

## Information Note and Program

# Developing National Ecosystems for South-South and Triangular Cooperation to Achieve Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development

On the Sidelines of the UN General Assembly  
26 September 2019, 11 a.m. – 1 p.m.

United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation Conference Room

304 East 45<sup>th</sup> Street, FF-1120  
New York, 10017, USA

### 1. Background

It has been 40 years since the adoption of the Buenos Aires Plan of Action for Promoting and Implementing Technical Cooperation among Developing Countries (BAPA). The plan of action, signed by 138 countries in 1979, charted a way forward in terms of promoting the development of stronger ties among the countries of the South, through stronger technical, financial, social and political cooperation. Since then, South-South cooperation (SSC) has become a significant tool to link countries, especially to share know-how, expertise, technology and resources in order to solve development challenges, while preserving the principles of solidarity and respect for sovereignty.

Furthermore, Northern partners and multilateral development institutions have also supported exchanges between Southern countries, through an arrangement referred to as South-South and triangular cooperation (SSTrC).

The countries of the South met again in Buenos Aires, Argentina, from 20 to 22 March 2019 in order to commemorate the 40th year of BAPA at the second High-level United Nations Conference on South-South Cooperation (BAPA+40) and to take stock of achievements, challenges and opportunities in SSTrC. At the same time, the participating countries agreed on an Outcome Document which reinforces the long-standing principles of SSTrC as a solidarity-based development cooperation mechanism which aims to contribute to agenda 2030.

Taking into consideration its long-standing experience in SSTrC, the Bank actively contributed to the preparatory stages of BAPA+40 since November 2017. One of the main activities that the Bank undertook in preparation for BAPA+40 was the formulation of a paper on “Enhancing National Ecosystems for SSTrC”.

The paper was formulated in cooperation with the technical cooperation agencies of the IsDB member countries, the South Centre and the United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation (UNOSSC) on the premise that strong institutional arrangements—referred to

as national ecosystems by IsDB—are vital for countries to be effectively and efficiently engaged in SSTRc.

The national ecosystem for SSTRc could vary from one country to another based on the economic, political and cultural circumstances. However, certain elements may be considered as key pillars of a strong national ecosystem for SSTRc. These pillars include political will, national strategy for SSTRc, national body for SSTRc, connected actors, financing mechanism, information bases, and performance management framework on SSTRc.

The preliminary findings of the paper, including the pillars of the national ecosystem for SSTRc, were presented at an event at BAPA+40 organized by IsDB, in collaboration with the South Centre and UNOSSC. During the event, IsDB's concept on national ecosystems received wide endorsement from the various partners, including the country representatives.

Following the deliberations at the IsDB's event at BAPA+40, and the feedback of the various technical cooperation agencies of IsDB's member countries, IsDB finalized its paper on national ecosystems for SSTRc in collaboration with the South Centre and UNOSSC. In addition, IsDB has prepared the "Capacity Development Program for Enhancing National Ecosystems for South-South and Triangular Cooperation" as a direct response to the recommendations highlighted in the BAPA+40 Outcome Document which will support the strengthening of various pillars of the member countries' national ecosystems based on demand.

## **2. Rationale**

Developing countries undertake SSTRc in different ways, using various approaches, institutional arrangements, and methodologies at the national level, influenced by various factors, including, but not limited to, existing capacities at the institutional, organizational, and human levels. While a lot has been achieved since 1955, the pace of improvements in national institutional frameworks has lagged behind the fast development of SSTRc. This is a constraint for unleashing the full potential of SSTRc.

The increasing complexity and sophistication as well as the substantial scale of SSTRc call for improved and effective institutional arrangements. The Islamic Development Bank (IsDB), based on its experiences in both field and analytical work in SSTRc and through in-depth discussions and exploration, together with its member countries, has identified the main pillars of an effective national institutional framework—or a "national ecosystem"—for SSTRc.

In order to contribute to the discussion on the importance of national ecosystems for SSTRc, IsDB and the South Centre partnered to formulate a paper that offers an overview of the currently existing national institutional arrangements set up by developing countries for

SSTrC and highlights the importance of strong national ecosystems for successful engagement in and contribution to SSTrC.

The paper takes into consideration the experiences of the countries of the South, as well as the experiences of IsDB and the South Centre in their capacities as multilateral development institutions and think tanks addressing development concerns of their respective member countries. The paper identifies the good practices and lessons learned from the experiences of developing countries that could be used for strengthening national ecosystems for SSTrC.

The preliminary outcomes of the subject paper were presented at the BAPA+40 and received wide endorsement. In the Outcome Document, the need to strengthen institutional arrangements for SSTrC—i.e. national ecosystems— was specifically mentioned as a key recommendation.

