

## Draft Concept Note

### **Leveraging South-South and Triangular Cooperation to Accelerate Transformation Towards Sustainable Development: Launch of an E-Module for the UN Development System at the Country and Regional level**

**Co-organizers:** United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation (UNOSSC) and UN Development Cooperation Office (UNDCO)

**Collaborating partners:** FAO, PAHO, UNFPA, WFP and UN System Staff College

**Date and time:** 10 February 2025; 8 AM – 9:30 AM (EST/New York Time)

**Venue:** Hybrid - *Doha Conference Room, 304 E. 45<sup>th</sup> Street; FF Building 11<sup>th</sup> Floor and on zoom*

#### **Background**

The 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) strongly anchored South-South and triangular cooperation as key means of implementation. Successful implementation of the 17 SDGs depends on a comprehensive framework that goes beyond official development assistance (ODA) commitments. SDG 17 highlights enhancing North-South cooperation, South-South and triangular cooperation, regional and international cooperation and access to science, technology, and innovation, knowledge sharing, data for policymaking and capacity building on mutually agreed terms, including through improved coordination among existing mechanisms, particularly within the UN System. Hence, the potential of South-South and triangular cooperation is still to be fully unleashed to be able to serve as a vehicle for a more transformative development cooperation.

The [United Nations System-wide Strategy on South-South and Triangular Cooperation for Sustainable Development](#), endorsed by the Executive Committee chaired by the Secretary-General in August 2020 (Decision 2020/38), aims to provide system-wide policy orientation to United Nations entities to increase the impact of South-South and triangular cooperation across United Nations activities at all levels: i.e., national, regional and global. It is intended to enable United Nations entities to be better positioned to coordinate policies and programmatic support on South-South and triangular cooperation, to support national priorities, and to drive forward the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs.

#### **South-South and triangular cooperation at regional and country level**

The UN General Assembly (UNGA) resolutions on South-South cooperation (A/RES/76/221 A/RES/77/185 and A/RES/78/167) give a strong mandate to the United Nations system and the Regional Commissions to implement the Strategy at the regional and country levels. The UNGA recognized the importance of the United Nations system-wide strategy on South-South and triangular cooperation and called upon the United Nations development system to continue mainstreaming South-South and triangular cooperation into the United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Frameworks (UNSDCFs), at the country level, as appropriate and called upon the United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation (UNOSSC) to work with the Regional Commissions to mainstream South-South and triangular cooperation, including through regional collaborative frameworks as a means to accelerate the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its SDGs.

## Capacity Development Initiative

In line with this mandate, to implement the Strategy and translate it into action at the country and regional level, in 2023, UNOSSC developed guidance for UN Country Teams and UN entities at the Regional level to support them in mainstreaming of South-South and triangular cooperation in UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Frameworks at country level and UN planning/ monitoring instruments at regional level. The Guidance was prepared through a consultative process involving members of the UN Inter-Agency Mechanism on South-South and triangular cooperation, UN Development Coordination Office (UNDCO), Regional Commissions and select Resident Coordinators/ Offices.

As a next step, UNOSSC, along with UNDCO and the UN Inter-Agency Mechanism embarked on a capacity development initiative to roll out the Guidelines and make them accessible to United Nations entities at the country and regional level so that they are better positioned to provide programmatic support on South-South and triangular cooperation to national partners, to accelerate progress towards national priorities and the 2030 Agenda. With the support of the UN System Staff College, a UN Task Team comprising several UN entities, and UNDCO, UNOSSC has converted the Guidelines into an E-module for UNCTs, Regional Commissions and the United Nations Development System (UNDS) at the Regional level.

## E-Module on South-South and Triangular Cooperation

The E-Module, a self-paced online module, will be launched at this event, along with the President of the High-level Committee on South-South Cooperation and key UN partners including EOSG, UNDCO, UNRCs, FAO, PAHO, UNFPA, UNSSC and WFP, along with members of the Inter-Agency Mechanism.

The successful roll-out of the guidelines and E-module for UN staff at the country and regional level will:

- Enhance understanding of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the role of South-South and triangular cooperation in achieving SDGs.
- Integrate South-South and triangular cooperation perspectives and thematic areas into UNSDCF and UNCT members' planning, implementation, monitoring, evaluation, and reporting, including Country Analysis (CCA) and the UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Frameworks (UNSDCF).
- Identify critical entry points and approaches to strategically engage in conceptualization and effectively utilize South-South and triangular cooperation initiatives to achieve sustainable national development objectives.
- Review and develop familiarity with existing modalities of institutionalization and tools, for South-South and triangular cooperation to deliver on sustainable development priorities effectively.
- Provide information on South-South and Triangular Cooperation knowledge sources, networks, and funding mechanisms including a number of trust funds created to finance, on demand, the development programmes and projects of two or more partner developing countries. For example, the [India, Brazil and South Africa Facility for Poverty and Hunger Alleviation \(IBSA Fund\)](#) and the [India-UN Development Partnership Fund \(including the Commonwealth Window\)](#).
- Share examples of UNCTs that have integrated South-South and triangular cooperation into their respective UNSDCFs. For example, the [India UNSDCF 2023-2027](#) identifies South-South and triangular cooperation as a strategy to facilitate investments in

