

UNOSSC Managed South-South Trust Funds

YOUTH

Portfolio



United Nations
Office for South-South Cooperation

UNOSSC Managed South-South Trust Funds

Youth Portfolio



Portfolio Coverage

70+ countries



Total Allocation

\$14+ million



Direct Beneficiaries

60,000+ people



21 projects with

14 UN entities



Highlight of Projects



UN Fund for South-South Cooperation

- **Greening Higher Education through South-South University Cooperation Network (SUCN)** – China-UN Global South-South Development Facility
- **Youth4South Initiative**
- **Empower Fellowship**
- **The Gambia:** Advancing Youth Volunteerism in Banjul
- **Nigeria & Pakistan:** Youth Employment and Entrepreneurship Skills Improvement
- **Global South** COVID-19 Digital Innovation Challenge



India-UN Development Partnership Fund

- **Burundi:** Human Capital Development for Youth – Advancing Health, Entrepreneurship & E-Commerce
- **Micronesia:** Empowering Young Women Athletes through South-South Cooperation
- **Zambia:** Empowering Women and Youth through Digital Utility and Financial Services
- **Timor-Leste:** Leveraging ICT to Improve Education and Skills
- **Benin:** Promoting Youth and Women Employment through Agricultural Diversification



India, Brazil, and South Africa Facility for Poverty and Hunger Alleviation

- **Gabon:** Empowering Youth and Women-led SMEs in the Cassava Value Chain
- **Palau:** Rehabilitation of a High School Teacher Training Center
- **The Gambia:** Enhanced Vegetable Production and Processing for Rural Women and Youth
- **Viet Nam:** Innovative e-Learning Approaches for Health Education
- **Cambodia:** Poverty Reduction among Youth through Volunteer Skills

GREENING HIGHER EDUCATION

South-South University Cooperation Network



Jointly implemented by UNOSSC and UNESCO IESALC under Global South-South Development Center (GSSDC) Project with funding support from Govt. of China, this initiative positions universities as engines of sustainability and innovation in the Global South. The SUCN platform fosters cross-regional collaboration to integrate climate action, science, and technology into education systems while empowering young innovators to co-create local solutions—from AI-driven agriculture to solar-powered transport. By institutionalizing cooperation through working groups and long-term action plans, the initiative exemplifies how South-South and Triangular Cooperation can transform higher education into a driver of green, inclusive, and youth-led sustainable development.

Key Results

- **Building a Global South academic network:** Established the South-South University Cooperation Network (SUCN), linking 69 universities—including 11 leader institutions—across Africa, Asia-Pacific, the Arab States, and Latin America.
- **Empowering youth innovation for climate action:** Through the 16-week Greening-with-STI Bootcamp, trained 225 students from 10 universities, producing 22 youth-led prototypes for sustainable technologies.
- **Fostering South-South collaboration in higher education:** Promoted curriculum greening, STI transfer & gender-inclusive leadership through joint research, mentorship, and institutional partnerships.

Project Information

Implementing Agency:

United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation (UNOSSC); UNESCO International Institute for Higher Education in Latin America and the Caribbean (IESALC)

Duration: 2024–2026 (Ongoing)

Relevant SDGs:



YOUTH4SOUTH

Empowering Youth through SSTC

Launched in 2017, the Youth4South Initiative serves as UNOSSC's flagship youth platform to empower young leaders through South-South and triangular cooperation. It combines structured capacity development, entrepreneurship, and innovation exchange to turn ideas into action. Through collaboration with UN agencies, intergovernmental organizations, and development banks, Youth4South enables youth to access knowledge networks, mentorship, and tools for scaling up Southern-led solutions. By fostering partnerships across sectors and regions, it strengthens youth leadership in shaping sustainable development pathways for the Global South.

