

Transformative partnerships for trade resilience

South-South and triangular cooperation in action



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Abbreviations

AfCFTA	African Continental Free Trade Area
CAREC	Central Asia Regional Economic Cooperation
EIF	Enhanced Integrated Framework
LDC	Least-developed country
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SIDS	Small island developing states
SPS	Sanitary and phytosanitary
SSC	South-South cooperation
STDF	Standards and Trade Development Facility
TOSSD	Total Official Support for Sustainable Development
UNCTAD	United Nations Trade and Development
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNIDO	United Nations Industrial Development Organization
UNOSSC	United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation
WTO	World Trade Organization

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Foreword

As developing economies navigate persistent challenges – ranging from financing constraints, geopolitical tensions and climate-related difficulties to rapid technological change – it is important to examine how the opportunities created by expanding trade between developing economies can be broadened and translated into lasting gains for sustainable development.

The challenges are particularly acute for developing economies facing constraints that limit their ability to absorb the impact of international crises, diversify their economies and participate fully in regional and global trade.

South-South and triangular cooperation can play an important role in addressing these constraints. Rooted in principles of solidarity, self-reliance, mutual benefit and national ownership, South-South cooperation enables developing economies to exchange knowledge, expertise, technologies, policy approaches and development solutions elaborated in similar circumstances.

Triangular cooperation complements South-South cooperation by bringing developed economies into the partnership to provide innovative financing,

technical expertise and institutional support while preserving developing economies' leadership and ownership. Together, these forms of cooperation can help economies strengthen institutional and productive capacities, address trade-related constraints, build economic resilience and respond collectively to shared challenges.

This joint WTO-UNOSSC publication, “Transformative partnerships for trade resilience: South-South and triangular cooperation in action”, examines how such cooperation can work in practice for trade and development. It combines an analysis of the changing landscape of South-South trade and the evolution of South-South and triangular cooperation with practical examples of how cooperation among developing economies, supported where appropriate by developed-economy partners, can facilitate knowledge exchange, strengthen institutions, improve market access, support regional integration and enhance the resilience and sustainability of value chains.

The publication identifies priorities for future action. These include focusing cooperation on trade-related constraints, strengthening regional approaches, building partnerships that can

deliver sustained results, and using triangular cooperation to mobilize complementary expertise and resources. Better measurement of South-South cooperation and enhanced reporting can also strengthen the evidence base for policy-making and identify effective approaches.

We invite governments, international organizations, financial institutions, the private sector and development partners to build on the experiences and insights presented in this publication and to deepen practical cooperation that responds to developing economies' priorities.



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Executive summary

Trade between developing economies – South-South trade – has become a major force in the world economy, representing more than a quarter of world merchandise exports in 2025. South-South cooperation and triangular cooperation (South-South partnerships supported by a developed economy) are helping an increasing number of developing economies share in its benefits.

South-South trade has grown fast, but its gains are uneven

Trade between developing economies accounted for 27.8 per cent of world merchandise exports in 2025, worth around US\$ 7.2 trillion. Its share of world exports has nearly doubled since 2005, while its value has increased 4.8-fold. This trade has expanded nearly twice as rapidly as trade between developing and developed economies and has remained resilient through successive crises.

Its benefits, however, remain unevenly shared. Most South-South trade takes place within developing Asia. Outside Asia, developing regions trade more with Asia than with each other. Regional integration in Africa and in Latin America and the Caribbean is the largest untapped source of growth.

Broadening participation in trade depends on lowering the policy and institutional barriers that raise the costs of trade. These

costs in developing economies remain almost 30 per cent higher than in high-income economies, with non-tariff measures, limited access to trade finance and weak quality infrastructure weighing heavily on exporters in developing economies. South-South and triangular cooperation can help address these barriers by providing complementary channels for mobilizing knowledge, expertise and resources and by enabling developing economies to share relevant experience and solutions.

A long-standing form of cooperation

South-South cooperation is a long-standing partnership among peers whose scope has steadily widened. Rooted in the 1955 Bandung Conference, a historic meeting of 29 Asian and African developing economies in Indonesia, and further consolidated in the 1978 Buenos Aires Plan of Action (BAPA), which established a framework for technical and economic cooperation among developing economies, it has grown from technical exchanges into economic, financial and multi-actor partnerships. BAPA+40,

the Second High-level UN Conference on South-South Cooperation, in 2019, explicitly recognized its contribution to trade. South-South cooperation is founded on sovereignty, national ownership, non-conditionality and mutual benefit, and complements rather than replaces North-South cooperation. Over time, an increasingly diverse ecosystem has emerged around South-South cooperation, encompassing regional integration arrangements, development finance institutions in developing economies, national cooperation agencies, trust funds and other platforms for knowledge and resource exchange.

Triangular cooperation extends the impact of South-South cooperation by bringing developed economy and multilateral partners into partnerships led by developing economies. These partners add finance, technical expertise and scale, while leadership stays with the developing economies involved.

New industries open further opportunities for cooperation. Developing economies are already among the leading exporters of green industrial goods, a market worth around US\$ 1.76 trillion in 2024, yet production remains concentrated in only a few of these economies. Cooperation on technology, skills, regulatory standards and regional value chains can help many more developing economies take part.

Partnerships with the EIF and STDF have delivered results

Partnerships supported by the multi-agency Enhanced Integrated Framework (EIF) and the Standards and Trade Development Facility (STDF) have illustrated how South-South and triangular cooperation can deliver tangible trade-related results. In each

successful partnership, a developing economy has adapted a solution developed by another developing economy, with support provided from international organizations and development partners.

The results are concrete and have lasted beyond the specific projects. The partnerships have ranged from shortening laboratory testing times for export products and securing internationally recognized pest-free areas to opening new export markets and raising incomes for thousands of smallholder farmers.

What the successful partnerships have in common is that they have built lasting institutions. The partnerships adapted solutions proven to work in comparable settings, embedded the results in national institutions and combined external financing with national ownership and leadership.

Measurement of South-South cooperation is improving, but coverage remains incomplete

Better measurement of South-South cooperation is needed to build a more complete picture of its importance. Much of this cooperation takes the form of technical assistance, training, expert exchanges and knowledge sharing, which is difficult to capture by conventional financial statistics. As a result, its scale and results are often underestimated, both in national policy-making and in the monitoring of support for trade.

Two complementary frameworks are now helping to improve measurement. The United Nations (UN) Framework to Measure South-South Cooperation, established by developing

economies engaged in South-South Cooperation and welcomed by UN member states at the UN Statistical Commission in 2022, underpins reporting under UN Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 17.3.1, with UN Trade and Development as its custodian. Ten economies reported under SDG 17.3.1 for the first time in 2026. Secondly, Total Official Support for Sustainable Development (TOSSD) records official support regardless of its form, including South-South and triangular cooperation. More than 130 economies and organizations now report to the TOSSD, among them 19 developing economies.

Data coverage needs to be broadened to give a full picture of South-South cooperation. Many developing economies face practical difficulties in collecting information across ministries and agencies. Stronger national data systems, peer learning and coherent reporting across the UN Framework to Measure South-South Cooperation and TOSSD would allow more developing economies to report on their own priorities and would make trade-related cooperation more visible.

Priorities for action

Three priorities emerge for maximizing the impact of South-South and triangular cooperation in trade. They build on the BAPA+40 of 2019, the Sevilla Commitment on financing for development adopted by the United Nations in 2025, the Awaza Programme of Action for landlocked developing countries adopted by the UN in 2024 and the Antigua and Barbuda

Agenda for small island developing states (SIDS) adopted by world leaders in 2024.

- 1. Targeted action is needed on key trade-related constraints,** including resilience in sectors and supply chains exposed to crises, financing for trade-related capacity, regional integration and cross-border cooperation, sustained trade capacity, and broader participation by least-developed countries, landlocked developing countries and SIDS.
- 2. Inter- and intraregional cooperation** needs to be strengthened with financial institutions and development partners, including on regional value chains and through co-financing mechanisms such as the UN Office for South-South Cooperation's (UNOSSC's) Triangular Cooperation Window.
- 3. Coordination, partnership brokering and measurement** need to be improved, including by strengthening connections between trade-related facilities and existing South-South and triangular cooperation mechanisms and platforms.

Partnership is the thread that runs through the three priorities. It is also the theme of the 2026 Global Review of Aid for Trade. As the initiative marks its twentieth anniversary, this co-publication of the WTO and UNOSSC contributes to the discussion on building partnerships for trade that effectively leverages South-South and triangular cooperation for resilient, inclusive and sustainable trade.

