



UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM-WIDE STRATEGY ON

# **SOUTH-SOUTH AND TRIANGULAR COOPERATION FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT**

**2026-2029**



**United  
Nations**



United Nations  
Office for South-South Cooperation

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## Table of Contents

<b>I. SUMMARY .....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>II. INTRODUCTION.....</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>A. BACKGROUND .....</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>B. PROCESS OF STRATEGY DEVELOPMENT.....</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>C. OBJECTIVE OF THE STRATEGY .....</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>III. UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM-WIDE STRATEGY ON SOUTH-SOUTH AND TRIANGULAR COOPERATION FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT, 2026-2029.....</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>A. PREAMBLE.....</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>B. WORKING DEFINITIONS AND PRINCIPLES OF SOUTH-SOUTH AND TRIANGULAR COOPERATION .....</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>1. Working definitions .....</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>a. South-South cooperation.....</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>b. Triangular cooperation .....</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>2. Principles .....</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>C. MAIN ELEMENTS OF THE STRATEGY .....</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>1. Strategic planning .....</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>a. Mainstreaming South-South and triangular cooperation .....</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>b. Ensuring coherence and coordination.....</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>2. Partnership and joint initiatives .....</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>a. Becoming part of an alliance .....</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>b. Joint work.....</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>3. Organizational ownership .....</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>a. Capacity development .....</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>b. Communication and advocacy.....</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>c. Human and financial resources .....</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>IV. ENTITY ACCOUNTABILITY FRAMEWORK.....</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>A. OVERVIEW.....</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>B. IMPLEMENTATION .....</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>1. UNOSSC .....</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>2. United Nations Entities .....</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>3. Inter-agency actions .....</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>C. MONITORING, EVALUATION AND REPORTING.....</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>D. SOUTH-SOUTH AND TRIANGULAR COOPERATION SCORECARD .....</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>SCORECARD: MAIN ELEMENTS AND INDICATORS* .....</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>ANNEX 1. TERMS OF REFERENCE: UNITED NATIONS INTER-AGENCY MECHANISM FOR SOUTH-SOUTH AND TRIANGULAR COOPERATION.....</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>ANNEX 2. INSTITUTIONAL ARRANGEMENTS .....</b>	<b>22</b>
<b>ANNEX 3. LIST OF MEMBERS OF THE UNITED NATIONS INTER-AGENCY MECHANISM FOR SOUTH-SOUTH AND TRIANGULAR COOPERATION.....</b>	<b>25</b>

# I. Summary

1. Building on the findings and recommendations of the independent evaluation of the previous United Nations System-wide Strategy on South-South and Triangular Cooperation (2020-2025)<sup>1</sup>, and informed by consultations with Member States through the High-level Committee on South-South Cooperation and United Nations entities through the United Nations Inter-Agency Mechanism and Advisory Group for South-South and Triangular Cooperation, the United Nations System-wide Strategy on South-South and Triangular Cooperation for Sustainable Development (2026-2029) sets a coherent, results-oriented framework for how the United Nations development system will support Member States to advance sustainable development leveraging South-South and triangular cooperation. The strategy responds to longstanding intergovernmental mandates calling for strengthened system-wide coherence, accountability and effectiveness in supporting South-South and triangular cooperation, including the Buenos Aires outcome document of the Second High-level United Nations Conference on South-South Cooperation (BAPA+40), relevant General Assembly resolutions, and recent global development frameworks<sup>2</sup>.