Key Results

- **Building global youth capacity:** Engaged over 6,700 young professionals and government officials through certified training programmes in public health, disaster risk reduction, agriculture, and digital innovation.
- **Catalyzing entrepreneurship:** Organized four international youth innovation competitions reaching 700+ young entrepreneurs across 50+ countries, providing mentorship, funding, and global exposure.
- **Advancing South-South cooperation:** Connected youth, policymakers, and institutions across the Global South to co-create and scale up sustainable, SDG-driven solutions.

Project Information

Implementing Agency:

UNOSSC, in partnership with Zayed International Foundation for the Environment; UNFPA; UNDP; IFAD; WFP; UNESCO; UN ESCAP; ITU; UN Youth Office; ICGEB; China Institute for South-South Cooperation in Agriculture (CISSCA); African Union Commission; World Bank; Islamic Development Bank (IsDB)

Duration: 2017–2024 (Ongoing)

Relevant SDGs:



EMPOWER Fellowship

Launched under UNOSSC's Youth4South initiative, the EMPOWER Fellowship supports young women scientists from developing countries to enhance their research skills, leadership, and international collaboration. Implemented jointly by UNOSSC and ICGEB with support from the Zayed International Foundation for the Environment, the fellowship promotes gender equality in science and technology through South-South and Triangular Cooperation.

The pilot cohort brought together young women scientists from Bangladesh, Colombia, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Tanzania, and Zimbabwe. Hosted at ICGEB laboratories in India and South Africa, the fellows conducted advanced research on pressing global health and agricultural challenges—including malaria, coronaviruses, and drought-resistant crops—using the latest biotechnological techniques.

Key Results

- Women scientists trained through **six-month research placements** in India and South Africa.
- Advanced research conducted on malaria biomarkers, antimalarial drug design, drought-tolerant crops, and viral immunology.
- Strengthened South-South collaboration in biotechnology and capacity development for women scientists from LDCs.

Project Information

Implementing Agency:

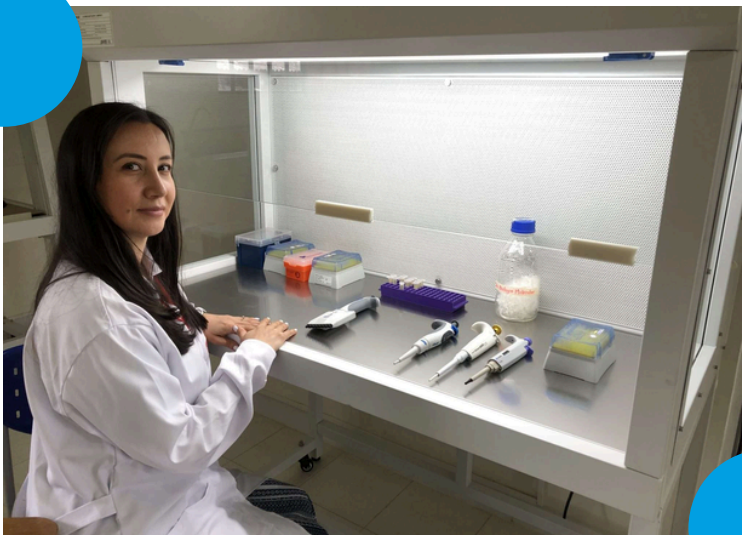
International Centre for Genetic Engineering and Biotechnology (ICGEB)

Duration: 2021–2023 (Completed)

Relevant SDGs:



International Centre for Genetic Engineering and Biotechnology



THE GAMBIA

Advancing Youth Volunteerism in Banjul

Implemented under the UNOSSC Cities Project with funding from the Government of China, this Banjul pilot demonstrates how South-South and triangular cooperation can strengthen youth engagement in local governance and sustainable city transformation. Through the partnership between Banjul and Shenzhen, the initiative integrates volunteerism, vocational training, and entrepreneurship into municipal development strategies, positioning youth as active drivers of urban resilience and socioeconomic recovery. By linking local action with global solidarity, the project offers a replicable model of how city-to-city cooperation can build inclusive, youth-led pathways toward sustainable urban futures.