research, technology and innovations. South-South cooperation and triangular cooperation are integrated as enablers and facilitators in each UNSDCF priority area, a central focus of its partnership strategy and includes specific outputs related to South-South and triangular cooperation efforts; the [China UNSDCF, 2021-2025](#) positions South-South and triangular cooperation as critical components of its international development cooperation strategy; the [Kenya UNSDCF 2022-2026](#) includes an indicator to capture development assistance and South-South Cooperation as a proportion of total domestic budget that benefits people in Kenya at risk of being left behind; the [Rwanda UNSDCF 2018-2024](#) emphasizes regional cooperation as a priority for the government to promote national and regional peace for resilient and sustainable development; the [Saudi Arabia UNSDCF 2022-2026](#) highlights the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia's interest to forge inclusive and sustainable global partnerships through effective capacity-building in developing countries to support national plans to implement all the SDGs, including through North- South, South-South, and triangular cooperation; and [the Arab Republic of Egypt UNSDCF 2023-2027](#) emphasizes regional integration and South-South trade relationships to open additional trade and investment opportunities for Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) and South-South knowledge exchanges with other countries to improve the business environment and eco-system and to stimulate sustainable and inclusive industrialization, investments, and job creation.

As a next step, UNOSSC will conduct surveys to ascertain the needs of UN Resident Coordinators and UNCTs for technical assistance to mainstream South-South and triangular cooperation in UNSDCFs.

### **Organizers**

The Development Cooperation Office supports UN Resident Coordinators in coordinating activities across UNCTs and ensures the preparation of UN programming tools such as the Common Country Analysis and the UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCFs). The role of DCO and RCs is critical to the rollout of the Guidelines for UNCTs and Regional level entities and the Capacity Development initiative to better leverage global, regional, and country-level capacities and resources to support national partners in leveraging South-South and triangular cooperation to accelerate progress towards SDGs.

UNOSSC was established to promote and coordinate South-South and triangular cooperation globally and on a UN system-wide basis. UNOSSC coordinates the Inter-Agency Mechanism for South-South and triangular cooperation comprising focal points from over 40 UN entities and is the Secretariat to the UN High-level Committee.

### **Partnerships**

UNOSSC has engaged in partnerships for the preparation of the E-module.

The UN System Staff College was created to equip the UN and its partners with the knowledge, skills, and behaviors to implement the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. It has designed and delivered capacity development programs for several UN entities, including on South-South and triangular cooperation. Their comparative advantage is in the in-depth understanding of the learning and knowledge needs of the UN system and their experience in

delivering high-quality learning experiences and solutions that support professionals along their learning journeys.

UNOSSC also invited collaboration with other UN entities to be part of a coalition to roll out the capacity development initiative for staff of United Nations entities at the country and regional level. The E-module was a joint endeavor and was co-financed by FAO, PAHO, UNFPA, UNOSSC and WFP. A UN Task Team contributed to the content and review of the modules. The task team is comprised of FAO, WFP, UNECE, ECLAC, ECA, ESCAP, UNFPA, UNDCO (NY and LAC region), PAHO, UNDP, ILO, UNEP, IOM, UNICEF, and UNOSSC.

## **Objectives**

The event will aim at:

- Launching the E-Module on South-South and Triangular Cooperation for the United Nations Country Teams and Regional UN Development System Entities
- Giving a thrust to the ongoing efforts of the UN system at the country and regional level in supporting national governments to leverage South-South and Triangular Cooperation as effective means of implementation for the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs;
- Showcasing good examples of UN System support to South-South cooperation, in action at the country level, including through the mainstreaming of South-South and triangular cooperation into UNSDCFs and regional collaborative frameworks to support the acceleration of the SDGs;
- Highlighting the mechanisms, knowledge resources and financing as well as UNOSSC service offer, available to governments and the UN system at country and regional level for South-South and triangular cooperation;

## **Participation**

The hybrid event will bring together UN Resident Coordinators and their Offices, UN Country Teams, UN Development Coordination Offices at the regional level, UN Entities at the regional level and Regional Commissions and UN Entity HQs.

## Agenda

Time	Description
8:05-8:10	Welcome Remarks by <b>Ms. Dima Al-khatib</b> , Director, UNOSSC
8:10-8:15	Opening Remarks by <b>Ms. Helena Fraser, Chief, Policy &amp; Programming Branch</b> , UN DCO
8:15-8:20	Launch of E-Module (Photo-op)
8:20-8:30	Demo of module, UN System Staff College
8:30-8:45	Panel discussion with UN collaborating partners on E-Modules and roll-out plans at regional and country level (FAO, PAHO, UNFPA, WFP)
8:45-9:25	Open Discussion on roll-out of E-modules: Reflections from regions and country level – <b>Moderated by Roberto Valente, DCO LAC Regional Director (TBC)</b>  Moderator will invite Interventions by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>UN Resident Coordinators</b></li><li>• <b>DCO Regional Directors</b></li><li>• <b>Regional Commission Head of NY Office</b></li></ul>
9:25-9:30	Wrap-up and Closing Remarks by <b>Ms. Dima Al-khatib</b> , Director, UNOSSC