The rise of South-South trade: Trends and challenges

1

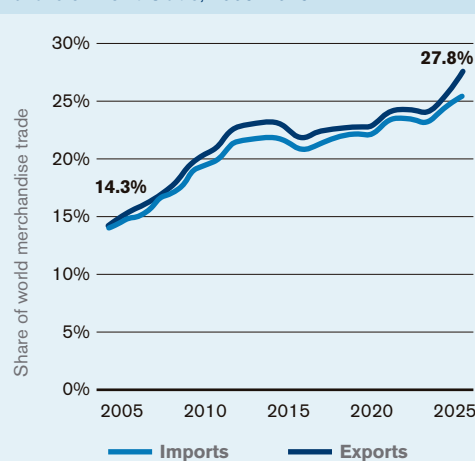
The growth of South-South trade

Trade among developing economies has become a major component of global merchandise trade. In 2025, these economies exported around US\$ 7.2 trillion of merchandise to one another, representing 27.8 per cent of world merchandise exports, up from 14.3 per cent in 2005 and from 23.0 per cent in 2015. Imports show a similar pattern, rising from 14.0 to 25.7 per cent between 2005 and 2025 (see Figure 1).¹

Between 2005 and 2025, South-South merchandise exports increased 4.8-fold, compared with a 2.5-fold increase in trade between developing and developed economies. Despite significant disruptions over this period, including the 2008 financial crisis and the COVID-19 pandemic, South-South trade maintained a stronger long-term growth trajectory (see Figure 2). Developing economies' share of global merchandise exports rose from 33.9 to 46.4 per cent.

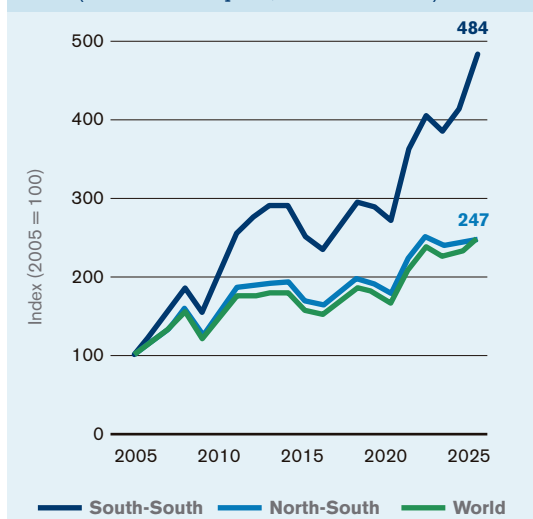
In value terms, trade involving China accounts for approximately half of South-South merchandise exports. However, the broader trend remains when China-related flows are excluded, as trade among other developing economies still rose from

Figure 1. South-South trade has nearly doubled its share of world trade, 2005–2025



Source: UNCTAD calculations based on UNCTADstat merchandise trade matrix (annual, analytical). 2025 figures may be provisional.

Figure 2. South-South trade has outpaced North-South trade (merchandise exports, index 2005 = 100)



Source: UNCTAD calculations based on UNCTADstat merchandise trade matrix (annual, analytical). Index calculated from merchandise export values in current US dollars; 2005 = 100. 2025 figures may be provisional.

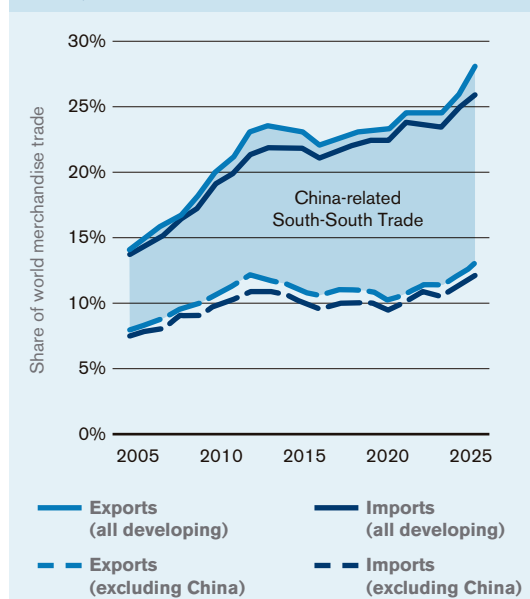
8.5 to 13.4 per cent of world merchandise exports between 2005 and 2025 and grew nearly fourfold (see Figure 3).

Regional patterns

Intraregional trade within developing Asia reached US\$ 5.5 trillion in 2025, representing the large majority of all South-South trade, compared with US\$ 113 billion within Africa and US\$ 203 billion within the developing Americas. Africa exported US\$ 248 billion to developing Asia, twice the value of its trade with itself (see Figure 4).

Outside Asia, South-South trade operates largely as a hub-and-spoke system, in which developing regions trade more with Asia than with one another. Regional integration in Africa and Latin America and the Caribbean represents a major untapped source of growth.

Figure 3. South-South trade with and without China, 2005–2025

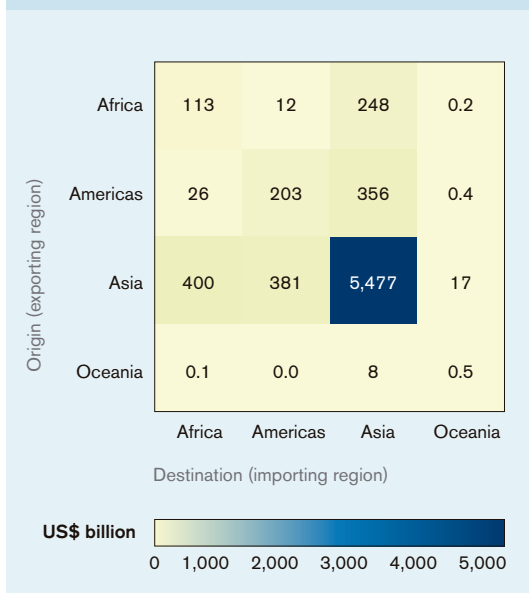


Source: UNCTAD calculations based on UNCTADstat merchandise trade matrix (annual, analytical). Shares calculated from merchandise export values in current US dollars. 2025 figures may be provisional.

Barriers to trade and the need for cooperation

Trade costs in developing economies remain almost 30 per cent higher than in high-income economies (WTO, 2023). The WTO Trade Cost Index finds that trade policy barriers and regulatory differences form the largest component of trade costs when low-income economies trade with one another, whereas transport costs are the largest factor among high-income economies.² Non-tariff measures now impose higher export costs than tariffs for 88 per cent of economies (UNCTAD, 2026). In addition, only a quarter of trade in West Africa and the Mekong region of Southeast Asia is supported by trade finance, against 60 to 80 per cent in advanced economies (WTO and IFC, 2022).

Figure 4. Merchandise exports between developing regions, 2025 (US\$ billion)



Source: UNCTAD calculations based on UNCTADstat merchandise trade matrix (annual, analytical). Values in current US dollars; 2025 figures may be provisional.

Note: The cells in the chart show exports from the regions on the left, to the regions along the bottom; the colour intensity reflects the value of these exports, from pale yellow for the lowest values to dark blue for the highest (see the colour scale). The figures in bold show trade within each region.

United Nations (UN) Trade and Development estimates that regulatory convergence can cut non-tariff-measure costs by 15 to 30 per cent, and in Africa by 30 to 40 per cent in agriculture and manufacturing (UNCTAD, 2026). Raising West African trade finance coverage to the African average of 40 per cent of trade would lift West Africa's trade flows by around 8 per cent annually (WTO and IFC, 2022). Measures to enhance trade facilitation, quality infrastructure (the framework for ensuring products and services are safe and of high quality) and regional integration can help to address these issues.

The delivery of relevant initiatives depends on partnerships, the central theme of the 2026 Global Review of Aid for Trade. Aid for Trade disbursements grew by 8 per cent between 2006 and 2015, but by only 1 per cent from 2015 to 2024 (WTO, 2026). Against this backdrop, South-South and triangular cooperation can provide complementary channels for mobilizing knowledge, expertise and resources. South-South cooperation enables developing economies to exchange relevant experience and solutions, while triangular cooperation can bring complementary support from additional partners. These forms of cooperation are discussed in greater detail in Chapter 2, while their practical application is illustrated through the EIF and STDF case studies presented in Chapter 3.

Conclusion

South-South trade accounts for more than a quarter of world merchandise trade, having expanded much faster than trade between developing and developed economies since 2005. It has also proved to be resilient through upheavals such as the financial crisis and the COVID-19 pandemic. Yet, growth remains concentrated in Asia, and intraregional trade in Africa and Latin America and the Caribbean is weak. Broadening participation in South-South trade will therefore depend not only on expanding market opportunities, but also on addressing the trade costs, financing gaps and institutional constraints that continue to limit trade among developing economies. South-South and triangular cooperation can complement wider trade and development efforts by enabling countries to share relevant experience, strengthen trade-related capacities and develop practical partnerships to address these constraints.