2. Its overarching objective is to provide a system-wide policy and strategic orientation to United Nations development system, and galvanize a coordinated and coherent approach to policy, programmatic and partnership support for South-South and triangular cooperation to increase collective action and impact at national, regional and global levels to achieve sustainable development. It aims to achieve this objective through reinvigoration of the Inter-Agency Mechanism for South-South and Triangular Cooperation as a partnership platform, and supporting focal points for advocacy and mainstreaming South-South and triangular cooperation through:

- i. increasing the engagement with the United Nations Sustainable Development Group (UNSDG) through the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Administrator as Vice-Chair of the UNSDG, who serves as the porte-parole for the United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation (UNOSSC)'s representation in the UNSDG and executive secretaries of Regional Economic Commissions and strengthening coordination at the regional and country levels through increased interaction with the United Nations Development Coordination Office, Regional Collaborative Platforms, regional commissions and resident coordinator offices; and
- ii. establishing an accountability framework for South-South and triangular cooperation results, including: (i) a results-based action plan and introduction of a scorecard reviewed annually by the Inter-Agency Mechanism (director level); (ii) advocating for inclusion of South-South and triangular cooperation in United Nations strategic planning instruments; and (iii) strengthening system-wide reporting based on enhanced guidance, digital and artificial intelligence (AI) enabled data aggregation, follow-up mechanisms, and consolidated reporting of development results of South-South and triangular cooperation. Reporting of the consolidated progress will inform the Annual Report of the Secretary-General on the State of South-South Cooperation as well as the biennial reports of the High-level Committee on South-South Cooperation. A mid-term review and final independent evaluation will assess implementation progress, capture lessons learned and inform future directions of the Strategy.

3. This approach positions South-South and triangular cooperation as core modalities of United Nations support to Member States, contributing to more coordinated coherent and impact-oriented multilateral development cooperation.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://erc.undp.org/evaluation/evaluations/detail/15083?tab=documents>

<sup>2</sup> Para 18 below outlines the key directives, including UN resolutions, decisions and frameworks.

## II. Introduction

### A. Background

4. The institutional foundation for United Nations support to South-South and triangular cooperation derives from the Buenos Aires Plan of Action for Promoting and Implementing Technical Cooperation among Developing Countries (1978), subsequent General Assembly resolutions, and the establishment of the United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation (UNOSSC) as the focal point for promoting and facilitating South-South and triangular cooperation for development on a global and United Nations system-wide basis<sup>3</sup>. The High-level Committee on South-South Cooperation, a subsidiary body of the General Assembly, provides intergovernmental policy guidance.

5. General Assembly resolutions, including A/RES/79/236, have reiterated the need for strengthened system-wide approaches and regular reporting on progress. In addition, global development frameworks, including the Doha Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries (2022–2031), the Antigua and Barbuda Agenda for Small Island Developing States, Makati Declaration on Middle-Income Countries, the Awaza Programme of Action for Landlocked Developing Countries (2024-2034), the Sevilla Commitment of the Fourth International Conference on Financing for Development, and the Pact for the Future (A/RES/79/1), underscore the importance of South-South and triangular cooperation as complementary modalities to North-South cooperation and call for enhanced mobilization, coordination and impact.

6. In response to a request of the Secretary-General (A/72/297), UNOSSC coordinated, in consultation with the United Nations agencies, the preparation of the first United Nations System-wide Strategy on South-South and Triangular Cooperation (2020-2025), endorsed by the Executive Office of the Secretary-General. That strategy established a structured framework to enhance coordination, strengthen mainstreaming and promote shared accountability across United Nations development system. The present 2026-2029 Strategy further refines focus and impact, strengthening coordination, coherence, partnership and accountability mechanisms, while aligning more closely with evolving intergovernmental guidance and system-wide processes.

7. An independent evaluation of the United Nations System-wide Strategy (2020-2025)<sup>4</sup> was conducted to assess relevance, effectiveness, and coherence. The evaluation recognized the added value of having a formalized system-wide framework and noted progress in strengthening inter-agency coordination and raising the visibility of South-South and triangular cooperation across the system. At the same time, it identified areas that should be further strengthened, including:

