options and development solutions for prioritized complex challenges, taking into consideration the needs of the member states.

- Research and data lead – conducts research, gathers evidence, develops the new 'data collaboratives', and provides insights to inform evidence-based policymaking and solution generation.

- Capacity-building and training specialist – designs and delivers the core capacity-building programmes to enhance evidence-based policy-making skills among Lab participants and beneficiaries.

- Communication and outreach lead – develops and implements strategies to advocate for the adoption of evidence-based policies and solutions by member states and relevant agencies, and ensures high visibility of the Lab's activities.

- Knowledge exchange and collaboration facilitator – facilitates knowledge sharing, collaboration and learning among Lab participants and stakeholders.

GOVERNANCE

The governance of the UNOSSC Lab will be overseen by a Steering Committee (membership to be determined), which will be responsible for providing strategic direction, overseeing execution, and ensuring transparency and accountability.

Steering Committee provides strategic guidance

Guides strategies, oversees implementation, and ensures transparency and accountability

Members from member states, the United Nations and partners

Balanced representation from different stakeholders

Open and competitive member selection

Porposed two-year terms, renewable once

Source: UNOSSC

The Lab will establish diverse partnerships, including with governments, international organizations, businesses, start-ups, civil society and academia, to mobilize resources, share knowledge and foster collaborative capacity-building. Stakeholder engagement ensures community relevance, involving local governments, civil society, academia and the private sector in research, pilot projects and capacity-building initiatives.

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CONCLUSION

The creation and operationalization of this Lab are imperative for addressing the intertwined and evolving challenges in sustainable human development. Traditional, linear, ad hoc and isolated approaches have neither yielded the desired results nor ensured sustainability in addressing the multifaceted issues at hand. Thus, the Lab will serve as a pivotal platform that will facilitate the scaling and replication of impactful strategies. By emphasizing rigorous impact evaluation, the Lab will identify replicable strategies that can be scaled for broader influence. It will also bridge the following existing gaps: limited learning and knowledge exchange, an inadequate focus on impact assessment, and insufficient visibility of effective methodologies across various contexts.

By enabling collaborative efforts and robust evaluation, the UNOSSC South-South and Triangular Cooperation Solutions Lab will serve as an essential tool for devising sustainable, adaptable and impactful solutions to complex development challenges.

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