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Endnotes

1. Developing and developed economies follow the UNCTAD classification; developing economies comprise Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean, Asia excluding Israel, Japan and the Republic of Korea, and Oceania excluding Australia and New Zealand. The WTO has no formal definition of developing-economy status and relies on self-designation, so WTO-sourced figures may differ. Merchandise figures are UNCTAD calculations based on the UNCTADstat merchandise trade matrix, in current US dollars, reported on the exporter side; 2025 figures may be provisional.

2. World Trade Organization (WTO), “WTO Trade Cost Index”. Available at <https://tradecosts.wto.org/>.

The evolution of South-South and triangular cooperation

2

Cooperation built on solidarity and shared experience

The outpacing of North-South trade by South-South trade in recent decades not only indicates the changing geography of world trade; it also demonstrates the transformation of development cooperation through South-South and triangular cooperation in and through trade, and the impact of these cooperation modalities in the transformation of the developing economies' growth trajectories.

South-South cooperation (cooperation among developing economies) has evolved into a broad concept since its inception when 29 Asian and African economies met in Bandung, Indonesia, at the 1955 Bandung Conference. Its foundational United Nations (UN) framework, the Buenos Aires Plan of Action (BAPA), was adopted by 138 countries in 1978 (A/RES/33/134; Al-Khatib in Körber-Stiftung, 2025). These principles were reaffirmed at the Second High-level UN Conference on South-South Cooperation (BAPA+40) in 2019, and the scope of cooperation with economic and multi-actor partnerships was broadened to align with the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. It explicitly recognized the contribution of South-South and triangular cooperation in relation to trade (A/RES/73/291).

Developing economies have long used South-South cooperation to address shared development challenges, drawing on comparable experience, approaches suited to their contexts and readily adaptable skills, tools and knowledge. It has also provided a platform for developing common positions in regional and global forums, including on trade.

South-South cooperation has grown in scale and volume as well as broadened in terms of geographic reach and approaches over the past decades. It remains anchored, however, in the same principles of respect for sovereignty, non-interference in internal affairs and self-reliance, as well as in reciprocal collaborations that are demand-driven, non-conditional and mutually beneficial.¹

The enduring relevance of this cooperation rests in the recognition that the needs and interests of developing economies may differ and evolve, but they remain bound by a common aspiration for self-determined growth and development, and for building partnerships based on equality and mutual respect. Strategically leveraged, and with the added strength of triangular cooperation (incorporating the support of a developed economy, private sector, or international organization), South-South cooperation can further broaden mutually beneficial South-South trade relations, help close capacity gaps and geographic disparities, and facilitate joint action on key priorities for collective growth and sustainable development. South-South cooperation is not a substitute for North-South cooperation but a complement to it.

Evolution and elements of cooperation

Evolution of South-South cooperation

South-South cooperation is multidimensional; it is implemented as bilateral, regional and global arrangements in a variety of domains (economic, sociocultural, environmental, etc.). Conceptually in contrast with traditional development support or “foreign aid,” which involves financial flows officially reported and tracked by donors and recipients, South-South cooperation is not treated or recorded as development assistance or aid, with parties considered as partners rather than donors or recipients. It does not fit the formal definition or reporting standards used by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development’s Development Assistance Committee (OECD-DAC) system, thus early data are limited.²

However, documented initiatives illustrate South-South cooperation’s long-standing emphasis on technical cooperation, knowledge exchange and

capacity building in agriculture, health, education and economic modernization. Examples include the Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation Programme, established in 1964, which facilitated training and knowledge exchanges between India and other economies in Asia and Africa; the China-Africa agricultural technical cooperation from the late 1950s to the 1970s; and the Cuba medical missions to economies in Africa and the Caribbean in the 1960s, which channelled medical assistance as well as facilitated knowledge and skills exchanges.³

Other well-documented examples serve as a precursor to the eventual expansion of South-South cooperation in other domains: the China-Tanzania/Zambia Railway initiative in the 1970s is an early South-South approach to infrastructure development and to building economic corridors; and the Itaipu Dam initiative, established by Brazil and Paraguay in 1973, which saw the construction of the world’s largest operational hydroelectric dam at the time, serves as a reference framework for cross-border South-South cooperation on building shared energy resources for growing economies.⁴

South-South cooperation in trade and innovative financing

Regional and interregional cooperation on trade and economic development has been central to South-South cooperation from its early years. The Latin American Free Trade Association, established in 1960, sought to create a regional free trade zone. The East African Community, established in 1967 by Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda, formalized regional ties and supported joint cross-border infrastructure.

Other regional blocs have advanced trade and development through South-South cooperation.

The Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), founded in 1967, has expanded its membership and partnerships, including with advanced economies. The Caribbean Community, established in 1973 to boost trade and regional integration, has broadened cooperation to address security and development, leveraging South-South cooperation. The Southern Common Market (MERCOSUR), established in 1991, promotes regional economic integration among its members and cooperation on common interests such as migration and labour; while the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa, established in 1994, promotes collective self-reliance through measures including technical capacity building.

Building financial institutions and mechanisms has also been central to this evolution. Early institutions include the Inter-American Development Bank (established in 1959); the Kuwait Fund for Arab Economic Development (1961), the first development fund established by a developing economy to provide financial and technical assistance to other Arab developing nations; the African Development Bank (1964), now a major 81-member institution which established a South-South Cooperation Trust Fund in 2011; and the Asian Development Bank (1966), which helps bridge knowledge and financing gaps through South-South and triangular cooperation, including on trade. The Islamic Development Bank and the Saudi Fund for Development, both established in 1974, also support infrastructure and trade facilitation.

Institutionalization of South-South cooperation and broadening channels for developing economy-led collaborations

South-South cooperation was institutionalized within the UN's development cooperation

framework in 1974, when the General Assembly endorsed the establishment of a special unit within the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) to promote technical cooperation among developing countries (TCDC) and integrate it fully into the Programme (in 2012, this unit was renamed the United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation, tasked with promoting and coordinating South-South cooperation within and beyond the UN system).⁵

Four years later, in 1978, the foundational framework of South-South cooperation (the Buenos Aires Plan of Action or BAPA) was adopted by 138 economies at a UN high-level conference in Argentina. The core principles of South-South cooperation would be reaffirmed on its 40th anniversary, in 2019, (BAPA+40) and its scope broadened – from narrow technical exchanges in the past into broader economic, financial and multi-actor global development partnerships aligned with the UN 2030 Agenda. The Outcome Document of BAPA+40 specifically notes recognition of the role of South-South cooperation for helping enhance South-South trade, broadening the access of developing economies to markets, and building a digital economy, amongst other benefits (see Box 1).⁶

Developing-economy-led initiatives have further expanded cooperation on tariffs, trade opening in various sectors, and the development of new investments as well as expansion of transborder market opportunities: the Brazil-Russia-India-China-South Africa alliance; the India-Brazil-South Africa Trilateral Cooperation Forum; the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation; the India-Africa Forum; and the Belt and Road Initiative of China.

As their economies grew, developing countries also created funding mechanisms to address

Box 1. Outcome Document of the Second High-Level UN Conference on South-South Cooperation (BAPA+40)

... South-South cooperation and triangular cooperation increasingly take different and evolving forms, including technical cooperation, the sharing of knowledge and experience, training, capacity building and technology transfer on mutually agreed terms, aimed at achieving sustainable development through the promotion of, inter alia, economic cooperation, including trade, investment, infrastructure development and connectivity, agriculture and rural development, food security and nutrition, food safety, health, energy, disaster risk reduction, addressing climate change, as well as mutual learning and the coordination of development policies and strategies among developing countries. (para 18)

We note the role of trade in growth and economic development of developing countries and recognize the significant contribution of South-South and triangular cooperation in the area of trade and its ability to promote sustainable development, and in this regard reaffirm the importance of strengthening South-South trade in [a] WTO-consistent manner, including the Global System of Trade Preferences among Developing Countries. (para 20)

shared development priorities, including capacities for trade and development. Examples entrusted to the UN Office for South-South Cooperation (UNOSSC) as the UN focal point on South-South cooperation and triangular cooperation, include: the UN Fund for South-South Cooperation, established through the 1995 UN General Assembly Resolution 50/119, which receives voluntary contributions and resources to support the development priorities of developing economies (member states, philanthropic foundations, the private sector, etc.); the Pérez-Guerrero Trust Fund for South-South Cooperation, established in 1983 through General Assembly Resolution 38/201 to support members of the Group of 77; the India-Brazil-South Africa Facility for Poverty and Hunger Alleviation established in

2006; and the India-UN Development Partnership Fund established in 2017, which focuses support on least-developed countries and small island developing states.⁷

Triangular cooperation broadens South-South cooperation on trade

South-South and triangular cooperation emerged in the 1970s as a mechanism for building on and expanding South-South cooperation, as partnerships led by developing economies involved partners from developed economies and/or multilateral organizations. It rests on the idea that “no country is too economically poor to help and share experiences, and none is too rich to learn from others”.⁸

The regional blocs that emerged in the evolution of South-South cooperation grew to involve South-South and triangular cooperation approaches to trade and matters related to trade. For instance, the Japan International Cooperation Agency-ASEAN partnership facilitates knowledge exchange on energy, disaster management and food security, alongside infrastructure and collaborative frameworks related to transport, transit routes and cross-border supply chains.⁹

Regional bodies in Latin America and the Caribbean have strengthened collaborations with the European Union (EU) and OECD countries that also advance trade cooperation. The EU-MERCOSUR trade agreement signed in January 2026 stands as a landmark free trade pact connecting the two regions, eliminating tariffs on 91 per cent of goods over time.

