

Annex: Selected South-South and triangular cooperation initiatives relevant to trade

This annex presents selected initiatives that illustrate how South-South and triangular cooperation supports trade, complementing the priorities for action in Chapter 5 and the case studies in Chapter 3. Part A covers initiatives led by developing economies and triangular initiatives; Part B covers support provided through the United Nations (UN) system.

It has been compiled by the UN Office for South-South Cooperation (UNOSSC) from the South-South Galaxy+, the 2025 Report of the UN Secretary-General on the State of South-South Cooperation, and the 2025 Report of the United Nations High-level Committee on South-South Cooperation. Descriptions are based on information provided by implementing partners; inclusion does not imply endorsement by the World Trade Organization or UNOSSC.

Part A: Initiatives led by developing economies and triangular initiatives				
Region	Initiative	Description	Partners	Source
Africa	Harmonization of Standards for Pharmaceutical Products and Medical Devices	Analyses international, regional and national standards for their suitability to African contexts, with the aim of enhancing intra-African trade, reducing counterfeit products and building regional health systems. Considered critical to the implementation of the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA)	African Export-Import Bank; African Organisation for Standardisation; Arab Africa Trade Bridges Program; International Islamic Trade Finance Corporation; Islamic Development Bank	South-South Galaxy: https://southsouth-galaxy.org/solutions/detail/harmonisation-of-standards-for-pharmaceutical-products-and-medical-devices/
Arab region (North Africa)	Market Access Programme for Agri-food and Local Products (PAMPAT, Phase II)	Supports sustainable value chains for traditional agri-food products, creating jobs and income and building regional arrangements that foster trade	Morocco, Switzerland, Tunisia; UN Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO)	UNIDO (2023), <i>Supporting Sustainable Supply Chains through South-South and Triangular Industrial Cooperation</i> , p. 14
Central Asia	Central Asia Regional Economic Cooperation (CAREC) Advanced Transit System	Harmonizes regional transit procedures among member economies of the CAREC Programme to strengthen regional trade and connectivity. A pilot was signed in 2023 by three member economies	Azerbaijan, Georgia, Uzbekistan; Asian Development Bank; CAREC Programme	https://carecprogram.org/ https://www.carecprogram.org/uploads/11-Background-Note-CAREC-Advanced-Transit-System-and-Information-Common-Exchange.pdf

Part A: Initiatives led by developing economies and triangular initiatives				
Region	Initiative	Description	Partners	Source
Asia and the Pacific (Southeast Asia)	Lower Mekong Basin Water-Energy-Food Nexus	Helps economies around the Lower Mekong Basin co-create climate-resilient community solutions that protect shared river-based trade and resource systems	Cambodia, Republic of Korea, Lao PDR, Thailand, Viet Nam; UNOSSC	South-South Galaxy: https://southsouth-galaxy.org/capacity-development/rok-unossc-facility/ UNDP: https://www.undp.org/vietnam/press-releases/green-value-chains-mekong-delta-connecting-businesses-science-and-communities-sustainable-livelihood-transformation
Asia and the Pacific	Access to Information and Digital Transformation in Samoa	Expands access to public and market information and to lifelong learning tools, including training and skills development to support the inclusion of young people in the economy	India, Samoa; UN Development Programme (UNDP); UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO); UNOSSC (funding through the India-UN Development Partnership Fund)	India-UN Development Partnership Fund, Report 2023, pp. 54–57: https://sbg.undp.org/rs/wp-content/uploads/2023/11/India-UN-Fund-Report-2023.pdf
Interregional	China-ASEAN Innovation and Entrepreneurship Competition	Promotes collaboration between universities and enterprises to build digital capacities in green technologies and the digital economy	China and ASEAN member states, with universities and enterprises in the region	South-South Galaxy: https://southsouth-galaxy.org/solutions/detail/innovation-cooperation-for-a-shared-dream-4
Interregional	Various, with a focus on SIDS	Southern Trust Funds supporting efforts in such areas as value chain resilience, capacity building in key industries, clean energy, economic growth, etc.	Brazil, India, South Africa, UN entities	South-South Galaxy: https://unsouthsouth.org/indiaunfund/ ; https://unsouthsouth.org/2024/05/30/sids4-ibsa-and-india-un-fund-champion-advocacy-and-support-for-sids-resilience-at-sids-conference/
Arab and Caribbean regions	United Arab Emirates-Caribbean Renewable Energy Fund	Supports wider and more resilient use of renewable energy in the Caribbean, addressing energy costs as a primary barrier to growth in small island developing states	Caribbean Community; Masdar (renewable energy company); United Arab Emirates (Abu Dhabi Fund for Development); 16 Caribbean small island developing states	UN-OHRLS (2021), <i>Good Practices in South-South and Triangular Cooperation for Sustainable Development in SIDS</i> , p. 44
Asia and Africa	Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation Programme	Capacity-building programme established in 1964. Recent efforts help partner countries in Africa build digital knowledge and skills for increasingly digital economies	India and partner countries in Africa	Ministry of External Affairs of India: https://www.itecgoi.in/

