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**South-South cooperation**

**Draft strategic framework of the United Nations Office for  
South-South Cooperation, 2018-2021**

*Summary*

This strategic framework is designed to guide the work of the United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation (UNOSSC) from 2018 to 2021 in support of efforts of Member States to implement the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development through South-South alliances and partnerships. Building on its previous framework for 2014-2017 (DP/CF/SSC/5), UNOSSC will support intergovernmental processes that set policies to further advance South-South cooperation across the United Nations system. The Office will also catalyze greater research and analysis to inform South-South policies and programmes of both Member States and United Nations system while forging partnerships and mobilizing resources. The overarching goal of UNOSSC under this framework is to support Member States efforts to achieve the eradication of poverty in all its forms and to promote gender equality and women's empowerment so as to achieve the 2030 Agenda through enhanced South-South cooperation, including triangular cooperation.

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## I. Introduction

1. Leveraging the abilities of all actors in development and enabling developing countries to inform and support each other are at the heart of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.<sup>1</sup> South-South cooperation as a complement to, not a substitute for, North-South development cooperation is a unique asset for knowledge exchange and the mutually beneficial transfer of appropriate and tested solutions.<sup>2</sup>

2. The strategic framework of the United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation (UNOSSC) for 2018-2021 articulates the UNOSSC mandate, development context, lessons learned, and vision and programme for that period. The overarching goal of the strategic framework is to bring South-South and triangular cooperation to bear in support of the efforts of Member States to eradicate poverty in all its forms and dimensions and to secure peace and prosperity while promoting gender equality and women's empowerment on a healthy planet.

3. The framework sets out how UNOSSC plans to spur coordinated and coherent support to South-South and triangular cooperation across the United Nations system and other intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations active in developmental, humanitarian and related fields. It also explains how UNOSSC will, at request and with consent, help to boost Member States institutional capacities for South-South cooperation, including through the provision of knowledge products to inform evidence-based policy choices and programmes. In addition, the framework describes how UNOSSC will reinforce its support to developing countries through stronger multi-stakeholder partnerships to galvanize South-South and triangular collective action among actors in government, civil society, academia and the private sector during the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and related international agreements.

## II. Mandate

4. UNOSSC is the focal point for promoting and facilitating South-South and triangular cooperation for development on a global and United Nations system-wide basis (A/72/237). Its strategic framework responds to General Assembly resolution 71/243 in which the General Assembly "reiterates that the United Nations development system should mainstream and enhance its support to South-South and triangular cooperation, at the request and with the ownership and leadership of developing countries, through a system-wide approach" (para. 23). The framework further responds to the needs expressed by world leaders to enhance South-South and triangular cooperation partnerships as means of implementing the 2030 Agenda.

## III. Principles and strategic objectives

5. The Nairobi outcome document stresses that "South-South cooperation and its agenda have to be set by countries of the South and should continue to be guided by the principles of respect for national sovereignty, national ownership and independence, equality, non-conditionality, non-interference in domestic affairs and mutual benefit".<sup>3</sup> The United Nations has an obligation to help to strengthen collaborative relations among developing countries considering its convening power, global reach, country presence, technical expertise and impartiality. This is no less true in the area of South-South and triangular cooperation. Recent years have seen intensified commitments to South-South and triangular cooperation from an increasing number

<sup>1</sup> SG Report: "Repositioning the United Nations development system to deliver on the 2030 Agenda: our promise for dignity, prosperity and peace on a healthy planet" A/72/684-E/2-18/7, para. 141.

<sup>2</sup> A/72/124, para. 42.

<sup>3</sup> A/64/222, para. 11.

of stakeholders in tandem with growing demand from developing countries for capacity support for South-South and triangular cooperation.

6. The strategic direction that UNOSSC will take is also informed by Member States requests to strengthen the Office in order for it to serve as a vital mechanism that ensures coherent and coordinated support to South-South and triangular cooperation across the United Nations system. To that end, Member States, in decisions 18/1 and 18/IM/1 of the High-level Committee on South-South Cooperation and in resolutions 69/239 and 70/222 of the General Assembly, requested the Secretary-General to present a comprehensive proposal on ways to enhance the role and impact of UNOSSC. In response, and for consideration during the nineteenth session of the High-level Committee on South-South Cooperation in 2016, the Secretary-General presented his report on a comprehensive proposal on concrete ways to enhance the role and impact of the United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation as well as the key measures taken to improve the coordination and coherence of United Nations support to South-South cooperation (SSC/19/2).

7. The programme of work that UNOSSC proposes in section VI of this framework towards facilitating the eradication of poverty in all its forms responds to Member States requests. The framework is also informed by the priorities and objectives articulated by the Secretary-General in his comprehensive proposal (SSC/19/2), including: (a) providing effective secretariat support to intergovernmental bodies, including analytical reporting on trends and opportunities; (b) coordinating coherent United Nations system support to South-South and triangular cooperation, and monitoring and reporting on the mainstreaming of that cooperation; (c) forging strategic South-South and triangular partnerships; (d) mapping Southern development solutions and becoming a robust knowledge hub on South-South and triangular cooperation; (e) undertaking outreach, advocacy and strategic communication on issues of critical importance to the South that call for South-South solutions; and (f) mobilizing resources and managing existing funds and others to be established for South-South cooperation within the purview of the Office (para. 22).

8. UNOSSC recognizes that developing countries need support to gain increased access to the knowledge and expertise of other countries of the South and the capacity to identify potential Southern partners. Surveys have identified these needs in areas such as, but not limited to, industry, trade and investment, knowledge and technology transfer, economic growth and employment, and environment and natural resources.<sup>4</sup>

9. Other objectives pursued under the present framework aim to support the United Nations development system to better address the opportunities and challenges posed by a rising global South. The Secretary-General has expressed his intention to work with UNOSSC and the United Nations Development Programme to formulate proposals to revamp United Nations structures and mechanisms in support South-South cooperation. He has also tasked UNOSSC to coordinate, in consultation with the United Nations agencies, the preparation of a United Nations system-wide South-South cooperation strategy to achieve more coherent and coordinated support by the United Nations system.<sup>5</sup> According to the Secretary-General, this preparatory work will inform the deliberations of the second High-level United Nations Conference on South-South Cooperation on the occasion of the fortieth anniversary of the adoption of the Buenos Aires Plan of Action for Promoting and Implementing Technical Cooperation among Developing Countries to be held in Argentina in March 2019. UNOSSC will respond accordingly to the deliberations and decisions emerging from that conference.