In Africa, the inherently South-South-oriented African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) established in 2019, which connects 54 economies in the region into a single market, has leveraged South-South and triangular cooperation as a mechanism for mobilizing capital and technical support within and beyond the region. Germany's federal development agency (GIZ), for instance, assisted the drafting of the AfCFTA Protocol on Digital Trade, which standardized e-commerce rules and data flow. Canada identifies as a key partner in the development of AfCFTA and has included non-traditional and transformative cooperation modalities to strengthen ties with the continent through mutually beneficial trade and economic relations.¹⁰

Data on South-South and triangular cooperation remain incomplete, as much of it takes the form of in-kind and other exchanges that conventional statistics do not capture. Chapter 4 discusses

the UN Framework to Measure South-South Cooperation (developed by United Nations Trade and Development) and Total Official Support for Sustainable Development, which are helping to close this gap.

Future potential of South-South and triangular cooperation for trade and development

The scope of South-South and triangular cooperation and the range of actors involved have broadened, creating more opportunities for trade and sustainable growth. The updated South-South Galaxy+ reflects the diversity of developing economies and the solutions they co-create (see Chapter 3 for case studies and the Annex for selected initiatives). As economies have accumulated expertise and financial capacity, cooperation has expanded into infrastructure development, institution building, capacity building in public administration, collective industrialization, regional integration, digital transformation and innovative financing.¹¹

The development needs of these economies and their sources of support have also diversified. Developing economies have seen increasing diversity in resource mobilization options for development: for instance, now composed largely of middle-income countries, they have enhanced capacity to mobilize domestic resources, including tapping domestic private capital, as well as remittances that have grown considerably, and are now three times greater than ODA.¹²

The Emerging Development Partners (EDP) Network, established in 2024, brings together developing economies that have become providers of support, including contributions to

ODA. It coordinates South-South cooperation-anchored efforts, with the UN Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific acting as Secretariat. It involves developing economies that have moved into middle-income status, established development cooperation agencies to manage engagement, and institutionalized South-South and triangular cooperation as a cooperation model: the Technical Cooperation Council of the Philippines (established in 1992), Turkish Cooperation and Coordination Agency (1992), Thailand International Cooperation Agency (2004), Azerbaijan International Development Agency (2011), Presidential Agency for International Cooperation of Colombia (2011), Indonesian Agency for International Development (2019) and the Kazakhstan Agency of International Development (2020).¹³

The EDP Network demonstrates the shifting model of development cooperation, with members providing development support on South-South and triangular cooperation modalities in such areas as trade and industry, trade and financial inclusion, strengthening small and medium-sized enterprises, sustainable agriculture, renewable energy and science and technology.¹⁴

South-South trade and cooperation as pathways to more sustainable growth in developing economies

Beyond its growing scale, South-South trade offers opportunities for structural transformation and greener growth. South-South and triangular cooperation can help economies combine access to new markets with exchanges of technology, productive know-how and policies that support greener production, resource efficiency and resilient value chains. These opportunities are

increasingly relevant, as environmental standards, clean-energy technologies and low-carbon industrial policies shape competitiveness and market access.

The expanding market for green products illustrates this potential. Global exports of green industrial goods increased from US\$ 429 billion in 2000 to approximately US\$ 1.76 trillion in 2024, representing around 8 per cent of global merchandise trade. Developing economies are already significant participants. For instance, China exported US\$ 410.5 billion of green industrial goods in 2024, followed by Mexico with US\$ 72.5 billion, while India, Singapore and Thailand were also among the leading developing-economy exporters. These emerging productive capabilities also create opportunities for South-South cooperation in renewable energy, sustainable transport, energy-efficient technologies and other green industries, including through technology adaptation, skills development, standards and the development of regional supply chains. These sectors offer further growth potential.

The International Energy Agency estimates that the market for clean-energy technologies could reach approximately US\$ 640 billion annually by 2030. Renewable-energy employment amounted to at least 16.6 million jobs in 2024, but remained concentrated, with China accounting for approximately 44 per cent. South-South and triangular cooperation can broaden participation in these emerging industries by supporting technology transfer, workforce development, investment partnerships, joint innovation and the localization of value chains. Triangular cooperation can further complement developing-economy expertise with additional finance, technology and institutional support.

The opportunity, therefore, is not to expand the overall volume of South-South trade, but to shape its composition and enabling environment so that trade contributes to structural transformation, resilience and environmental sustainability. The World Trade Organization has highlighted the diversification of global value chains, digitalization and the transition towards a low-carbon economy as potential sources of new opportunities for low- and middle-income economies.

Combining developing-economy knowledge and existing solutions, technologies and productive capacities with complementary financing and partnerships, South-South and triangular cooperation can help economies move towards higher-value and greener production, strengthen regional value chains and support development pathways that are more productive, inclusive, environmentally sustainable and resilient.

Conclusion

The rise of South-South trade reflects not only a shift in the geography of trade but also the growing role of developing economies as partners in each other's development. As trade and investment become more important drivers of their growth, building the necessary capacities will be a central need. South-South and triangular cooperation offer established channels for meeting this need, as the case studies in Chapter 3 illustrate, whilst Chapter 5 sets out priorities for action.

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Partnerships in action: Experiences and lessons from WTO practices

3

South-South and triangular cooperation are increasingly recognized as practical approaches for strengthening trade capacity in developing economies and supporting sustainable development. This chapter looks at the tangible results achieved with the support of two multi-agency partnerships: the Enhanced Integrated Framework (EIF) and the Standards and Trade Development Facility (STDF).

The EIF is a multilateral partnership dedicated exclusively to supporting least-developed countries (LDCs) and countries that have recently graduated from LDC status. It works with LDC governments, development partners and international organizations to address institutional and policy constraints, strengthen trade-related capacities and unlock export and investment opportunities. Now in its third phase, the EIF places particular emphasis on investment, partnership, peer learning and catalytic impact.

The STDF is a global partnership established by the United Nations (UN) Food and Agriculture Organization, the World Bank Group, the World Health Organization, the World Organisation for Animal Health and the WTO. This partnership has supported improvements to sanitary and

phytosanitary (SPS) capacity in developing economies and facilitated safe trade since its establishment in 2004 by helping LDCs and developing economies meet international food safety, animal health and plant health standards.

The six case studies presented in this chapter span a diverse range of trade-related challenges – from strengthening agricultural value chains, SPS systems and quality infrastructure to improving investment promotion and special economic zone development. Together, they show how economies have adapted successful experiences from other developing economies, while leveraging the financial, technical and institutional support of international organizations and development partners to scale up the impact of each project.



Ginger cultivation in Nepal.

EIF case studies

Nepal: building an SPS-compliant value chain with the support of Indian expertise

Before 2012, Nepal's ginger sector was characterized by strong levels of production with weak returns. High post-harvest losses, the absence of facilities meeting SPS requirements, and dependence on exporting unwashed ginger to India left farmers capturing a small share of the final value. The key constraint was the gap between production and meeting the needs of the export market. Without sufficient processing, Nepalese ginger could only be sold raw at prices set by buyers across the border.

The EIF Ginger Competitiveness Project (2012–2015) chose India as a partner because of its advanced ginger processing capacity, established SPS systems, and proven solutions that suited conditions on the ground. Nepalese

officials, engineers, private-sector leaders and farmers visited leading Indian processing facilities to see these systems in operation. Indian partners, including Bajaj Processpack Ltd., provided technical guidance and training, enabling Nepal to install its first commercial, SPS-compliant ginger washing and processing plant.

Capacity building was accompanied by infrastructure development. As a key milestone, Nepal established its first SPS-compliant ginger washing and processing unit in Jhapa District, enabling the sector to add value, improve quality and meet international market requirements for the first time.