- i. **Results measurement should rely more systematically on qualitative methods** that prioritize the identification of emerging impacts, interconnected factors and other relevant changes as perceived by beneficiaries, implementing agencies and strategic partners. In response, the 2026-2029 Strategy places stronger emphasis on results-based monitoring that captures both quantitative progress and qualitative evidence of change, learning and emerging impact.
- ii. **The United Nations system should establish and maintain processes for continuous reflection, learning and agile adaptation, prioritizing clarity over quantity.** By meticulously tracking a much more limited and highly relevant set of key indicators and outcomes, UNOSSC and its partners should gain richer insights, enabling quicker learning and more agile adjustments. Accordingly, the 2026-2029 Strategy introduces a more streamlined accountability approach, including a limited set of core indicators, an annual results-based action plan and regular review through the Inter-Agency Mechanism for South-South and Triangular Cooperation to support adaptive implementation.
- iii. **The United Nations system should prioritise investment in strategy implementation.** This strategy is designed to be achievable within existing capacities, while requiring clear institutional commitments by United Nations entities and UNOSSC. Resource needs and contributions, whether in staff time, in-kind technical support or financial resources, should be reflected in the annual results-based action plan for the

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<sup>3</sup> BAPA+40 Outcome document para 27(h).

<sup>4</sup> <https://erc.undp.org/evaluation/documents/detail/25237>

implementation of the 2026-2029 Strategy. United Nations development entities should also consider, as appropriate, pooling resources and undertaking joint resourcing (including through pooled arrangements) to support the effective implementation, monitoring and reporting of the strategy. This is reflected in the 2026-2029 Strategy through its emphasis on entity-level ownership, joint work and more deliberate alignment of human and financial resources with agreed system-wide priorities and results; and

- iv. **The evaluation further recommended that the Inter-Agency Mechanism should evolve into a stronger partnership platform**, leveraging the capacity of focal points to advocate with key colleagues and senior managers, and to mainstream South-South and triangular cooperation across entity policies, strategic planning, programmes and results reporting, taking into account the lessons from the United Nations System-wide Action Plan on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-SWAP) and the United Nations Disability Inclusion Strategy (UNDIS) and inter-agency mainstreaming experiences of United Nations Representatives of Internal Audit Services (UN-RIAS), the United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG) and the Human Resources Network of the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination. **In response, the 2026-2029 Strategy introduces a reinvigorated Inter-Agency Mechanism for South-South and Triangular Cooperation**, composed of senior staff at the director level, formally nominated by the Heads of United Nations entities and regional commissions, with technical staff involved as needed. The Mechanism is expected to serve as the primary driver of system-wide coordination and coherence, in line with its revised terms of reference (Annex 1). It will operate at two complementary levels: the director level, providing strategic direction and governance; and the expert level, supporting technical coordination and follow-up. Annex 1 provides further details on the revised terms of reference for the Inter-Agency Mechanism.

8. The broader system-wide United Nations reform, provides further impetus to this Strategy particularly as the Secretary-General has emphasized that the United Nations must act “with unity and purpose” to strengthen “efficiency, effectiveness, coherence, transparency and accountability.”

9. The changing global context and the resulting challenges for multilateral development underscore the urgent need to strengthen the leadership role of the Global South in accelerating sustainable development and shaping the evolving multilateral development architecture. Ongoing United Nations reform efforts, including UN80 and earlier development system reforms, seek to enhance efficiency, coherence and accountability across the system. At the same time, reductions in official development assistance, fiscal reprioritization in many countries, growing debt distress across the Global South, rapid digital transformation and advances in artificial intelligence, as well as increasing demand for innovation, partnerships and new financing approaches, are reshaping the landscape of development cooperation. Continued displacement and migration pressures are also generating complex social and economic impacts across regions. In this context, the present Strategy is intended to support UNOSSC and United Nations entities in elevating South-South and triangular cooperation as important modalities for solidarity, mutual learning and collective action, enabling countries of the South to support one another’s development and contribute to a more balanced and responsive multilateral system.

10. In response to these shifts, the present Strategy adopts a streamlined and realistic approach, anchored in an integrated results framework. Greater focus is placed on priority themes and outcomes aligned with the global Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) agenda. Learning from the uneven implementation experiences of the previous system-wide strategy and the findings of evaluation reports,<sup>5</sup> the new approach includes a results-based action plan, a scorecard and the identification of relevant key indicators. It ensures that regional and country levels are included in accountability for results and maintains an integrated and simplified monitoring and reporting system.