10. To enhance the United Nations capacity to support South-South cooperation, the Secretary-General, following the advice of his Executive Committee, requested UNOSSC to: (a) consider commissioning an independent annual comprehensive report on United Nations support to South-South cooperation; and (b) conduct a mapping of major development cooperation

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<sup>4</sup> A/70/62-E/2015/4.

<sup>5</sup> A/72/297, para. 94.

activities led by the South and key South-South cooperation providers, assessing possible linkages with the 2030 Agenda and opportunities for United Nations engagement (A/72/297).

11. UNOSSC is institutionally hosted by UNDP. Under the strategic framework, and while responding to Member States needs in line with its mandate, the framework will also, to the extent possible, complement the strategic plans of UNDP and other United Nations entities with the objective, further mainstream and enhance United Nations development system's support to Member States, as called for in the 2016 quadrennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities for development of the United Nations system.

12. Recognizing the contribution of South-South cooperation in promoting gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls in sustainable development, the Office will encourage further efforts to mainstream gender perspectives into South-South cooperation.

13. The work of UNOSSC under its strategic framework for 2018-2021 aims to enable the United Nations system to promote South-South and triangular cooperation in accordance with the principles laid out in the Nairobi outcome document of the 2009 High-level United Nations Conference on South-South Cooperation and the 1978 Buenos Aires Plan of Action for Promoting and Implementing Technical Cooperation among Developing Countries. UNOSSC also seeks to breathe new life into South-South cooperation through strengthened global partnerships among different stakeholders, including the Group of 77 and China (G-77), development partners from the North, the private sector, civil society organizations and other relevant actors.

#### **IV. Past cooperation, results and lessons learned**

14. The present framework builds on the lessons learned from the evaluation of the implementation of the UNOSSC strategic framework, 2014-2017 (DP/CF/SSC/5).<sup>6</sup> The external independent mid-term and final assessments of that strategic framework stated that under the framework, UNOSSC had contributed significantly to promoting the principles of South-South and triangular cooperation.

15. The review found that UNOSSC had successfully carried out much of the work pertaining to the servicing of the High-level Committee on South-South Cooperation and the General Assembly through the successful delivery of documents and background reports that provided a basis for policy discussions and negotiations of South-South resolutions. The number of United Nations agencies that contributed to the reports prepared by UNOSSC increased considerably over the period of the previous framework. During the first two years of the framework, only seven United Nations agencies, including regional commissions, provided inputs to those reports. In 2016, that number rose to 11, and by 2017, 23 United Nations organizations reported on their South-South and triangular cooperation activities through UNOSSC.

16. The designation of the Director of UNOSSC by the Secretary-General as his Envoy on South-South Cooperation reflected a recognition of the value and importance of the work of the Office. The assessments of the Office noted that stakeholders now view the Office as the main focal point for South-South and triangular cooperation within the United Nations system.

17. While the thematic dialogues on South-South cooperation that UNOSSC organizes in conjunction with biennial sessions of the High-level Committee are insightful, the Office and its partners would benefit from a more frequent convening of experts and practitioners on

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<sup>6</sup> Final evaluation of the performance of the United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation under its strategic framework, 2014-2017, in light of the adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

South-South cooperation to support the achievement of specific Sustainable Development Goals and targets, especially areas where significant gaps have been identified in the second report of the Secretary-General entitled *Repositioning the United Nations development system to deliver on the 2030 Agenda: our promise for dignity, prosperity and peace on a healthy planet* (A/72/684-E/2018/7).

18. The growing number of United Nations organizations that have established units dedicated to the promotion of South-South and triangular cooperation heighten the need for UNOSSC to bolster coordinated and coherent support to South-South cooperation across the United Nations system. This need will be addressed through output 1.2 of the strategic framework, 2018-2021.

19. Through national and inter-agency focal points, UNOSSC has catalyzed the mainstreaming of South-South cooperation into the operational work of the United Nations at the country level. Continued efforts to this end will be critical to the integration of South-South cooperation into measures to implement the 2030 Agenda through United Nations system-wide coordination instruments and approaches, including the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) and Delivering-as-One approaches.

20. UNOSSC entered into innovative new partnership agreements with the Governments of Honduras and Panama along with the United Nations country teams in those countries, bringing together all three parties to promote and support the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals through expanded South-South cooperation, including triangular collaboration. Arrangements such as these will enable stronger development outcomes through South-South cooperation to contribute to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and national development priorities.

21. UNOSSC has reinforced the management practices of development cooperation agencies in charge of South-South cooperation, for example through the Capacity Development in Management of South-South and Triangular Cooperation project launched with the support of the Brazilian Cooperation Agency and the Japan International Cooperation Agency.

22. Although the capacity of UNOSSC to serve as a knowledge hub for South-South cooperation stems from its many publications such as those in the series *Sharing Innovative Experiences*, *Southern Innovator* magazine, *Good Practices in South-South and Triangular Cooperation for Sustainable Development* and the new series *South-South in Action*, the Office needs to build on this record through greater collaboration with groups such as the South-South Global Thinkers: The Global Coalition of Think Tank Networks for South-South Cooperation (South-South Global Thinkers initiative) and other knowledge-sharing initiatives of the South and of the North.