More than 2,000 farmers, 60 per cent of whom were women, received hands-on training in good agricultural practices, quality management and post-harvest handling, using materials adapted from Indian and international standards to meet local needs. The Nepal Ginger Producers and

Traders' Association was given the support needed to manage both the facility and a trust fund, ensuring that benefits would continue to flow to smallholders after the project's conclusion. In parallel, an ongoing dialogue on SPS issues was established with Indian authorities.

The results extended beyond the plant itself. Post-harvest losses fell sharply and farm-gate prices, i.e. the price farmers received for their product before processing, transportation or retail mark-up costs, rose. Women's participation across the value chain increased and the Nepal-India SPS dialogue continued, supporting smoother cross-border trade and creating conditions for future market diversification.

Malawi: peer learning on special economic zones with Egypt

As Malawi sought to operationalize its special economic zones, it faced constraints familiar across LDCs: limited practical experience in zone management, a legal framework still developing, and no established method for identifying and attracting investors. While written guidance was available, operational know-how remained scarce.

The EIF and its partners arranged an exchange of information between the Malawi Investment and Trade Centre and Egypt's General Authority for Investment and Free Zones, an institution with extensive practical experience in economic zone management. A Malawian delegation undertook a study tour in Egypt, observing governance arrangements, infrastructure-led development and digital one-stop-shop systems at first hand. Egyptian counterparts shared lessons on economic zone management, investor services and public-private collaboration that were directly relevant to Malawi's situation.

This exchange was complemented by a structured investor-targeting programme supported by the World Association of Investment Promotion Agencies and UN Trade and Development, and by the modernization of Malawi's iGuide platform to improve the transparency of investment information. Together, these efforts produced a new roadmap for special economic zones, more effective investor outreach and modernized investment information systems. The knowledge and experience learned from Egypt shaped both the design and the implementation of Malawi's zones, and the relationship between the two countries continues to provide a resource for institutional reform.

"The knowledge we gained from Egypt's experience with special economic zones has been transformative for Malawi. Seeing how peer countries manage investor services and zone infrastructure gave us practical solutions that we could adapt immediately. This cooperation didn't just give us ideas, it helped us turn strategy into action."

Mr Wiskes Nkombezi, Secretary for the Malawi Ministry of Industry, Business, Trade and Tourism.

Guinea: improved quality infrastructure through triangular partnership

Guinea's upgrading of its national quality infrastructure illustrates the benefits of triangular cooperation. Exporters had long faced inadequate domestic testing and quality-control capacity,

meaning products had to be sent abroad for certification. This added costs and delays to every consignment and placed market compliance beyond the reach of smaller firms.

The National Quality Control Office (Office National de Contrôle de Qualité – ONCQ) led implementation of the upgrading project, supported by the EIF, with the European Union acting as donor facilitator. Peer learning between developing economies was built into the design of the project, with ONCQ staff undertaking a benchmarking mission to Senegal's national laboratory. This launched a long-term partnership, opening regional networks and providing the basis for future mutual training.

International and bilateral partners, including the UN Industrial Development Organization and the Belgian federal development agency, Enabel, together with technical suppliers from Europe and China, provided laboratory equipment, training and advice on quality management systems aligned to ISO 17025 and ISO 17020.¹ National and regional bodies, among them the Guinean Export Promotion Agency, the Guinean Institute for Standardisation and Metrology, and the Ministry of Agriculture, were engaged throughout the project.

As a result, laboratory testing times for export products fell from 21 to five days. The volume of analyses and inspections increased significantly, and ONCQ's revenues quadrupled, giving the institution the opportunity to achieve financial sustainability. Guinean export products now meet international standards, supporting a marked increase in global exports and stronger public health protection. ONCQ has become a reference point for other West African countries seeking to reduce compliance costs and dependence on laboratories abroad.

STDF case studies

South-South and triangular cooperation have been particularly successful in addressing SPS issues, where economies across Africa, Asia and the Pacific, and Latin America and the Caribbean experience difficulties in meeting international food safety, animal health and plant health standards. By sharing practical knowledge, technical expertise and regulatory experience, developing economies can strengthen their SPS systems, drawing on approaches developed successfully elsewhere.

The STDF provides a global platform for SPS collaboration through regional and multi-economy initiatives, fostering communities of good practice and inter- and intraregional networks that support learning and the scaling-up of successful approaches. Regional collaboration has long been a cornerstone of this approach and a practical vehicle for South-South and triangular cooperation.

Since 2004, the STDF has approved US\$ 82.4 million in funding for 137 projects, 73 of which (53 per cent) have been regional. By bringing together economies facing common SPS challenges, these projects facilitate peer learning, knowledge exchange, and the uptake and scaling-up of successful SPS innovations. They also create opportunities for collaboration among public and private stakeholders in economies at different levels of development, enabling them to share expertise and solutions tailored to local contexts.

The STDF 2025-2030 strategy titled *Facilitating Safe Trade to Meet the Global Goals* places partnership, innovation, learning and scaling-up at the centre of its work, and reinforces links



with regional partners to accelerate the uptake, replication and scaling-up of SPS solutions across economies and regions.

Southeast Asia: safer pepper value chains

Pepper is an important source of income for thousands of smallholder farmers in Cambodia, Lao PDR and Viet Nam. All three countries face similar food safety and market access challenges, but Viet Nam has developed extensive expertise as one of the world's leading pepper exporters. The STDF-supported Safer Spices project, implemented by CAB International (formerly Commonwealth Agricultural Bureaux), a non-profit intergovernmental organization, was designed to put Viet Nam's expertise to work across the region, with the national Western Highlands Agriculture and Forestry Science Institute sharing lessons from its long engagement with the Vietnamese pepper sector.

The project brought together government agencies, technical and private-sector partners and farmer groups from the three countries to develop solutions adapted to local conditions. Exchanges among farmers, small businesses and government authorities accelerated the adoption of good agricultural and hygiene practices. Its central output was a regional Code of Practice, grounded in the standards of Codex, the primary international standard-setting body for food safety, and Vietnamese experience, but written to take account of pepper production across the three countries.

The project produced positive results. In Cambodia, improved practices raised yields by 10 per cent and farmer incomes by 30 per cent, supporting the country's first-ever export of black pepper to China in 2024, a shipment of 30 tonnes. In Lao PDR, the project connected farmers to Vietnamese buyers and enabled

participating farmers to earn income throughout the year, with an estimated US\$ 50 to US\$ 70 a week in additional earnings during the harvest season. In Viet Nam, safe production models were expanded, pesticide use reduced, and production costs lowered, helping to address the informal cross-border trade in contaminated peppercorn.

“Thanks to the project, I gained valuable knowledge and connected with buyers like Simexco and Vietpepper in Viet Nam, creating new opportunities to supply lemongrass and other products.”

Soumaly Phommahuk, Etu Green, a women-led enterprise in Lao PDR.

The Code of Practice is now being scaled-up through Cambodia's CAPSAFE programme, an initiative funded by the European Union and Germany's federal agency for development cooperation, GIZ, to boost the sustainability, safety and competitiveness of Cambodia's agricultural sector. The code is also being disseminated through government services, extending safer production practices to more and more farmers and value chains.

Southern Africa: transboundary fruit fly management

Fruit flies are among the most damaging horticultural pests in Southern Africa. They threaten fruit production, raise SPS compliance costs and can trigger trade restrictions affecting farmers, exporters and national economies. Because the pests are a cross-border problem, effective management requires cooperation

between neighbours rather than action by any one economy.

South Africa and Mozambique worked together through an STDF-funded project implemented by South Africa's Agricultural Research Council, combining the expertise of government agencies, research institutions and industry partners in both countries. The project built on existing cooperation between both countries' plant protection organizations, enabling Mozambique to draw on South Africa's extensive experience in fruit fly surveillance and management under international standards for phytosanitary measures. As a result, officials and other stakeholders in Mozambique strengthened their surveillance and pest management systems through technical exchanges and joint work in the field.

The project supported the establishment of internationally recognized pest-free areas and areas of low pest prevalence, facilitating trade from Mozambique to South Africa and beyond. A shared database was established to monitor fruit fly populations in real time, generate pest reports and improve coordination between the two national plant protection organizations. At the same time, new pest identification protocols, diagnostic tools and online training resources are providing the foundation for long-term surveillance capacity.

The project also demonstrated how cooperation between developing economies can mobilize finance. South African public and private sector parties contributed substantial financial resources alongside technical expertise. The project has resulted in the introduction of financing models for the sustained maintenance of pest-free areas by governments and industry, supporting the operational and financial durability of the approach.