Part A: Initiatives led by developing economies and triangular initiatives				
Region	Initiative	Description	Partners	Source
Asia, Africa and Central Asia	Small and medium-sized enterprise (SME) Stories in South-South Trade Facilitation at the China International Import Expo (CIIE)	Knowledge and technical exchanges on South-South and triangular trade, focused on the role of SMEs, organized in the framework of the CIIE	China, Ethiopia, Kyrgyz Republic, Rwanda, Uganda, Zambia; UNOSSC	https://unsouthsouth.org/knowledge-product/unlocking-opportunities-sme-stories-in-south-south-trade-facilitation-at-ciie/
Latin America	Fostering Regional Coordination in Aquaculture Value Chains	Strengthens regional cooperation to improve productive capacities in aquaculture, a significant sector in the economies concerned, and fosters regional integration	El Salvador, Honduras; UNIDO	UNIDO (2023), <i>Supporting Sustainable Supply Chains through South-South and Triangular Industrial Cooperation</i> , p. 18
Latin America and the Caribbean (triangular)	Triangular Cooperation Programme for Latin America and the Caribbean	Launched in 2024 to strengthen partnerships using South-South and triangular cooperation, focusing on priorities that shape the development trajectories of economies in the region	Spain and 18 economies in Latin America and the Caribbean	https://informesursur.org/en/spains-triangular-cooperation-program-for-latin-america-and-the-caribbean/

Part B: Support through the UN system				
Region	Initiative	Description	Partners	Source
Landlocked developing countries (LLDCs) in five regions	South-South and Triangular Cooperation Case Studies in Support of the Awaza Programme of Action 2024-2034	Background case studies for the Ministerial Dialogue on South-South and Triangular Cooperation at LLDC3 (Third Ministerial Meeting), covering Ethiopia, Lao PDR, Paraguay, Rwanda and Tajikistan. The studies identify cooperation on economic corridors, regional integration, market access, transit and transport infrastructure, institutional capacity and the harmonization of cross-border systems	UN-Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States (UN-OHRLS); UNOSSC; UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs, with governments, financial institutions, regional development banks and the private sector	https://unsouthsouth.org/2025/05/23/south-south-and-triangular-cooperation-case-studies-in-support-of-the-new-landlocked-developing-countries-programme-of-action-2024-2034/
Africa	Peer-Learning Platform for the African Continental Free Trade Area	Enables state parties to share strategies, address bottlenecks and accelerate inclusive trade under the AfCFTA	African Union; AfCFTA Secretariat; UN Development Programme; UN Economic Commission for Africa	https://www.undp.org/africa/press-releases/continental-conference-african-continental-free-trade-area-afcfta-explores-strategies-peer-learning-accelerate-emergence

Part B: Support through the UN system				
Region	Initiative	Description	Partners	Source
Global and interregional	South-South and Triangular Cooperation Solutions Lab	Open platform designed to strengthen developing economy capacities, including for green growth, entrepreneurship and digital skills	United Arab Emirates; UNOSSC; International Atomic Energy Agency; World Food Programme; UN Economic Commission for Europe; Gulf Organisation for Research & Development	https://southsouth-galaxy.org/sstc-solutions-lab
Asia and the Pacific	South-South Cooperation Connector	Regional platform for good practices that helps match demand for technical cooperation with supply	UN Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific	https://www.unescap.org/partnerships/south-south-cooperation/connector
Interregional	South-South and Triangular Cooperation Networks for the One Country One Priority Product initiative	Uses knowledge and expertise sharing to build sustainable, productive, resilient and competitive agri-food value chains	UN Food and Agriculture Organization, with Algeria, Cambodia, Lesotho and the Philippines	https://www.fao.org/flexible-voluntary-contribution/activities/initiatives/detail/south-south-and-triangular-cooperation-(sstc)-networks-to-promote-knowledge-and-expertise-sharing-for-scaling-up-the-one-country-one-priority-product-(ocop)-initiative/en
Global	South-South and Triangular Cooperation Gateway	A knowledge platform and connector	UN Food and Agriculture Organization	https://www.fao.org/sstc-gateway/
Global	Investment Policy Reviews	Objective evaluations of economies' legal, regulatory and institutional frameworks for foreign direct investment	UN Trade and Development	https://unctad.org/topic/investment/investment-policy-reviews
Global (triangular)	Blue Economy Pilot Project	Pilot project on the blue economy launched in 2025 under the Triangular Cooperation Window of the UN Fund for South-South Cooperation	Portugal; UNOSSC, UNESCO	https://www.iesalc.unesco.org/en/blue-economy-pilot-project