23. The Global South-South Development (GSSD) Expos in 2016 (Dubai) and 2017 (Antalya) were deemed successful in engaging Member States, United Nations agencies and other diverse partners to dialogue, showcase proven development solutions for scaling up, share good practices and forge partnerships. There is a need for follow-up mechanisms to ensure that these events yield demonstrable development impact.

24. The funds managed by UNOSSC, including the United Nations Fund for South-South Cooperation (UNFSSC), the Pérez-Guerrero Trust Fund for South-South Cooperation (PGTF) of the Group of 77, the India-UN Development Partnership Fund, and the India, Brazil and South Africa Facility for Poverty and Hunger Alleviation (IBSA Fund) have had notable impact, particularly in least developed countries (LDCs) and small island developing States (SIDS).

25. UNOSSC has engaged with Member States for them to provide much-needed staff assistance for both headquarters and regional offices through its secondment programme. Responding to calls from the General Assembly<sup>7</sup> and the High-level Committee on South-South

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<sup>7</sup> A/72/237, para. 9.

Cooperation, the Government of Thailand has seconded two people to the UNOSSC Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific, and Sweden is supporting a staff position at UNOSSC headquarters. It has been recommended that the Office expand this programme, and Member States in a position to do so are encouraged to strengthen the Office through staff support. UNOSSC will thus encourage Member States to second staff to its headquarters and regional offices as the need arises.

26. Some activities under the UNOSSC strategic framework, 2014-2017, changed or were phased out during the final two years, following recommendations of the mid-term review.

27. A 2016 audit by the UNDP Office of Audit and Investigations (OAI) covering all activities of UNOSSC resulted in 16 recommendations,<sup>8</sup> all of which were fully implemented by the Office by the end of 2017.

## V. Situation analysis

28. Countries of the South are intensifying their cooperation with each other to accelerate the attainment of sustainable peace and prosperity. Global growth slowed following the financial crisis of 2008-2009 but the current upward trend is largely attributable to the performance and recovery of emerging economies and the South as a whole. Growing Southern economies are steering South-South exchanges that benefit many countries in the global South. However, external forces could continue to hinder socioeconomic progress across the developing world.<sup>9</sup> This suggests a greater need for nuanced policy responses and actions if the promise of the 2030 Agenda to eradicate poverty in all its forms is to be realized by 2030.

29. In this context, developing countries affirm the value of North-South development cooperation and its emphasis on the norms and social services including health, education and environmental conservation that help to expand an individual's life choices. Moreover, the South underscores that poverty eradication is to be its top priority, and developing countries increasingly turn to each other for trade, investment, infrastructure development, the boosting of agricultural productivity and demand-driven cooperation to complement, not to be a substitute for, North-South forms of development cooperation.

30. Emerging economies have given the South a greater voice in global governance mechanisms such as the Group of 20. The South has also added new momentum to South-South socioeconomic interactions and maintained a degree of international solidarity amid anti-globalization sentiments, nationalism and related opposition to international agreements in some parts of the world. Emerging economies are also championing major South-South cooperation platforms such as the One Belt, One Road initiative of China and the India-led International Solar Alliance. These endeavours offer frameworks for South-South cooperation that hold out promise for the realization of the 2030 Agenda by many countries including those under difficult development circumstances, such as LDCs, SIDS and landlocked developing countries (LLDCs). Recent years have also witnessed a notable rise of South-South foreign direct investment to LLDCs from Southern emerging economies.

31. Developing countries additionally leverage South-South cooperation as a means to respond to the many challenges that they face such as access to affordable technology, medicines and many other goods and services. South-South investments present new connections and channels for transferring standards, affordable technologies, knowledge and business models across borders and regions, often reaching the very poor in remote places. Southern companies with the ability to design business models and technologies suited to the circumstances of the South

<sup>8</sup> UNDP, Office of Audit and Investigations (OAI), Audit of United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation: Follow-up of Audit Report No. 1580 dated 24 February 2016 (Updated: 2 May 2016). Report No. 1754 dated 22 February 2017.

<sup>9</sup> United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, *Trade and Development Report 2017*, p. 1.

enable developing countries to acquire such innovations, which they might adopt faster than through investments from the North.<sup>10</sup>

32. An important new feature on the global landscape is the institutions that developing countries have established to advance South-South cooperation. The Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank is projected to provide \$10 billion to \$15 billion in loans annually over the coming decade. By some estimates, the New Development Bank established by Brazil, the Russian Federation, India, China and South Africa (BRICS) would be capable of providing \$3.4 billion in loans annually by 2024, and close to \$9 billion by 2034. Notably, the new South-led banks respond to the enormous challenges that developing countries face to finance investments in infrastructure. BRICS countries established the New Development Bank to address the difficulty of securing long-term financing, which is a root cause of the gap between the demand and the supply of infrastructure financing in developing countries.<sup>11</sup>

33. The contribution of developing countries to international development cooperation continues to rise. After the adoption of the 2030 Agenda, the Addis Ababa Action Agenda and the Paris Agreement, India and China launched several initiatives that elevated South-South development cooperation to a higher level. In 2016, India announced a \$10 billion concessional credit line to Africa over a period of five years, further to \$600 million in grant assistance, plus an earlier line-of-credit programme that India had extended to Africa. China established a \$2 billion fund to assist developing countries towards the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, thus launching its South-South cooperation fund. In addition, many developing countries in crisis situations receive South-South humanitarian assistance from partner countries in the developing world.

34. Despite the gains described above, the uneven pace of global economic recovery threatens the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals by LDCs in Africa and parts of Asia where many countries have not returned to healthy growth. Nearly a billion people have escaped poverty since 1999 but about 767 million remain in fragile circumstances.<sup>12</sup>

35. Hence, the surge in South-South cooperation raises a fresh need for more responsive policies, human capital, stronger institutions, multi-stakeholder partnerships and resources to harness fully the power of South-South initiatives in realizing the 2030 Agenda. The opportunities for UNOSSC and the rest of the development community to build on in this regard lie within existing South-South approaches, including peer-to-peer learning, exchanges of knowledge and experience, and networking; policy dialogues, advice and coordination; and training programmes, technical assistance and financial support to projects and programmes, among many other interventions.