Key Results

- **Empowering urban youth:** Strengthened volunteerism, entrepreneurship, and vocational training frameworks for over 180 young people across Banjul's nine wards.
- **Enabling city-to-city learning:** Fostered partnership between Banjul and Shenzhen through two online exchanges and a formal Statement of Intent, facilitating peer learning in youth and urban development.
- **Promoting digital and technical skills:** Delivered training in tailoring, construction, cosmetology, and ICT, supported by donated digital tools to enhance youth learning and employability.

Project Information

Implementing Agency:

United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) The Gambia Country Office; United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation (UNOSSC); Banjul City Council

Duration: 2022–2024 (Completed)

Relevant SDGs:



NIGERIA & PAKISTAN

Youth Employment & Entrepreneurship Skills Improvement

Funded by the Government of China under the Global South-South Development Center (GSSDC) Project, this small-grant initiative connects universities and youth across Nigeria, Pakistan, and China to strengthen participation in the digital economy. By integrating e-commerce training into academic programmes and creating hands-on learning hubs, the project empowers young entrepreneurs—particularly women—to develop business ventures, improve market readiness, and access global trade opportunities. Exemplifying South-South cooperation in action, it combines technology transfer, capacity building, and peer learning to advance youth-driven innovation and inclusive economic growth across the Global South.

Key Results

- **Empowering youth through digital skills:** Trained 173 young participants—including 72 women—and indirectly reached over 1,000 people to enhance employability and entrepreneurship through cross-border e-commerce.
- **Establishing innovation hubs:** Created Youth Employment and Entrepreneurship Skills Improvement Training Demonstration Sites in Nigeria and Pakistan to provide ongoing mentorship and technical guidance.
- **Fostering South-South learning and market access:** Promoted digital literacy, e-commerce innovation, and trade connectivity through biannual exchanges and nine video-based training modules.

Project Information

Implementing Agency:

Fujian Science Technology and Culture Innovation Association (FSTCIA)

Duration: 2023–2024 (Completed)

Relevant SDGs:



GLOBAL SOUTH

COVID-19 Digital Innovation Challenge

Jointly implemented by ITU and UNOSSC with funding from the UN Fund for South-South Cooperation, this global initiative mobilized young innovators to respond to COVID-19 challenges through digital transformation. From telemedicine in Uganda to digital literacy in Ecuador and QR-based contact tracing in Cambodia, the winning solutions exemplified practical innovation emerging from the Global South. Beyond competition, the initiative built mentorship networks and partnerships that strengthened youth entrepreneurship ecosystems. It stands as a model of how South-South collaboration can harness digital creativity for resilient, inclusive, and future-ready societies.

Key Results

- **Catalyzing youth-led innovation:** Received over 250 applications from 52 countries, with 12 winning projects across 10 nations developing digital solutions for health, education, and inclusion.
- **Scaling through mentorship and cooperation:** Connected innovators with 24 global experts and partners for implementation support, peer learning, and replication across the Global South.
- **Advancing digital resilience:** Demonstrated how technology and entrepreneurship can drive inclusive recovery and sustainable development through South-South and triangular cooperation.

Project Information

Implementing Agency:

International Telecommunication Union (ITU)

Duration: 2020–2023 (Completed)

Relevant SDGs:



BURUNDI

Human Capital Development for Youth - Advancing Health, Entrepreneurship & E-Commerce

With 64% of Burundi's population under 25, this initiative—funded through the UN Fund for South-South Cooperation and implemented with UNFPA—invests in the country's next generation by linking health, education, and economic empowerment. Covering 30 municipalities in six provinces, the project combines youth entrepreneurship and e-commerce training with strengthened AYSRH services to create holistic opportunities for development and inclusion. Early activities have engaged 1,500 youth in entrepreneurship orientation and secured strong support from governors and local administrators. Through South-South cooperation and national partnerships, the project demonstrates how integrated, youth-centered investments in human capital can drive local innovation and social cohesion.

