



United Nations Fund for South-South Cooperation Triangular Cooperation Window Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

United Nations
Office for South-South Cooperation

1. What is Triangular Cooperation?

- Triangular cooperation (TrC) involves Southern-driven partnerships between two or more developing countries supported by a developed country(ies)/or multilateral organization(s) to implement development cooperation programmes and projects ⁽¹⁾.
- Evidence shows that in many instances, developing countries/partners in development cooperation require the financial and technical support and expertise of multilateral and/or developed-country partners in the course of assisting other developing countries (see TCDC/9/3). Developed countries/partners also benefit by being able to take advantage of increased institutional capacity in the global South and to increase the impact of their aid disbursements by leveraging the resources of multiple Southern partners. Developed countries have increasingly expressed strong support for this approach to development and a willingness to share their experience and lessons learned as long as the triangular cooperation process is led and owned by Southern actors in order to achieve development results. (SSC/19/3).

2. What is the Triangular Cooperation (TrC) Window?

The Triangular Cooperation Window is a new initiative under the United Nations Fund for South-South Cooperation (UNFSSC).

- Designed as a facility under UNFSSC, the TrC window aims to mobilize resources, knowledge and expertise from a wide range of stakeholders to accelerate progress towards sustainable development.
- The initiative is designed to provide a platform for South-South and triangular projects and partnerships to expand and grow.

The primary objectives of the TrC Window are:

- Raise awareness of Triangular Cooperation (TrC) and facilitate its institutionalization.

- Mobilize resources and foster partnerships and support scaling up of SSC initiatives to support the implementation of the SDGs.
- Provide a flexible and responsive mechanism that addresses the specific needs and priorities of developing countries.
- Support innovative approaches, such as emerging technologies and capacity development, to maximize impact.

3. Why was the Triangular Cooperation Window established?

Given its transformational and catalytic potential, triangular cooperation has been advocated within the United Nations System since the term was introduced by the New Directions for Technical Cooperation among Developing Countries in 1995. Yet new momentum for Triangular Cooperation has built in the years following the adoption of the Buenos Aires outcome document of the second High-level United Nations Conference on South-South Cooperation (BAPA+40), UN system-wide strategy on South-South and triangular cooperation and leading to the call by the UN Secretary-General in its 2022 report to the General Assembly on the State of South-South cooperation for the establishment of a Triangular Cooperation Window within the United Nations Fund for South-South Cooperation (UNFSSC).

4. How does the Triangular Cooperation Window differ from other cooperation initiatives?

- The Triangular Cooperation Window emphasizes the involvement of both developed and developing countries, as equal partners at an open platform, following a demand-driven, responsive, adaptive and collaborative approach, allowing developing countries to articulate their needs and priorities, while fostering co-creation of projects TrC partners that align with these priorities.

(1) <https://unsouthsouth.org/about/about-sstc/>

The characteristics of the TrC Window are:

- Demand-driven and responsive: Ensuring that projects align with the needs and priorities of developing countries.
- **Adaptive and Flexible:** Maintaining a flexible approach to adapt to changing circumstances and opportunities.
- **Focus on tangible benefits:** Supporting projects that deliver clear and measurable benefits, particularly in areas such as AI, capacity development, and gender equality.
- **Scalability:** Prioritizing projects with the potential to scale up and maximize impact.

5. How will Triangular Cooperation Window be managed?

- The TrC Window will be managed by UNOSSC and operationalized under the UNFSSC as a facility.
- The various components will be co-designed with key contributing partners and relevant stakeholders, ensuring ownership by the participating countries.
- Through mobilizing resources from TrC partners to fund a select number of practical/demonstrative pilots and proposals, coupled with co-designed capacity development, knowledge sharing, communication activities and advisory and scaling up support. The value of triangular cooperation will be proved in adding resources, knowledge, cost-effectiveness and expertise to South-South partnerships, and delivering concrete results on the ground benefiting developing countries.

The governance of the TrC Window will be characterized by:

- Inclusive and balanced representation: The TrC Window Advisory Group will convene a diverse range of stakeholders, including member states, UN entities, multilateral development banks and NGOs, to provide broad-based input and strategic direction.
- Transparency and trust: Clear and transparent project selection criteria will be established to build trust and align with the objectives of the TrC Window.

6. What activities and thematic domains will Triangular Cooperation Window support?

The TrC window will support a wide range of activities and offer flexible options, funding activities from small-scale capacity-building, feasibility studies, testing, pilots, to large multi-year programmes and portfolios. The window also includes fundings to existing SSC projects and initiatives demonstrating scalability and impacts, capacity-building initiatives, and partnership engagement opportunities. Examples include sustainable development programs in the Lower Mekong River Basin, agricultural development in Africa, and tax mobilization practices for development, capacity development programmes, etc.