36. The comparative advantages of South-South cooperation to be harnessed in the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals include: “the plurality and diversity of partners and partnerships as well as multi-stakeholder approaches; low transaction and implementation costs, and speed of service and project delivery; greater flexibility and absence of conditionality; use of national systems and capacities and demand-driven approaches; a focus on mutual benefit, equality of partners and complementarity of capacities; and recognition of respect for national ownership and policy space”.<sup>13</sup>

37. Leveraging these advantages in the application of South-South cooperation as means to implement the 2030 Agenda and related agreements requires increased support to existing Southern institutions and partners to strengthen their capacities to identify regional priorities, Southern solutions, and expertise. For example, South-South cooperation is key to spurring

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<sup>10</sup> Creating Opportunity in East Asia and the Pacific, International Finance Corporation, World Bank Group.

<sup>11</sup> Zhu Jiejun, New South-South Cooperation and the BRICS New Development Bank, BRICS Insights Paper No. 2.

<sup>12</sup> United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA), *Sustainable Development Goals Report 2017*.

<sup>13</sup> The Evolution of South-South Development Cooperation: Its Role in the Implementation of the 2030 Agenda and the Paris Agreement on Climate Change, DCF Policy Brief, No. 17, September 2017, p. 3.

investments in the infrastructure, industrialization and participation of Africa in regional and global value chains, as the 2063 Agenda envisages. Optimizing these advantages calls for better communication and outreach to strengthen the capacity of Governments to effectively manage national institutions responsible for South-South cooperation and the capacity of parliaments to better oversee results-oriented formulation, implementation and evaluation of South-South cooperation initiatives.

38. The interconnectedness of the Sustainable Development Goals underscores the need for multi-stakeholder knowledge platforms as tools to strengthen cutting-edge research to inform evidence-based South-South policymaking processes, partnership-building, resource mobilization and programming. Such platforms are also essential to galvanize the efforts of subnational, national, regional and global actors in government, civil society, academia, the private sector and multilateral financial institutions.

39. Multi-stakeholder partnerships provide UNOSSC and the United Nations system the means to support Member States as they formulate policies and programmes to deal with the challenges posed by the Sustainable Development Goals. Beyond this, it is important to envision new ways for developing countries to address the transitions due to emerging megatrends such as artificial intelligence, big data and robotics. Sustainable Development Goal 17 challenges the international community to form or strengthen South-South and triangular partnerships to help to unleash the transformative power of science, technology and innovation. Policies and actions responsive to this challenge could, for example, leverage Southern solutions to accelerate human progress through the facilitation of South-South collaborative research to generate knowledge, policy options and innovative measures to reduce carbon emissions, address housing shortages, increase nutritious food, and improve air quality and access to affordable medicine.

## VI. Vision and proposed programme

40. UNOSSC envisions a world where the international community leverages tested development solutions from the global South to enhance support to South-South cooperation as a complement to North-South cooperation so as to accelerate the eradication of poverty in all its forms and achieve peace and prosperity for all on a sustainable planet.

41. UNOSSC proposes to focus its work under the strategic framework, 2018-2021, on three strategic outcomes targeting: (a) the advancement of policy choices for South-South and triangular cooperation and coordinated United Nations system support to such cooperation; (b) capacity development through the sharing of knowledge and experiences; and (c) the forging of strategic South-South and triangular partnerships to support demand-driven programmes.

**Outcome 1. Strengthened multilateral policymaking processes to advance Southern interests and development agenda, and enhanced coherence and coordination of United Nations support.**

42. The outputs of activities for the achievement of outcome 1 are:

*Output 1.1. Effective secretariat support provided to intergovernmental bodies to make informed and coherent decisions, including the provision of analytical reporting on South-South cooperation.*

UNOSSC will prepare annual reports of the Secretary-General on the state of South-South cooperation in close collaboration with relevant focal points in various United Nations specialized agencies, funds and programmes, and convene South-South issue-based dialogues and other high-level events for policymakers, experts and development practitioners to maintain political momentum.

UNOSSC will enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of the High-level Committee on South-South Cooperation, ensuring greater participation, especially by technical cooperation agencies, national authorities and other stakeholders in the work of the Committee. The Office will serve as the secretariat of the preparatory process of the Second High-level United Nations Conference on South-South Cooperation in compliance with relevant General Assembly resolutions and will lead the substantive preparations for the twentieth session of the High-level Committee on South-South Cooperation in June 2019 in response to relevant resolutions of the General Assembly and decisions of the High-level Committee. It will also continue to support the G-77 and China and other Southern constituencies in various undertakings, including the convening of the Third South Summit to be held in Africa in 2019. Through this work, UNOSSC will contribute to the formulation of sound global policies on South-South and triangular cooperation for the achievement of the 2030 Agenda and other internationally agreed development goals.

*Output 1.2. Coordinated and coherent United Nations system support provided to South-South and triangular cooperation, and progress in the mainstreaming of that cooperation monitored and reported.*

UNOSSC will lead a team of focal points for South-South and triangular cooperation of United Nations specialized agencies, funds and programmes to coordinate the preparation of a United Nations system-wide strategy on South-South cooperation, with a view to supporting South-South cooperation and triangular cooperation, as called for by the Secretary-General in his 2017 report on the state of South-South cooperation (A/72/297). UNOSSC will also establish and coordinate a formalized and effective inter-agency mechanism that expands the scope and mandate of the United Nations Development Group (UNDG) Task Team on South-South and Triangular Cooperation.

This strategy will aim to enhance the framework of South-South cooperation within the United Nations system, including through the updating of the framework of operational guidelines on United Nations support to South-South and triangular cooperation (SSC/19/3). It will also facilitate mainstreaming of South-South cooperation through training, capacity development workshops, learning events and coordinated United Nations system advocacy.