“Successful partnerships enhanced capacity building. Regional cooperation adds to that. What we learned from what’s happening in South Africa and Mozambique is that lessons can be rolled out in all Africa and other regions.”

Jan Hendrik Venter, Director of Plant Health, Department of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development, South Africa.

Latin America and the Caribbean: regional action on cadmium in cocoa

Cadmium contamination has become a significant challenge for cocoa-producing economies in Latin America and the Caribbean. Naturally present

in some soils, cadmium accumulates in cocoa beans and products, raising food safety concerns and threatening access to key export markets. Following the introduction of stricter international requirements, cocoa-producing economies across the region faced the same problem: how to generate the scientific evidence, testing capacity and mitigation strategies needed for SPS compliance while protecting smallholder livelihoods.

The STDF supported two complementary projects led by the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture and KU Leuven, a research institution in Belgium, enabling Colombia, Ecuador and Peru to coordinate research, strengthen laboratory capacity and share practical approaches to managing cadmium risk. Trinidad and Tobago joined independently, contributing its own expertise while benefiting from the shared learning.

Participating economies pooled expertise, harmonized analytical methods and exchanged data and methodologies. Laboratories collaborated to improve testing procedures, researchers jointly assessed mitigation options and national authorities strengthened the scientific basis for their decisions. A new regional platform was launched to connect producers, laboratories, policy-makers and research institutions.

Twenty-five public and private laboratories strengthened their capacity to test cadmium in cocoa and soils, 80 technicians gained skills in standardized analytical methods, and more than 2,300 cocoa farmers received training in improved agricultural practices. Updated hotspot maps helped authorities identify priority areas, and low-cost X-ray fluorescence technology provided an affordable tool for rapid testing.

“Countries didn’t just work in isolation. They created a community of practice, exchanging methodologies, validating laboratory results and sharing findings openly. That’s real South-South collaboration in action.”

Roxane Burstow, joint assessment of the projects.

Project knowledge and mitigation approaches were subsequently incorporated into national and international policy processes. Cadmium mitigation strategies were incorporated into national cocoa sector plans in Colombia, Ecuador and Peru, and experts from the region contributed their new knowledge to the Codex code of practice for the prevention and reduction of cadmium

contamination in cocoa beans, approved in 2022. The lasting links formed between laboratories, researchers, policy-makers and producers constitute a network of good practice capable of responding to future SPS challenges.

Strengthening trade partnerships through South-South and triangular cooperation

The six case studies demonstrate that South-South and triangular cooperation can help economies address trade-related challenges by combining practical experience, technical expertise and complementary partnerships. Although the sectors and contexts differ, all six case studies show that economies facing similar constraints can benefit from adapting solutions developed by other developing economies, while drawing on the support of international organizations, development partners and other stakeholders to strengthen implementation.

A common feature across these case studies is that cooperation extended beyond knowledge exchange. It contributed to stronger national institutions, improved regulatory and technical capacities, and practical tools that continued to generate benefits after project completion. Whether through producer organizations, quality infrastructure, national plant protection organizations, regional research networks or investment promotion agencies, the projects embedded knowledge within institutions capable of sustaining and scaling-up results.

The case studies also highlight the importance of combining financing with national ownership and regional expertise. Financial and technical support helped facilitate exchanges, strengthen institutions and scale-up successful approaches, while the economies involved in the project provided

leadership, local knowledge and implementation capacity. Together, these experiences suggest that South-South and triangular cooperation are most effective when they build on practical peer learning, foster long-term partnerships and strengthen institutions that can continue to support trade and development beyond individual projects.

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Endnote

1. ISO 17025 enables laboratories to demonstrate that they operate competently and generate valid results, thereby promoting confidence in their work both nationally and around the world; ISO 17020 specifies the requirements for the competence, impartiality and consistent operation of inspection bodies.

Glue manufacturing in
South Africa.



Measuring South-South cooperation: Building a more complete picture

4

Why measuring South-South cooperation matters

South-South cooperation (SSC) has become an increasingly important part of the international development landscape. Alongside expanding trade and investment among developing economies, South-South cooperation is facilitating the exchange of knowledge, expertise, technologies and resources through an expanding range of bilateral, regional and interregional partnerships. Yet, the statistical picture of these contributions remains incomplete.

This matters for both development and trade policy. Comprehensive and reliable information helps governments understand where resources and expertise are being directed, identify gaps and opportunities, coordinate cooperation more effectively and demonstrate its contribution to sustainable development. Better measurement also contributes to a more complete understanding of the resources mobilized for implementation of the United Nations (UN) Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), including under SDG 17.3.1 on additional financial resources mobilized for developing economies from multiple sources.

Measuring SSC nevertheless presents particular challenges. Development finance statistics have historically provided extensive information on

Official Development Assistance and other forms of development support. SSC encompasses a wider diversity of cooperation practices, including financial and non-financial modalities. Technical cooperation, training, knowledge exchange, technology transfer, expert deployments and other in-kind contributions may be central to a partnership even where their value is difficult to express through conventional financial measures.

SSC can also involve multidirectional exchanges and mutual learning between partners, reflecting principles such as national ownership, equality, non-conditionality, non-interference and mutual benefit. Capturing these different dimensions requires statistical approaches that can reflect the specific characteristics of SSC while generating

sufficiently robust information for national and international use.

For the WTO, this issue has particular relevance to Aid for Trade. Existing monitoring provides extensive evidence on development finance directed towards building trade capacity. A fuller picture of SSC could complement this evidence by increasing the visibility of cooperation among developing economies in areas such as trade facilitation, productive capacity, infrastructure, standards, skills and knowledge exchange.

Advancing the measurement and reporting of South-South cooperation

Important progress has been made in recent years towards strengthening the statistical foundations for measuring development support. The United Nations Framework to Measure South-South Cooperation, and Total Official Support for Sustainable Development (TOSSD) contribute to this evolving data landscape, serving different yet complementary purposes.

United Nations Framework to Measure South-South Cooperation

Due to the challenges highlighted above and other challenges, historically there has not been an agreed approach for measuring South-South cooperation. In 2021, economies engaged in South-South cooperation came together under the UN Statistical Commission to develop and agree on a framework designed to capture various forms of South-South cooperation, built specifically to identify and define both financial and non-financial modalities of SSC. They asked UN Trade and Development (UNCTAD) to provide the secretariat for a dedicated group, chaired by India, to develop the first ever economy-owned

framework to measure South-South cooperation, hosted by the United Nations.

UN member states welcomed this framework at the UN Statistical Commission in 2022¹ when endorsing the new methodology to measure SDG 17.3.1. They requested that further work on the framework, including on global reporting and capacity building, be supported by UNCTAD and led by developing economies, building on country-led mechanisms. They also called for its inclusion under SDG 17.3.1 and invited economies engaged in South-South cooperation to work closely with UNCTAD. The UN Framework reflects the principles of South-South cooperation,² including national sovereignty, ownership, equality, non-conditionality, non-interference and mutual benefit, promoting a country-led approach, adaptable to national priorities.

As explained in the UNCTAD *Manual for the Framework to Measure South-South Cooperation*,³ the UN Framework is a country-led initiative to strengthen how South-South cooperation is measured and made visible. It serves as the methodological basis enabling data reporting under SDG 17.3.1, giving economies a shared conceptual framework for reporting various financial and non-financial cooperation modalities.

The High-level Committee on South-South Cooperation, coordinated by the United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation (UNOSSC), welcomed the UNCTAD *Manual for the Framework to Measure South-South Cooperation* in 2025, encouraging its continued refinement and broader application by developing economies, with the support of the United Nations development system, including through efforts to strengthen national statistical capacities for the

voluntary collection, analysis and reporting of South-South cooperation contributions.

UNCTAD coordinates the initiative by supporting economies' application of the *Manual*, promoting flexible reporting approaches including through an online platform, and supporting pilot implementation and capacity-building activities with partners such as the UN Regional Commissions.⁴ UNCTAD also ensures system-wide coordination with UNOSSC. The UNOSSC *Handbook on Integrating South-South and Triangular Cooperation in the Voluntary National Reviews* (2023)⁵ encourages the use of the UN Framework in country reports. The UN Regional Commissions leverage their regional networks and mechanisms supporting South-South cooperation, including to enhance data capacities.

With partners, UNCTAD aims to empower economies to collect, analyse and report their own South-South cooperation data, according to their national circumstances and priorities. Ten economies⁶ reported their SSC data for SDG 17.3.1 in the UN Framework for the first time in 2026. Nine of these were featured in the UNCTAD South-South Data Insights.⁷ Additional pilot projects are ongoing across the world to expand reporting. A regular country-led mechanism, hosted by UNCTAD, is under development to provide a platform for developing economies to further develop and decide on methodologies and concepts, exchange experiences and provide peer support. Interregional South-South data forums bring together policy-makers, statisticians, cooperation agencies and development partners to share lessons learned, strengthen networks and promote innovation in data collection and reporting.