Member states express their needs and priorities for cooperation and through various South-South cooperation outcome documents and UN resolutions. These expressed demands will guide the thematic priorities of the window to support a broad spectrum of SSTRC initiatives, projects and proposals demonstrating strong catalytic and multiplier effects on achieving SDGs, especially through what has been identified as six transitions or investment pathways⁽²⁾: food security, energy access, digital connectivity, education, jobs and social protection, and climate change. Cross-cutting issues like gender equality and youth empowerment ensure inclusivity in its initiatives.

7. Who can participate in the TrC Window? And how can partners engage with and contribute to the Triangular Cooperation Window?

UNOSSC invites partners from both the North and South to financially fund and co-design the various components under the Triangular Cooperation Window, including:

- **All countries** that wish to engage in TrC.
- **Development partners** such as multilateral development banks, NGOs, and other international organizations.
- **Entities** with TrC expertise and resources to contribute.

(2) <https://unsdg.un.org/sites/default/files/2023-09/Six%20Transitions%20English.pdf>

Interested partners can contribute through funding expertise, co-design, or by participating in policy dialogues, training workshops and project development:

- **Financial contributions:** Stakeholders can provide financial support to fund projects and initiatives of interest within the TrC Window.
- **In-kind contributions:** These are recognized as expressions of equal partnership and are valued for their unique contributions to the success of TrC projects.
- **Expertise and knowledge:** Capacity development, sharing expertise and good practices is crucial for the successful implementation and scaling of TrC initiatives.

Projects will be sourced in collaboration with contributing partners, aligning with priority thematic areas, operational modalities, and activity types.

Transparent and jointly defined criteria are essential to ensure alignment with the objectives of the TrC Window. The TrC advisory group will be convened to collectively develop the criteria and review the project ideas/proposals sourced. The process will be conducted through public announcements and will be streamlined while maintaining robust governance and accountability mechanisms to ensure high-quality outcomes.

8. When will the Triangular Cooperation Window be officially launched?

The Triangular Cooperation Window is set to be launched in October 2024, during the 8th International Meeting on Triangular Cooperation in Lisbon.

- Leading up to the launch, UNOSSC has already engaged in various consultations with member states and potential partners to finalize the program and establish joint activities.
- During September 2024 General Assembly, a dedicated side event has been co-organized by UNOSSC and the Permanent Mission of Portugal.

9. How the TrC Window support will be monitored and evaluated, how will the impact of TrC projects be measured?

The Triangular Cooperation Window will implement monitoring and evaluation frameworks on the projects and initiatives supported, aligned with UNEG guidance and the policies of the respective UN agencies involved. This ensures accountability and effectiveness, with lessons learned and best practices disseminated among participating countries and stakeholders.

- **Leveraging existing M&E frameworks:** Where possible, synergies with existing monitoring and evaluation frameworks will be explored.
- **Qualitative and quantitative indicators:** Both types of indicators will be used to assess the impact of projects, ensuring a comprehensive understanding of their contributions to sustainable development.
- **Regular reviews:** A review of lessons learned will be conducted after the first year of operationalization, with feedback from key contributing and programme partners and beneficiaries informing future refinements.
- **Adaptive management:** The TrC Window will remain responsive to changing needs and emerging opportunities, ensuring its relevance and effectiveness over time and focus on impact.

10. How will awareness and visibility of the TrC Window be raised?

Raising awareness and ensuring visibility will be key components of the TrC Window's strategy:

- **Stakeholder engagement:** Active outreach to stakeholders, including the private sector, will be a priority.
- **Awareness raising and visibility events:** Events will be organized with key member state partners and stakeholders at the key intergovernmental platforms.
- **UN Resident Coordinators:** On-the-ground UN Resident Coordinators will be engaged in outreach and building synergies with local and regional initiatives and stakeholders.

11. What are the operational modalities and programming options?

Operational Modalities	Resource Envelope	Programming Options
Seed Funding	\$100,000 to <\$500,000	- Trainings, document good practices, advocacy, feasibility studies/testing.
Funding of a Pilot Initiative	\$500,000 to <\$1 million	- Pilot project focused on technical cooperation with physical inputs to enable uptake of a Southern solution in 1 or 2 other developing countries. - Joint system co-production, physical inputs, and training for adoption.
Multi-country Project	\$1 million to \$5 million	- 1 to 5 TrC projects supporting technology and knowledge transfer for sub-regions or cross-regional approaches. - Collective responses to cross-border challenges.
Project Portfolio	>\$5 million	- Portfolio approach through calls for proposals or competitive invitations for TrC projects. - Demand-driven prioritization focusing on thematic, SDG-related, partnerships, and regional diversity.

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