During major forums such as the annual GSSD Expo and the biennial sessions of the High-level Committee on South-South Cooperation, UNOSSC will organize inter-agency meetings and discussions on South-South cooperation.

The Office will facilitate the coordination and collaboration of United Nations agencies on South-South cooperation in key areas related to the Sustainable Development Goals and encourage national focal points for South-South cooperation to contribute to this process. In this regard, UNOSSC is collaborating with UN-Women and the United Nations Children's Fund, among other United Nations agencies and entities, in developing their own South-South cooperation strategies within their respective mandates.

Policy advisory services will be provided to national governments, the teams of the UNDG regional directors, United Nations country teams and United Nations resident coordinators to promote the inclusion of Southern development solutions and perspectives during the preparation of various development policies and strategies such as the common country assessments, UNDAFs, the Delivering-as-One approaches and national development plans for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. Also, UNOSSC will coordinate the work of the network of focal points for South-South cooperation across the United Nations system.

**Outcome 2. Capacities of Member States, the United Nations system and other partners in South-South and triangular cooperation strengthened through enhanced generation and sharing of knowledge and access to high-quality advisory services.**

43. The outputs of activities for the achievement of strategic outcome 2 are:

*Output 2.1. Expanded platform and network of key Southern stakeholders to map and share Southern development solutions and to advance thought leadership on South-South and triangular cooperation initiatives with the potential to accelerate the achievement of the 2030 Agenda.*

Through collaboration with United Nations entities and other stakeholders, UNOSSC will create a knowledge-sharing system, including Southern-led centres of excellence, to bolster access by Member States and partners to Southern evidence-based solutions in addressing common obstacles and thematic challenges to meeting the Sustainable Development Goals.

Additionally, the Office will continue to strengthen the Global Coalition of Think Tank Networks for South-South Cooperation in partnership with UNDP. This initiative will facilitate collaboration among the think tank networks to advance thought leadership and evidence-based research and development to inform policy dialogues and decision-making on South-South cooperation in the context of sustainable development.

UNOSSC will use the latest traditional and new media information and communications technologies to engage Member States, connect networks and deliver information of critical importance directly and instantaneously worldwide.

*Output 2.2. Developing countries and partner institutions are supported to create and share high-quality knowledge products.*

UNOSSC will collaborate with the Global Coalition of Think Tank Networks for South-South Cooperation to produce independent reports in consultation with Member States to improve the quantity and quality of data and analysis that developing countries need to strengthen their institutional capacities for the achievement of Sustainable Development Goals through South-South and triangular cooperation at the subregional, regional, interregional and national levels.

Thematic reports will be produced highlighting policy options and good practices for South-South cooperation in addressing pressing Sustainable Development Goal-related issues.

UNOSSC will map, document and disseminate Southern development solutions, thus building a robust knowledge hub for South-South and triangular cooperation. Publications such as those in the series South-South in Action will continue to be produced and disseminated in print and online together with online mapping tools.

*Output 2.3. Developing countries have access to high-quality advisory services on the application of knowledge to bolster their capacities in the context of the implementation of Agenda 2030.*

UNOSSC will organize or support capacity development workshops, seminars and learning events for development policymakers and practitioners on issues of importance identified by Southern countries. These include management of South-South cooperation; improved access by the poor to nutritious food, affordable medicine, safe drinking water, sanitation and clean technology; as well as gender equality and empowerment of women.

Through its regional offices, UNOSSC will identify, document and disseminate among subregional and regional institutions, including economic groupings, South-South policies and programmes that have proven effective in strengthening regional integration via the South-South provision of public goods and services.

UNOSSC will provide support to regional commissions and the United Nations resident coordinator system by enhancing the advisory capacity on South-South cooperation of interested offices of resident coordinators and facilitate secondments to such offices from interested Member States.

The Office will also promote widespread adoption by institutions of higher education of dedicated certification programmes and degrees in South-South cooperation, including bachelor's and master's degree programmes.

**Outcome 3. South-South and triangular cooperation partnership initiatives and demand-driven programmes facilitated to address sustainable development needs of developing countries.**

44. The outputs of activities for the achievement of outcome 3 are:

*Output 3.1. Multi-stakeholder partnerships forged and resources mobilized in order for the United Nations to coherently support demand-driven South-South and triangular cooperation initiatives and programmes.*

UNOSSC will continue to support Member States in enhancing and expanding their South-South cooperation efforts through strengthened partnerships, the mobilization of resources, and strategic engagements to facilitate experience-sharing, plus the matching of demands and capacities to meet them.

The Office will support Member States in providing policy guidance to the Boards of the IBSA Fund, PGTF, UNFSSC and the India-UN Partnership Development Fund as well as other emerging funds or programmes, in accordance with their respective modalities and terms of reference, as they design impactful portfolios of development interventions consistent with South-South cooperation principles.

The Office will increase its outreach and strategic communication to advocate for the programmatic needs of developing countries and to mobilize support for South-South initiatives undertaken by the global South at the subregional, regional and interregional levels.

*Output 3.2. South-South and triangular cooperation initiatives and programmes supported with coordinated assistance from the United Nations system.*

On a demand-driven basis and within the mandate, UNOSSC will support countries to exchange knowledge and development solutions in priority areas related to the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals and other internationally agreed development goals identified by the countries of the South

The second report of the Secretary-General entitled *Repositioning the United Nations development system to deliver on the 2030 Agenda: our promise for dignity, prosperity and peace on a healthy planet (A/72/684-E/2018/7)* recognizes the significant gaps in collective support for clean water and sanitation (Sustainable Development Goal 6), alternative and clean energy (Goal 7), industry, innovation and infrastructure (Goal 9), responsible consumption and production (Goal 12) and the environment (Goals 13, 14 and 15). It also showed that investment in gender equality and women's empowerment remains insufficient. These are also areas identified by developing countries, especially the LDCs, LLDCs and SIDS, that need priority attention from and the collective support of the United Nations system. Based on demands expressed by Member States, UNOSSC will coordinate the efforts of the United Nations system in support of South-South and triangular cooperation initiatives in these interlinked thematic areas that are crucial to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda.