Key Results

- **Empowering youth through dual focus on health and entrepreneurship:** Supporting 1,500 people to develop entrepreneurship and e-commerce skills, while improving access to adolescent and youth sexual and reproductive health (AYSRH) services.
- **Strengthening local systems and facilities:** Providing technical assistance for the creation of 30 youth-led enterprises and upgrading 30 health centers.
- **Building community engagement and ownership:** Mobilizing local authorities and youth networks across 30 municipalities, with orientation workshops, awareness campaigns, and active youth participation

Project Information

Implementing Agency:

Ministry of the Interior, Community Development and Public Security, Ministry of National Education and Scientific Research, Ministry of Public Health and the Fight against AIDS, Ministry of East African Community Affairs, Youth, Sports and Culture and UNFPA

Duration: 2024

Relevant SDGs:



MICRONESIA

Empowering Young Women Athletes

Through the India–UN Development Partnership Fund, this project used sports as a transformative entry point for gender equality and youth empowerment in Micronesia. The Chuuk High School girls' basketball team became a symbol of resilience and leadership—turning challenges into success and inspiring communities nationwide. Beyond tournaments, the project linked policy reform, income generation, and mentorship to strengthen women's participation across all sectors. It stands as a vivid example of how South-South cooperation can elevate young women as leaders, entrepreneurs, and change-makers in small island developing states.

Key Results

- **Empowering young women through sports:** Enabled girls in Chuuk and across FSM to access leadership, confidence-building, and income-generating opportunities through athletic participation.
- **Leadership and inclusion:** Combined sports, policy advocacy, and community engagement to advance women's empowerment and gender equality.
- **South-South solidarity in action:** Leveraged India's partnership and UNDP's regional expertise to promote gender-responsive development in Pacific Island contexts.

Project Information

Implementing Agency:

Government of the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM);
UNDP Pacific Office

Duration: 2020–2024 (Completed)

Relevant SDGs:



ZAMBIA

Empowering Women & Youth with Increased Usage of Utility & Digital Financial Services

Through the India–UN Development Partnership Fund, this initiative positioned Zambia at the forefront of inclusive digital transformation. By digitalizing payments for essential utilities, the project reduced reliance on cash and increased transparency while promoting collaboration between government agencies, FinTech innovators, and financial service providers. With a strong focus on women and youth, it built digital literacy and access to financial tools that enable entrepreneurship and economic participation. Reflecting SSC in practice, the project transformed lessons from India's digital revolution into practical solutions for equitable development across Zambia.

Key Results

- **Driving digital transformation:** Supported the Government of Zambia to digitalize utility payments—initially for water enhancing efficiency, transparency, and accessibility for underserved communities.
- **Empowering women and youth:** Expanded access to affordable digital financial services, strengthening participation in the digital economy and improving livelihoods.
- **Scaling South-South innovation:** Leveraged India's digital finance experience to accelerate Zambia's National Financial Inclusion Strategy and promote inclusive growth.

Project Information

Implementing Agency:

Ministry of Finance, Republic of Zambia, with technical assistance from UNCDF

Duration: 2021–2022 (Completed)

Relevant SDGs:



TIMOR-LESTE

Leveraging ICT to Improve Education and Skills

Through the India-UN Development Partnership Fund, this initiative transformed Oe-Cusse into a hub of youth innovation. The ICT Innovation Bootcamp and Exhibition connected 120 students and 30 teachers with mentors from India, fostering a culture of problem-solving and entrepreneurship. By combining capacity development, community engagement, and cross-country mentorship, the project demonstrated how South-South cooperation can empower rural youth to participate in the digital economy and build pathways to decent work.