At the same time, the IsDB member countries highlighted the need to operationalize this concept of national ecosystems in order to enhance their country's capacity to engage in SSTrC in more effective ways. As a direct response to the recommendations of the BAPA+40 and in line with the outcomes of its paper on the subject, the Bank then formulated the "Capacity Development Program to Enhance National Ecosystems for SSTrC in IsDB Member Countries".

The UN General Assembly (UNGA) provides a major opportunity for the Bank to showcase and brand its concept of national ecosystems for SSTrC as a unique intellectual product of IsDB that contributes to the body of knowledge on SSTrC. It will also provide the necessary platform to raise awareness about the Bank's capacity development program on the subject, which will help position the Bank as a key player in SSTrC while also supporting the Bank's efforts to raise additional financial resources for the program.

### **3. Objectives of the Event**

The objectives of the event are to:

- i. Present IsDB's concept on national ecosystems for SSTrC and how it contributes to achieving agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development;
- ii. Launch IsDB's paper entitled "Developing National Ecosystems for South-South and Triangular Cooperation for Achieving agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development"; and
- iii. Present the outlines of the Bank's "Capacity Development Program on Enhancing National Ecosystems for SSTrC for the IsDB Member Countries".

#### **4. Issues to be Addressed**

During the event, the following issues will be addressed:

- i. The role of SSTRC as key mechanism to achieve the national development goals of the countries of the Global South and how IsDB has been playing a role since its inception in this regard;
- ii. The Bank's concept of national ecosystems for SSTRC and how it formulates a structured approach to understanding and defining institutional arrangements for effective engagement in SSTRC; and
- iii. The need to continuously develop capacity of the national ecosystems for SSTRC in the countries of the Global South, including the member countries of IsDB, in order to fully benefit from the potential of SSTRC in economic development.

#### **5. Expected Outcomes of the Event**

The expected outcomes of the event are as follows:

- i. The IsDB's paper on "Enhancing National Ecosystems for South-South and Triangular Cooperation to Achieve Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development" will be a key contribution to the body of knowledge on SSTRC, thereby, further strengthening the position of IsDB as a key player in this area;
- ii. The event will help to strengthen demand for interventions, with IsDB's facilitation, for developing national ecosystems for SSTRC; and
- iii. IsDB, UNOSSC and the South Centre will be able to deepen their partnership and create synergies for improving national institutional arrangements for SSTRC, among other areas of cooperation.

#### **6. Date and Venue of the Event**

The event will be held on 26 September 2019 at the conference room of the United Nations Office of South-South Cooperation (UNOSSC) in New York from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m.

#### **7. Targeted Audience**

This event targets Ministers and policy-makers from IsDB member countries, permanent representatives of Missions to the United Nations based in New York, representatives of development partners and donor agencies.

## 8. Program of the Event

Time	Session	Speakers / Panelists
10:30–11:00	Arrival of Guests	
		H.E. Dr. Bandar Hajjar President, Islamic Development Bank Group
11:00–11:30	Welcoming Remarks	H.E. Dr. Carlos Correa Executive Director of the South Centre  Mr. Jorge Chediek Director, United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation, and Envoy of the Secretary-General on South-South Cooperation
11:30–11:40	Launching of the IsDB Publication: “Developing National Ecosystems for South-South and Triangular Cooperation to Achieve Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development”	Dr. Abdulhakim Elwaer IsDB Group Spokesperson and the Adviser to the President on Global Advocacy
		H.E. Dr. Riad Malki Minister of Foreign Affairs and Expatriates, State of Palestine  H.E. Amb. Mr. Adonia Ayebare Permanent Representative, Permanent Mission of Uganda to the United Nations
11:40–12:50	Panel Discussion – Q&A Importance of Developing National Institutional Arrangements to Support SSTRc  Moderated by: Mr. Jean-Michel Happi Director, Country Strategy & Cooperation Department, Islamic Development Bank	H.E. Amb. Mohamed Methqal Director General, Moroccan Agency for International Cooperation  Ms. Ana Ciuti Director General, International Cooperation, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Worship, Argentina  Mr. Jorge Chediek Director, United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation, and Envoy of the Secretary-General on South-South Cooperation  Prof. Yuefen Li Senior Adviser, South-South Cooperation and Development Finance, South Centre
12:50–13:00	Concluding Remarks	Mr. Jorge Chediek Director, United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation, and Envoy of the Secretary-General on South-South Cooperation

## **9. Focal Points of the Co-organizing Institutions**

### *IsDB*

- Mr. Ahmed Faruk Diken, Senior Technical Cooperation Coordinator, Reverse Linkage
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### *UNOSSC*

- Mr. Tarik Iziraren, Deputy Director for Policy and Strategic Partnership
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### *South Centre*

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