UNOSSC will continue to organize South-South Development Expos that serve as the United Nations system-wide and global platform to showcase development solutions and initiatives of the South, to exchange knowledge and to build partnerships. It will also set up mechanisms to follow up on outcomes of the Expos and other initiatives.

## VII. Implementation arrangements

45. To deliver on the above commitments, UNOSSC will adopt the implementation arrangements described below to achieve the outcomes and outputs.

### *Fostering strategic partnerships*

46. The 2030 Agenda envisions a revitalized global partnership that leverages the resources of all stakeholders to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals. To this end, UNOSSC aims to forge at least 20 new strategic multi-stakeholder partnerships and leverage resources to support South-South and triangular programmes and initiatives. This will involve: (a) strengthening partnerships with individual Member States, groups of countries, and regional and interregional organizations; (b) forging multi-stakeholder partnerships with partners in civil society, academia and the private sector; (c) enhancing the coherence and coordination of United Nations support to South-South cooperation, including through the development of a United Nations system-wide strategy on South-South cooperation and the bolstering of the network of United Nations focal points for South-South cooperation; (d) supporting the establishment of mechanisms and platforms that promote partnership and collaboration; and (e) mobilizing resources through enhanced cooperation with all stakeholders.

47. UNOSSC has learned from experience that prudential leadership and due diligence are essential to the establishment and maintenance of risk-free partnerships. Hence the Office uses an updated UNDP Risk Assessment Tool that provides guidance on how to assess risks related to collaboration with private-sector entities.

### *Resource mobilization*

48. It is envisaged that UNDP will remain committed to ensuring a stable and predictable allocation of regular (core) resources towards the implementation of the UNOSSC strategic framework, 2018-2021.<sup>14</sup> In the UNDP integrated resources plan and integrated budget estimates, 2018-2021, UNDP has proposed to the Executive Board that it maintain its support of UNOSSC at the same level as allocations for the UNOSSC strategic framework for 2014-2017, based on projected regular resource contributions for the integrated budget, 2018-2021. For 2018-2021, UNDP has committed a total of \$26.2 million: \$14 million under the programmatic component of the integrated budget (development effectiveness line) and \$12.2 million under the institutional component.

49. UNOSSC has taken measures to reinforce its approach to partnership-building and resource mobilization over the past two years. Hence, the Office has rolled out a new strategy to engage partners in government, civil society, academia and the private sector to support the planned activities under the strategic framework, 2018-2021. It plans to mobilize an additional \$50 million of other (non-core) resources to supplement the regular (core) resources to be secured from UNDP. The Office expects a share of non-core resources to come from Member States, other institutions and various other sources of funding, including: (a) contributions to UNFSSC; (b) third-party cost-sharing; (c) parallel financing; (d) direct financing; and (e) special fund management arrangements such as those of the India-UN Development Partnership Fund, the Qiaonyu Foundation and the IBSA Fund.

### *Strengthened regional presence*

50. UNOSSC will strengthen its regional offices to respond to the multifaceted needs of developing countries. The UNOSSC regional offices will also be responsible for facilitating the integration of South-South cooperation approaches into United Nations joint support to cross-border and interregional programmes. UNOSSC regional offices will support innovative platforms that foster partnerships and collaboration with national governments, UNDP, regional

<sup>14</sup> See SSC/19/2, para. 35; Executive Board decision 2013/28; SSC/18/3, para.34; and SSC/18/IM/1, para.37.

commissions and other United Nations entities as well as civil society, academia and the private sector while reporting on the outcomes to the General Assembly via the annual reports of the Secretary-General on the state of South-South cooperation.

*Demand-driven programming*

51. UNOSSC will foster high-profile South-South initiatives in thematic areas that relate to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and related development frameworks. Identified thematic areas include, but are not limited to, climate change, public service delivery, youth, cities and urban development. The Office will work with stakeholders to identify areas where there are demand and available resources and where the Office can add value in the context of the 2030 Agenda. Since the Sustainable Development Goals are interrelated, UNOSSC will aim to maximize its impact through South-South dialogues, research, partnerships and programmes targeted at key sectors that have an impact on the achievement of a large number of Goals.

*Efficient funds management*

52. UNOSSC will continue to be an efficient and effective manager of funds for South-South and triangular cooperation. To this end, it will facilitate enhanced and expanded United Nations support to South-South and triangular cooperation through the management of project portfolios that serve as pilot cases for multilateral cooperation as well as laboratories of innovation for the application of South-South principles and good practices in the sharing of expertise, technology and experiences to promote sustainable development. The Office will also provide catalytic resources to support collaborative projects and initiatives in various fields of cooperation identified by developing countries.<sup>15</sup>

*Strategic outreach, advocacy and communication*

53. UNOSSC recognizes that South-South cooperation has evolved but that information on its growing significance as well as the role and impact of its key drivers can be enhanced. UNOSSC will thus implement a new strategy to bolster its outreach, advocacy and strategic communication to underscore the positive impact of South-South cooperation. The strategy will emphasize dissemination of information and interaction on advocacy initiatives and projects relating to South-South and triangular cooperation both inside the United Nations system and among partners in governments, civil society and academia. The Office will also engage all partners to increase the understanding and visibility of practical expressions of Southern solidarity, including through the publication of electronic bulletins and facilitation of social media engagements and targeted events.