Key Results

- **Bridging the digital divide:** Established ICT labs and training programs in Oe-Cusse schools, enhancing students' digital literacy and employability.
- **Empowering educators:** Built teachers' capacity in ICT-based lesson design and classroom engagement, strengthening education quality and innovation.
- **South-South knowledge exchange:** Indian experts from Robolab Technologies mentored students and teachers in robotics and web design, demonstrating practical cooperation in technology transfer and skills development.

Project Information

Implementing Agency:

UNDP, Ministry of Education (Timor-Leste), Regional Government of Oe-Cusse, UNDP Timor-Leste

Duration: 2019–2020 (Completed)

Relevant SDGs:



BENIN

Promoting Youth & Women Employment through Agricultural Diversification

Through the India–UN Development Partnership Fund, this initiative catalyzed youth- and women-led agribusiness in Benin by pairing skills development with market connectivity. Intensive training and mentorship equipped young entrepreneurs to scale up production and diversify agricultural value chains, while peer exchanges nurtured innovation and self-reliance. Reflecting the essence of South-South cooperation, the project translated shared knowledge and solidarity into tangible livelihoods, advancing inclusive economic growth and women’s empowerment across rural communities.

Key Results

- **Empowering young agripreneurs:** Trained 101 youth—including 15 women—selected from over 700 applicants in agribusiness management, value-chain development, and entrepreneurship.
- **Strengthening market linkages:** Connected youth-led enterprises with suppliers, distributors, and exporters to expand access to finance and markets.
- **Fostering South-South learning:** Leveraged Indian support and shared expertise to build local entrepreneurship ecosystems and promote inclusive rural growth.

Project Information

Implementing Agency:

Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Fisheries; UNDP Benin

Duration: 2018–2021 (Completed)

Relevant SDGs:



GABON

Empowering Youth & Women-led SMEs in the Cassava Value Chain

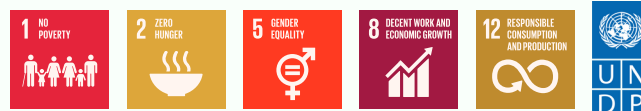
Anchored in Gabon’s vision for green growth, this IBSA Fund project positioned youth and women entrepreneurs at the center of the country’s agricultural transformation. By revitalizing the cassava value chain through technology transfer, capacity building, and inclusive financing, the project creates new pathways for rural employment and food security. Drawing on the technical experience of IBSA partners, it exemplifies how South-South cooperation can drive agrifood innovation, reduce inequalities, and empower communities to lead sustainable economic change.

Key Results

- **Strengthening agri-entrepreneurship:** Supporting 100 smallholders, 10 cooperatives, and 20 youth- and women-led SMEs through training, infrastructure, and microgrants to boost cassava production.
- **Driving innovation and sustainability:** Introducing low-carbon processing technologies and digital market solutions to double productivity and reduce post-harvest losses by 10%.
- **South-South knowledge exchange:** Leveraging expertise from Brazil, India, and South Africa to advance sustainable agri-processing and SME development under Gabon’s “Green Gabon” strategy.

Project Information

Implementing Agency:
Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock, Fisheries and Food;
Ministry of Trade, SMEs and Industry; UNDP
Duration: 2025–2026 (Ongoing)
Relevant SDGs:



PALAU

Rehabilitation of a High School Teacher Training Center

Funded through the IBSA Fund and implemented by IOM in close collaboration with the Government of Palau, this project supports the rehabilitation of a high school facility in Koror into a modern Teacher Training Centre. The initiative strengthens education infrastructure and professional development systems under Palau's Education Master Plan (2017–2026). Designed with climate-resilient features, the centre also serves as an emergency evacuation shelter, demonstrating how South-South solidarity can link education, resilience, and sustainability in Small Island Developing States.

Key Results

- Refurbishment of an existing facility into a modern **Teacher Training Centre** to train 80 high school teachers.
- **Enhanced teacher training systems** supporting quality education and national capacity development.
- **Climate-resilient infrastructure** doubling as a community shelter during natural disasters.
- **Reduced operational costs** for education training through a dedicated national facility.