Total Official Support for Sustainable Development

Total Official Support for Sustainable Development (TOSSD) is an international standard for measuring the full array of resources to promote the sustainable development of developing economies. TOSSD is a two-pillar framework. It is designed to monitor official resources flowing into developing economies for their sustainable development (Pillar I) as well as private resources mobilized through official means. It also measures contributions to international public goods⁸ (Pillar II). The TOSSD standard is governed by the International Forum on TOSSD⁹ whose membership is composed of traditional providers, South-South cooperation providers, other developing economies and international organizations.

TOSSD tracks resource flows regardless of their nature (financial or in-kind), their concessionality or whether they are delivered through bilateral or multilateral channels. It captures different financial instruments, including grants, debt instruments, equity, mezzanine finance and guarantees; frameworks of collaboration, including South-South and triangular cooperation; and financing arrangements, such as blended finance.

TOSSD data are collected from provider economies and organizations. As of July 2026, more than 130 economies and organizations had reported to TOSSD, including 19 developing economies. Multilateral organizations based in developing economies, such as the New Development Bank, also report to TOSSD.

In 2024, official support reported in TOSSD represented a total of US\$ 497.5 billion,

compared with US\$ 473.4 billion in 2023. Of this, US\$ 364.3 billion represented cross-border flows to developing economies and US\$ 133.2 billion addressed global sustainable development challenges. Mobilized private finance through official interventions amounted to a further US\$ 79.6 billion in 2024.

The International Forum on TOSSD ensures the alignment of reporting to TOSSD with the UN Framework to Measure South-South Cooperation, working closely with UNCTAD as its custodian and as Permanent Observer of the International Forum on TOSSD. All SSC data reported to TOSSD are available at activity-level on the TOSSD website.¹⁰ The availability of SSC data in TOSSD has increased across the years – however, several SSC providers do not report to the UN Framework for the time being, and some current providers continue to make efforts to broaden their reporting in TOSSD, covering the full array of SSC modalities.

From better measurement to better evidence for policy

The development of the statistical approaches outlined above represents an important step towards a more comprehensive understanding of the changing development cooperation landscape. However, data are still being gathered in both frameworks, and current coverage is not yet sufficient to support comprehensive global aggregates of SSC activities and flows.

The next challenge is to translate methodological progress into broader participation, stronger national data systems and information that can effectively support policy-making.

Strengthening national capacities and expanding reporting

Many developing economies continue to face practical and institutional challenges in collecting information on cooperation activities across different ministries and agencies. Continued capacity development, peer learning, investment in national data systems and strengthened data governance can enable more economies to collect, manage and report SSC information according to their national priorities.

In 2025, the United Nations General Assembly reiterated its request to UNCTAD for strengthened support to developing economies for applying the UN Framework and asked for regular reporting on progress in implementing its *Manual*.¹¹ In the Sevilla Commitment, agreed at the UN's 4th International Conference on Financing for Development, in 2025, member states reaffirmed support for enhanced reporting under SDG 17.3.1, encouraging broader reporting on South-South cooperation under the UN Framework for its statistical measurement, and supported UNCTAD's role as its custodian.

Improving coherence while reducing reporting burdens

As development cooperation statistics evolve, stronger support for digital and data capacities in developing economies can enable greater interoperability between data systems. It can also help economies collect information efficiently and use it for multiple national, regional and international purposes.

UNCTAD and the International Forum on TOSSD are working together to support coherent reporting

and comparability of data for SDG 17.3.1. The UN Framework serves as the source of South-South cooperation data for SDG reporting, while TOSSD submits data on North-South and other non-SSC official support flows to this indicator. As data availability increases, together these frameworks can contribute to a fuller understanding of triangular cooperation, including where developing economies play a key role.

Making trade-related SSC more visible

For the trade community, improved SSC data offer an opportunity to complement the existing evidence base on Aid for Trade. As reporting coverage expands, closer engagement among the WTO, UNCTAD, UNOSSC, the International Forum on TOSSD and national authorities could help better identify trade-related SSC and understand how it contributes to developing economies' trade capacity and sustainable development. Trade-related activities could be identified in both frameworks, including links to relevant trade-related SDG targets, including SDG 8.a on Aid for Trade.

Better measurement is not an end in itself. Its value lies in enabling economies to better understand and manage their cooperation, increasing the visibility of South-South cooperation contributions, and providing policy-makers with a more complete evidence base. Continued country leadership, stronger statistical capacity and cooperation among international organizations can help ensure that the evolving measurement and reporting approaches reflect the diversity of development cooperation while providing increasingly useful information for trade and sustainable development.

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5. UNOSSC (2023), *Handbook on Integrating South-South and Triangular Cooperation in the Voluntary National Reviews (2023)*. Available at <https://unsouthsouth.org/knowledge-product/handbook-on-integrating-south-south-and-triangular-cooperation-in-the-voluntary-national-reviews-2023/>.
6. These are Argentina; Brazil; Chile; Colombia; Dominican Republic; Ecuador; Mexico; Namibia; Peru; Uruguay.
7. UNCTAD, "Data Insights", UNCTAD Data Hub. Available at <https://unctadstat.unctad.org/insights/theme/281>.
8. International public goods (or global public goods) are goods, services, resources, or benefits available to all economies and people, and where one economy's use does not reduce another economy's ability to benefit from them.
9. <https://www.tossd.org/en/international-forum-on-tossd.html>.
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Medical laboratory.



From cooperation to action: Priorities for stronger trade partnerships

5

The evidence presented in this publication shows both the growing importance of South-South trade and the practical contribution that South-South and triangular cooperation can make in addressing trade-related challenges. Trade among developing economies has expanded significantly, creating new opportunities for market diversification, regional integration and more resilient value chains. Yet, these opportunities remain unevenly distributed, and many developing economies continue to face significant constraints related to productive capacity, connectivity, regulatory standards, trade finance and institutional capacity.

The case studies presented in Chapter 3 demonstrate how cooperation among developing economies, complemented where appropriate by partners from developed economies, can help address some of the constraints faced by developing economies. They also point to a broader lesson: cooperation is most effective when it responds to clearly identified needs, connects economies with relevant expertise and experience, and builds capacities and institutions that can sustain results beyond individual projects.

Drawing on the evidence and experiences presented throughout the publication (supported further by examples cited in the text and listed in the Annex), three broad priorities for action emerge: leveraging South-South and triangular

cooperation to address key trade-related constraints; strengthening inter- and intraregional cooperation, including through partnerships with financial institutions and development partners, among others; and improving coordination, partnership brokering and measurement.

The three priorities for action align with outcomes of recent international forums and commitments that recognize the contribution of South-South cooperation and trade to sustainable development. These include the Second High-level Conference on South-South Cooperation (BAPA+40) in Buenos Aires in 2019, the Sevilla Commitment on financing for development adopted by the United Nations in 2025, the Awaza Programme of Action for landlocked developing countries

adopted by the UN in 2024, and the Antigua and Barbuda Agenda for small island developing states (SIDS) adopted by world leaders in 2024. These outcomes note, however, that South-South cooperation is a complement, rather than substitute for, North-South cooperation.

Targeted action on key priorities

Strengthen resilience in sectors and supply chains exposed to external crises

Recent disruptions to trade and supply chains, in part due to conflict, geopolitical shifts and climate-related shocks, have highlighted the vulnerability of developing economies to external crises. South-South and triangular cooperation can contribute to greater resilience by supporting diversification, strengthening productive capacity and facilitating the exchange of experience and solutions in sectors particularly exposed to such disruptions, including food and agriculture, energy and transport.

Existing initiatives illustrate different approaches. In the Caribbean, the United Arab Emirates-Caribbean Renewable Energy Fund supports 16 SIDS in addressing energy costs, while the India, Brazil and South Africa Facility for Poverty and Hunger Alleviation (IBSA Fund) and the India-UN Development Partnership Fund (India-UN Fund) support resilience in SIDS, including through infrastructure designed to withstand extreme weather. Economies in the Lower Mekong Basin, supported by the Republic of Korea and the United Nations (UN) Office for South-South Cooperation (UNOSSC), are working together on climate-resilient solutions for shared river-based resource systems. The effort supports the broader aim to strengthen green value chains in the Mekong Delta. Such cooperation can help

economies adapt approaches developed in comparable settings to their own circumstances.

Mobilize financing for trade-related capacity

Developing economies require not only knowledge and technical expertise but also adequate financing to address infrastructure gaps, strengthen productive capacity and build trade-related institutions. Financial institutions in developing economies can play an important role in this area, while triangular arrangements, incorporating assistance from a developed economy, private sector, or an international organization, can help mobilize complementary financing and expertise.