## **VIII. Programme management, monitoring and evaluation**

54. UNOSSC will continue to strengthen programme management, monitoring and evaluation of the present strategic framework in keeping with the recommendations of the two reviews mentioned earlier and those of the UNDP Office of Audit and Investigations. UNOSSC has implemented the recommendations of the UNDP Management Consulting Team to ensure that its staffing profile matches its core mandates and to enhance its impact across the United Nations system. To improve the effectiveness of its operations, UNOSSC has revamped its organizational structure and adopted a clearer distribution of functions and duties among staff. It also continues to leverage the vast network of UNDP country offices and United Nations organizations and country teams as well as the network of national focal points for South-South cooperation. These partners enable the Office to catalyze the integration of South-South approaches to development into various development policies and programming instruments such as the UNDAF at the country level. In addition, the Office has set up a Programme Support Unit overseen by a Deputy Director to ensure that all operations are consistent with UNDP corporate policies and procedures. It has also taken steps to achieve better gender parity in its

<sup>15</sup> For more information on fund management, see <https://www.unsouthsouth.org/our-work/south-south-trust-fund-management/>.

professional staff positions while taking into account geographical balance. In line with UNDP standards and procedures, the Programme Support Unit will foster the transparency and accountability of UNOSSC through the submission to UNDP of a UNOSSC integrated work plan as part of the annual corporate resources plan of the organization. As per delegated authority, the Director of UNOSSC will periodically report on the implementation of the annual Integrated Work Plan to the UNDP Associate Administrator.

55. In addition, UNOSSC has designed a comprehensive office-wide evaluation plan to track and report on progress towards the achievement of the UNOSSC strategic framework outcomes. Hence, UNOSSC will follow more closely the guidelines set out in the UNDP policies and procedures. In response to Member States calls for coherent United Nations support to their development initiatives, the activities under the present strategic framework will be aligned with the UNDP Strategic Plan, 2018-2021, as well as the strategic frameworks and plans of other relevant United Nations system organizations, so as to better leverage on system-wide assets as needed. UNOSSC recognizes its strengths and resource constraints. As a result, the Office will ensure full implementation of this strategic framework through close collaboration with UNDP regional bureaux, regional centres, country offices and relevant United Nations specialized agencies, funds and programmes as well as regional commissions. Such a collaborative ecosystem is necessitated by the growing number of United Nations organization that have established units, budgets and staff dedicated to the advancement of South-South cooperation.

56. The biennial sessions of the High-level Committee on South-South Cooperation will review reports of the Administrator on the implementation of this strategic framework, 2018-2021. Similarly, the General Assembly will monitor and assess United Nations system-wide support to South-South cooperation based on the information that UNOSSC will channel through the annual reports of the Secretary-General on the state of South-South cooperation. In addition, it will include information on its work in reports of the Administrator to the Economic and Social Council on the implementation of the UNDP Strategic Plan, through the Executive Board of UNDP/UNFPA/UNOPS.

57. In collaboration with the UNDP Independent Evaluation Office, UNOSSC will ascertain how it has helped to bring about changes in human development conditions including through the behaviour of people or institutions targeted under this framework.<sup>16</sup> A final evaluation of the strategic framework will be carried out in accordance with UNDP policies and procedures.

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<sup>16</sup> See UNDP Outcome-level Evaluation: A Companion Guide to the Handbook on Planning, Monitoring and Evaluating for Development Results for Programme Units and Evaluators, 2011.

## Annex. Results and resources framework for the strategic framework of the United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation, 2018-2021

Outputs	Output indicators	Indicative resources (in dollars)
<p><b>Output 1.1.</b> Effective secretariat support provided to intergovernmental bodies to make informed and coherent decisions, including the provision of analytical reporting on South-South cooperation.</p>	<p>1.1.1. Number of evidence-based analytical reports prepared to inform the United Nations system and other intergovernmental bodies about recent trends, opportunities and challenges regarding South-South and triangular cooperation (reports of the Secretary-General; reports of the Administrator to the High-level Committee on South-South Cooperation).</p> <p>1.1.2. Number of issue-based policy dialogues convened at the global, regional and interregional levels and policy briefs produced on South-South cooperation, in collaboration with Member States, the United Nations system and other development partners, to support the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals and other internationally agreed development goals.</p> <p>1.1.3. Number of reports, issue papers, policy briefs and dialogues facilitated in the preparation of the Second High-level United Nations Conference on South-South Cooperation.</p> <p>1.1.4. Support provided to Member States groupings, at their request, for effective dialogue among themselves.</p> <p>1.1.5. Average number of United Nations system organizations collaborating on the UNOSSC web portal and contributing to reports for intergovernmental deliberations on South-South cooperation and triangular cooperation.</p> <p>1.1.6. Number of intergovernmental processes serviced by UNOSSC as secretariat of the High-level Committee on South-South Cooperation and coordinator of South-South cooperation in the United Nations system.</p> <p>1.1.7. Preparation of a multi-year programme of work for the High-level Committee on South-South Cooperation.</p>	<p>5,110,000 (35% of regular)</p> <p>6,000,000 (12% of other)</p>
<p><b>Output 1.2.</b> Coordinated and coherent United Nations system support provided to South-South and triangular cooperation, and progress in the mainstreaming of that cooperation monitored and reported.</p>	<p>1.2.1. United Nations system-wide strategy on South-South cooperation prepared in consultation with the United Nations specialized agencies, funds and programmes.</p> <p>1.2.2. Number of activities supporting United Nations system coordination of South-South cooperation.</p> <p>1.2.3. Reports of the Secretary-General on the state of South-South cooperation.</p> <p>1.2.4. Number of intergovernmental and inter-agency consultations and learning events convened at national and regional levels relating to South-South cooperation.</p> <p>1.2.5. Number of United Nations agencies taking steps to integrate, operationalize and mainstream South-South and triangular cooperation through the development of strategies, mechanisms, and policy and programming instruments.</p> <p>1.2.6. Number of United Nations country teams that have South-South and triangular cooperation integrated into their United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) and other programming and planning instruments.</p> <p>1.2.7. Number of capacity development activities organized to support the South-South cooperation activities of development partners.</p> <p>1.2.8. Establishment of the South-South Climate Cooperation inter-agency group of the United Nations to facilitate South-South cooperation on climate change, including support to the implementation of the South-South Cooperation Action Plan that is a part of the Secretary-General's climate change engagement strategy for 2018-2021.</p> <p>1.2.9. Inter-agency South-South communications team established to consolidate and coordinate United Nations system advocacy for South-South and triangular cooperation, including around the implementation of the United Nations system-wide strategy on South-South cooperation.</p>	
<p><b>Output 2.1.</b> Expanded platform and network of key Southern stakeholders to map and share Southern development solutions and to advance thought leadership on South-South</p>	<p>2.1.1. Global Coalition of Think Tank Networks for South-South Cooperation successfully operationalized and online platform established.</p> <p>2.1.2. Number of individual think tanks engaged in e-discussions organized on the South-South Global Thinkers online platform and in events, workshops and research initiatives.</p> <p>2.1.3. Establishment of network of developing-country institutions and practitioners in the areas of poverty eradication, gender empowerment and climate change, among others, to facilitate the identification and dissemination of Southern solutions on demand.</p>	<p>5,840,000 (40% of regular)</p> <p>9,000,000 (18% of other)</p>