Project Information

Implementing Agency:

IOM; Ministry of Education; Ministry of Public Infrastructure and Industries

Duration: 2023–2026 (Ongoing)

Relevant SDGs:



THE GAMBIA

Enhanced Vegetable Production & Processing for Rural Women and Youth

Implemented by FAO, this initiative empowers rural youth and women to become leaders in sustainable agriculture and food processing. Combining technical training with value-chain development, it transforms high post-harvest losses into opportunities for entrepreneurship and community growth. Participants now produce value-added goods—from sauces to millet-based sweets—with strong market potential. Reflecting the IBSA Fund’s vision of practical South-South cooperation, the project links agricultural innovation, skills development, and gender empowerment to advance food security and inclusive rural transformation in The Gambia.

Key Results

- **Building youth and women’s agrifood skills:** Trained young entrepreneurs in vegetable processing, packaging, and value addition to reduce post-harvest losses and create market-ready products.
- **Promoting sustainable agribusiness:** Supported cooperatives and youth groups to strengthen branding, market access, and collective entrepreneurship for income generation.
- **Scaling South-South innovation:** Through the IBSA Fund, shared expertise from India, Brazil, and South Africa to enhance food security and rural livelihoods in The Gambia.

Project Information

Implementing Agency:

FAO, in collaboration with the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Food Security and the Ministry of Youth and Sports

Duration: 2022–2024 (Ongoing)

Relevant SDGs:



VIET NAM

Innovative e-Learning Approaches for Health Education

This IBSA Fund initiative modernized medical education in Viet Nam through a scalable e-learning model that bridged geographic and resource gaps in healthcare training. By integrating digital platforms into medical curricula, the project empowered health workers to access quality instruction while maintaining service delivery in remote regions. Its post-project adaptation during the COVID-19 pandemic underscored both flexibility and impact. Exemplifying South-South cooperation in action, the project showcased how shared innovation and technology can enhance healthcare systems, strengthen institutional capacity, and expand equitable access to medical knowledge.

Key Results

- **Expanding digital healthcare learning:** Developed and piloted an e-learning platform for training health workers and medical students in noncommunicable diseases and marine medicine.
- **Building sustainable capacity:** Trained over 870 professionals and students and established five e-learning centers to strengthen continuous medical education in underserved areas.
- **Scaling through South-South innovation:** Supported by the IBSA Fund, the platform was later adapted for WHO's COVID-19 training modules, demonstrating resilience and knowledge exchange across the Global South.

Project Information

Implementing Agency:

World Health Organization (WHO) Viet Nam; Ministry of Health; Hai Phong University of Medicine and Pharmacy (HPMU)

Duration: 2015–2019 (Completed)

Relevant SDGs:



CAMBODIA

Poverty Reduction among Youth through Volunteer Skills Development

Implemented by UNV with support from the IBSA Fund, this initiative positioned volunteerism as a catalyst for youth empowerment and inclusive growth in Cambodia. By equipping young people with practical, accredited skills and creating digital systems to match them with volunteer and job opportunities, the project bridged education, employability, and civic participation. It strengthened national policies and institutional frameworks while fostering youth-led contributions to community development. Exemplifying South-South cooperation, the project showcased how volunteerism can drive both personal transformation and sustainable poverty reduction.

Key Results

- **Empowering youth through volunteerism:** Trained 1,000 young volunteers in employability and entrepreneurship skills, linking community service with pathways to decent work.
- **Building systems for youth engagement:** Established a national online platform, career centers, and a skills accreditation framework to institutionalize volunteerism.
- **Promoting South-South innovation:** Demonstrated how volunteerism can serve as a strategy for youth employment and poverty reduction under the IBSA cooperation framework.

Project Information

Implementing Agency: Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport; United Nations Volunteers (UNV) Programme
Duration: 2015–2020 (Completed)
Relevant SDGs:





United Nations
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For more information:
unsouthsouth.org/our-work/south-south-trust-fund-management