Financial institutions are already working alongside technical and development partners in some areas. The International Islamic Trade Finance Corporation and African Export-Import Bank – Afreximbank – for example, participate in initiatives supporting harmonization of regulatory standards in Africa. Such partnerships illustrate the potential for combining technical cooperation with financing to address trade-related constraints.

Support regional integration and cross-border cooperation

Many hindrances to trade are inherently cross-border. Regulatory standards, conformity assessment, transit procedures, connectivity and regional value chains therefore offer particularly strong opportunities for South-South and triangular cooperation.

Cooperation among neighbouring economies can facilitate the exchange of experience and support more compatible approaches to cross-border procedures. The Central Asia Regional Economic

Cooperation (CAREC) Advanced Transit System is being piloted by Azerbaijan, Georgia and Uzbekistan to harmonize transit procedures. In Africa, cooperation on regulatory standards and quality infrastructure is supporting efforts to facilitate intra-African trade under the African Continental Free Trade Area.

Regional economic communities and other regional institutions can provide useful platforms for such cooperation by connecting technical initiatives with broader regional integration objectives.

Build strategic and sustained trade capacity

Capacity-building needs continue to evolve as trade rules, technologies and risks change, including through digitalization and the growing use of artificial intelligence. South-South cooperation can add value where developing economies can share experience gained in addressing similar institutional, regulatory or productive challenges.

The experiences presented in this publication also underline the importance of moving beyond one-off activities towards sustained institutional capacity building.

Existing diagnostics, including the Diagnostic Trade Integration Studies of the Enhanced Integrated Framework and the Phytosanitary Capacity Evaluation of the International Plant Protection Convention can help identify needs and target cooperation accordingly. Attention from the outset to staffing, financing, institutional responsibilities and continued links between partner institutions can help sustain results beyond individual projects.

Broaden participation in the opportunities created by South-South trade

The expansion of South-South trade has been significant, but its benefits remain unevenly distributed across regions and economies. Least-developed countries, landlocked developing countries and SIDS continue to face particular constraints in participating in regional and global trade. These constraints differ according to national circumstances: transit and cross-border procedures are particularly important for landlocked economies, while connectivity and scale present significant challenges for many SIDS.

South-South and triangular cooperation can help address constraints through targeted exchanges of expertise, institutional partnerships and approaches adapted to participating economies' circumstances. Such cooperation can also support economies navigating structural transitions, including processes for graduating from LDC status, by helping strengthen productive and institutional capacities and reduce vulnerability to external crises.

Inter- and intraregional cooperation

The expansion of South-South trade and investment has distinct inter- and intraregional dimensions. For example, South-South and triangular cooperation has contributed to initiatives that align regulatory standards, address cross-border processes and build regional value chains. In Central America, El Salvador and Honduras are coordinating on aquaculture value chains with UN Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) support, and in North Africa, Tunisia and Morocco share experience in bringing traditional agri-food products to market through the Market Access

Programme for Agri-Food and Local Products (PAMPAT) initiative, implemented by UNIDO with Swiss funding.

Cooperation within and between regions has also helped elevate developing-economy priorities in agenda-setting forums: successive G20 presidencies held by developing economies (Indonesia in 2022, India in 2023, Brazil in 2024 and South Africa in 2025) broadened the spaces in which these priorities, including on trade, were discussed.

Traditional partners have expanded their support through triangular cooperation, providing catalytic funding as well as knowledge and platforms for engagement. As mentioned in Chapter 3, the European Union financed Guinea's quality infrastructure upgrade alongside its partnership with Senegal. In 2024, UNOSSC launched the Triangular Cooperation Window under the UN Fund for South-South Cooperation to mobilize complementary resources, knowledge and expertise for demand-driven partnerships responding to developing economies' priorities. Co-financing arrangements of this kind are a cost-effective way of taking proven solutions to new economies, provided leadership stays with developing-economy partners.

Trade in the blue economy is a growing area for cooperation. More than 80 per cent of world trade by volume moves by sea, with developing economies accounting for about 55 per cent of exports of ocean-based goods, whilst climate-related challenges affect supply chains in both developed and developing economies alike.¹ The Blue Economy Pilot Project launched in 2025 by UNOSSC and the UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) under the Triangular Cooperation Window, with funding from Portugal, is an early example of this cooperation.

Improve coordination, partnership brokering and measurement

A recurring lesson from the experiences examined in this publication is the importance of effective partnership brokering. Economies may possess relevant solutions and expertise, but cooperation does not necessarily emerge automatically. Institutions can play an important role in identifying needs, connecting economies with suitable partners, mobilizing resources and helping translate exchanges into sustained institutional capacity.

UNOSSC promotes, coordinates and facilitates South-South and triangular cooperation globally and across the UN system. The newly launched Global Alliance for South-South and Triangular Cooperation provides a multistakeholder, voluntary and demand-driven partnership space connecting country priorities with relevant expertise, solutions and partners. In addition to the Global Alliance, UNOSSC platforms seek to connect demand for expertise and solutions with experience available across developing economies. These platforms include its updated digital repository, South-South Galaxy+, and the South-South and Triangular Cooperation Solutions Lab. Other platforms, such as the South-South Cooperation Connector of the UN Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific, the South-South and Triangular Cooperation Gateway of the Food and Agriculture Organization, and the International Labour Organization's South-South Meeting Point also help facilitate such cooperation.

The case studies presented in Chapter 3 show how trade-related facilities also perform a brokering and enabling function. In the cases examined, the Enhanced Integrated Framework and the Standards and Trade Development

Facility (STDF) helped identify specific trade-related constraints, connect beneficiary economies with relevant expertise from other developing economies, support exchanges and help anchor results in national institutions. These experiences demonstrate how existing trade-related mechanisms can facilitate practical South-South and triangular partnerships without requiring entirely new institutional structures.

The case studies suggest opportunities for stronger connections between trade-related facilities and existing South-South and triangular cooperation mechanisms. Peer matching could, where appropriate, be incorporated into programme design, while stronger links between trade-related initiatives and knowledge-sharing platforms could facilitate the exchange and replication of successful approaches across developing economies. Such connections could help move from individual projects towards a more systematic exchange of trade-related solutions, while retaining flexibility to respond to country-specific needs.

Better evidence is equally important. Improved measurement and reporting of trade-related South-South cooperation, including in-kind contributions, can strengthen understanding of its scale, characteristics and results. The UN Framework to Measure South-South Cooperation, which tracks financial and non-financial development support between developing economies under SDG indicator 17.3.1,² provides one avenue for improving the visibility of these contributions. Together with other international efforts to strengthen development cooperation statistics, better measurement can provide a stronger evidence base for policy-making, facilitate learning across programmes, and help partners identify where cooperation can have the greatest impact.

Looking ahead

Partnership is the theme of the “2026 Global Review”, held as the Aid for Trade initiative marks its twentieth anniversary. In highlighting development cooperation, this publication is a contribution to that discussion. The evidence and experiences presented throughout the report highlight opportunities to deepen practical cooperation among developing economies, strengthen connections with development partners, improve the sharing of trade-related solutions and build a stronger evidence base on what works.

South-South and triangular cooperation provide practical ways to draw on relevant experience, connect economies facing similar challenges, mobilize complementary expertise and resources, and strengthen institutions capable of sustaining results. Leveraging these partnerships more strategically can help broaden the opportunities created by South-South trade and contribute to more resilient, inclusive and sustainable trade and development.

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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

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Transformative partnerships for trade resilience

South-South and triangular cooperation in action

Cooperation between developing economies (South-South cooperation) and triangular cooperation (partnerships driven by two or more developing economies and supported by developed country partners or multilateral organizations) offer opportunities for developing economies to address trade-related challenges through exchanges of knowledge, skills, resources and technical know-how. This cooperation also takes the form of regional and interregional actions and partnerships that support trade and development.

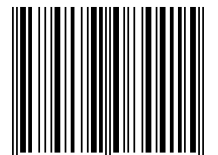
Rooted in shared experiences, common objectives and solidarity, South-South cooperation respects national sovereignty and ownership, and complements cooperation between developed and developing economies (North-South cooperation).

Jointly prepared by the World Trade Organization (WTO) and the United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation (UNOSSC), this publication examines the evolving role of South-South and triangular cooperation in strengthening trade capacities and resilience. Drawing on global and regional trade trends and practical experiences from developing economies, it illustrates how partnerships can help overcome trade constraints and support greater participation in international trade.

The publication also explores approaches to measuring and reporting South-South cooperation and identifies priorities for strengthening partnerships, improving coordination and enhancing the visibility of their contributions to trade and development.



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