11. Building on the evaluation findings outlined above (see paragraph 6), the present Strategy introduces strengthened accountability mechanisms to support coherent and effective system-wide implementation. These include the introduction of a scorecard to ensure alignment of South-South and triangular cooperation programming with agency mandates and strategic plans to foster shared ownership and accountability for implementation of the Strategy. A scorecard with a core set of indicators will allow annual review and mandatory reporting by members of the Inter-Agency Mechanism for South-South and Triangular Cooperation.

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<sup>5</sup> Including evaluations of the United Nations system-wide strategy on South-South and triangular cooperation, 2022–2025, and the UNOSSC strategic framework, 2022–2025.

12. Following its mandate,<sup>6</sup> UNOSSC is committed to working through the United Nations system to deliver a comprehensive, integrated approach to implementing the United Nations system-wide strategy on South-South and triangular cooperation. Aligned with the UNOSSC Strategic Framework 2026-2029, the Office will provide strong leadership to advance a vision in which South-South and triangular cooperation is mainstreamed into pillars of the global development architecture, while fostering system-wide coherence by leveraging the complementary and comparative advantages of each United Nations entity, through appropriate coordination mechanisms, joint programmes, and a reinvigorated Inter-Agency Mechanism, to strengthen shared responsibility and accountability for delivering agreed outcomes.

## **B. Process of strategy development**

13. The Strategy was developed through an inclusive, system-wide consultation and engagement process. It builds on lessons learned from outreach and consultations conducted for the previous strategy. The engagement process involved inputs from the UN Advisory Group on South-South and Triangular Cooperation and the UN Inter-Agency Mechanism for South-South and Triangular Cooperation through consultations, workshops, and written submissions; as well as interviews and focus group discussions with Member States and the UN development system, carried out as part of the evaluation of the UN System-wide Strategy on South-South and Triangular Cooperation 2020-2025, among other activities. Evidence from recent independent evaluations of the United Nations system-wide strategy on South-South and triangular cooperation, 2022-2025, and the UNOSSC strategic framework, 2022-2025, together with feedback from Member States, the United Nations development system, inter-agency networks, civil society and other stakeholders, directly informed the scope, priorities and modalities of this Strategy.

14. The drafting process was further strengthened through systematic engagement with the Advisory Group<sup>7</sup> and the Inter-Agency Mechanism, which served as validation platforms to test assumptions, ensure alignment with system-wide priorities and incorporate diverse perspectives. In parallel, entity-led working groups supported the finalization of the accountability framework, including a refined set of indicators, ensuring coherence with results-based management practices and enabling consistent monitoring across entities.

## **C. Objective of the strategy**

15. This Strategy aims to accelerate progress toward the Sustainable Development Goals. Its overarching objective is to provide system-wide policy and strategic orientation to the United Nations development system in galvanizing a coordinated and coherent approach to policy, programmatic and partnership support for South-South and triangular cooperation. Through strengthened collective action, the Strategy seeks to enhance the impact of United Nations activities at national, regional and global levels in support of sustainable development.

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<sup>6</sup> [A/RES/73/291](#), para 27 (h).

<sup>7</sup> Advisory Group was established to guide the evaluation of the current UN System-wide Strategy as well as the formulation of the new strategy and guide the work of the Inter-Agency Mechanism going forward.

### III. United Nations system-wide strategy on South-South and triangular cooperation for sustainable development, 2026-2029

#### A. Preamble

16. The United Nations system commits, through the Strategy, to enhancing efforts to embed and mainstream South-South and triangular cooperation throughout the United Nations development system.

17. The United Nations system-wide strategy is aligned to fulfil expectations and operationalize several intergovernmental global agendas and recommendations in high-level reports that explicitly call on the United Nations system to mobilize, coordinate and mainstream South-South and triangular cooperation.