and triangular cooperation initiatives with the potential to accelerate the achievement of the 2030 Agenda.	<p>2.1.4. Establishment of a global peer-review mechanism, including specialists in poverty eradication, gender, and other areas as needed, to ensure high quality of all UNOSSC-supported publications and facilitate evidence-based decision-making.</p> <p>2.1.5. Number of United Nations system organizations that share information, facilitate dialogue and engage in knowledge-sharing via the UNOSSC web portal and help desk.</p> <p>2.1.6. Number of policy dialogues and knowledge-sharing forums for national Directors-General for Development Cooperation (South and North) convened, at their request, including through the GSSD Expo, to enable peer-to-peer learning, mutual capacity development and follow-up.</p>	
<b>Output 2.2.</b> Developing countries and partner institutions are supported to create and share high-quality knowledge products.	<p>2.2.1. Number of volumes of South-South in Action and other publications launched in partnership with Member States, United Nations agencies, international non-governmental organizations, non-governmental organizations, civil society organizations and think tanks.</p> <p>2.2.2. Number of peer-reviewed scoping papers and policy studies on South-South cooperation produced.</p> <p>2.2.3. Production of independent comprehensive report on South-South cooperation capturing emerging trends through evidence-based analysis.</p> <p>2.2.4. Number of cases compiled for the Good Practices in South-South and Triangular Cooperation for Sustainable Development publication and shared via UNOSSC web portal.</p> <p>2.2.5. Number of United Nations system organizations and other stakeholders contributing case studies to Good Practices in South-South and Triangular Cooperation for Sustainable Development publication.</p> <p>2.2.6. Number of Southern development solutions, including triangular cooperation solutions, showcased at the annual GSSD Expo.</p> <p>2.2.7. Reported outcomes of partnerships formed and initiatives launched as a result of knowledge-sharing at the GSSD Expo.</p> <p>2.2.8. Data base consolidated for easy access to South-South and triangular cooperation solutions.</p>	
<b>Output 2.3.</b> Developing countries have access to high-quality advisory services on the application of knowledge to bolster their capacities in the context of the implementation of Agenda 2030.	<p>2.3.1. Number of capacity development workshops, learning events, issue-based policy dialogues, study tours, training courses and seminars organized.</p> <p>2.3.2. Number of users of the South-South cooperation training manuals, curriculums and other documents that are developed and shared.</p> <p>2.3.3. Number of personnel in UNOSSC regional and thematic teams responding to demands for advisory services from developing countries.</p> <p>2.3.4. Number of institutions to which UNOSSC has provided advice on establishing South-South partnerships, initiatives and/or mechanisms in the context of the implementation of Agenda 2030.</p> <p>2.3.5. Number of regional initiatives facilitated by UNOSSC regional offices in order to meet the development demands of respective regions.</p> <p>2.3.6. Partner feedback on utility of knowledge products for policy- and decision-making.</p>	
<b>Output 3.1.</b> Multi-stakeholder partnerships forged and resources mobilized in order for the United Nations to coherently support demand-driven South-South and triangular cooperation initiatives and programmes.	<p>3.1.1. Continuity, replenishment and successful implementation of the project portfolios of UNOSSC managed funds.</p> <p>3.1.2. Number of partnership compacts established with relevant United Nations organizations, other intergovernmental organizations, partner countries and other relevant stakeholders.</p> <p>3.1.3. Number of new funding arrangements initiated to support the scaling up of proven Southern development solutions.</p> <p>3.1.4. Funds mobilized through the United Nations Fund for South-South Cooperation, the IBSA Fund, PGTF, the India-UN Partnership Development Fund, the Climate and Sustainability Programme, and other mechanisms for supporting South-South cooperation initiatives.</p> <p>3.1.5. Mechanisms for outreach, advocacy and strategic communication established to support partnership and demand-driven programming.</p>	<p>3,650,000 (25% of regular)</p> <p>35,000,000 (70% of other)</p>
<b>Output 3.2.</b> South-South and triangular cooperation initiatives and programmes	<p>3.2.1. Number of Southern countries participating in demand-driven initiatives and programmes organized or supported by UNOSSC.</p>	

<p>supported with coordinated assistance from the United Nations system.</p>	<p>3.2.2. Number of United Nations system organizations engaged in thematic programming organized or supported by UNOSSC.</p> <p>3.2.3. Number of development initiatives into which regional coordinator teams (Africa, Arab States, Eastern Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States, Asia and the Pacific, and Latin America and the Caribbean) integrate South-South cooperation.</p> <p>3.2.4. Number of resident coordinator offices enabled by UNOSSC to respond to the capacity development needs of national focal points for South-South and triangular cooperation at the country level.</p> <p>3.2.5. Number of subnational governments and cities supported to forge South-South and triangular partnerships for sustainable development.</p> <p>3.2.6. Number of women and youth who participate in and lead South-South cooperation initiatives.</p> <p>3.2.7. Number of thematic programmes and/or initiatives established at the demand of developing countries and leveraging United Nations system coordinated support.</p>	
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