18. Key directives include:

- i. **The decisions of the High-level Committee on South-South Cooperation**;
- ii. **Buenos Aires outcome document of the second High-level United Nations Conference on South-South Cooperation (BAPA+40) and its potential forthcoming review.** The BAPA+40 outcome document remains the cornerstone political and operational framework for South-South and triangular cooperation. It reaffirms the principles of solidarity, mutual benefit, national ownership and equality among partners while calling for modernization of institutional support systems and stronger accountability. A proposed review by Member States of BAPA+40 will evaluate global and United Nations progress in implementing the commitments and recommended actions contained in the BAPA+40 outcome document;
- iii. **Doha Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries, 2022-2031**: Calls for *full mobilization and coordination* of the United Nations system to support Doha Programme of Action implementation and reviews, with South-South and triangular cooperation as complements to North-South cooperation; it invites United Nations funds, programmes and international financial institutions (IFIs) to integrate the Doha Programme of Action into workplans;
- iv. **Awaza Programme of Action for Landlocked Developing Countries for the Decade 2024–2034**: Re-emphasizes United Nations-backed international cooperation and *promotion of regional and South-South cooperation* for infrastructure, integration and knowledge exchange;
- v. **Antigua and Barbuda Agenda for SIDS [Small Island Developing States] (ABAS)**: *Requests all United Nations development system entities* to integrate ABAS into their strategic plans and workplans and to support SIDS-SIDS cooperation and knowledge exchange;
- vi. **Sevilla Commitment (outcome document of the fourth International Conference on Financing for Development)**: Urges reinvigorating the development cooperation architecture and *enhancing South-South and triangular cooperation impact and effectiveness*, including reporting and regional financing mechanisms and strengthened domestic resource mobilization, that the United Nations system helps to operationalize;
- vii. **Pact for the Future (A/RES/79/1)**: The Heads of State and Government decide to *strengthen North-South cooperation, South-South and triangular cooperation* to build science, technology and innovation (STI) capacity and accelerate digital knowledge and technology transfer on mutually agreed terms;
- viii. **Makati Declaration on Middle-Income Countries**: The Declaration acknowledges the dual role of middle-income countries (MICs) as both beneficiaries and providers of cooperation and innovation. It highlights persistent vulnerabilities – debt, inequality and environmental stress – despite their growing global contributions and leadership in South-South and triangular cooperation.
- ix. **Resolutions of the Second Committee on South-South Cooperation**: These resolutions of the United Nations General Assembly reaffirm the importance of South-South and triangular cooperation as key modalities for advancing sustainable development. They call for strengthened support across the United

Nations system, enhanced knowledge-sharing and partnerships among developing countries, and follow-up to major global commitments.

19. High-level reports include the following:

- i. **The reports of the High-level Committee on South-South Cooperation** synthesize system-wide progress, policy gaps and recommendations to strengthen coordination and coherence of South-South cooperation and triangular cooperation across the United Nations system.
- ii. **The annual report (A/79/230) of the United Nations Secretary-General on the state of South-South cooperation** includes recommendations to the United Nations system to advance South-South and triangular cooperation. The United Nations entities are encouraged to leverage the potential of South-South and triangular cooperation to contribute to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals through: (a) accelerated implementation of the United Nations system-wide strategy on South-South and triangular cooperation for sustainable development; (b) full integration of South-South and triangular cooperation into the work of the United Nations development system at the global, regional and country levels (para 74). In addition, para 75 of the report, underscores that “it is essential that United Nations resident coordinators continue to spearhead the integration of South-South and triangular cooperation into the work of United Nations country teams”.

## B. Working definitions and principles of South-South and triangular cooperation

### 1. Working definitions

#### a. *South-South cooperation*

20. The BAPA+40 outcome document<sup>8</sup> sets forth the basis, principles and key actors of South-South cooperation:

- i. South-South cooperation is “a manifestation of solidarity among peoples and countries of the South that contributes to their national well-being, their national and collective self-reliance and the attainment of internationally agreed development goals, including the Sustainable Development Goals, according to national priorities and plans” (para. 8). Furthermore, “South-South cooperation should not be seen as [o]fficial [d]evelopment [a]ssistance” (para. 9).
- ii. “South-South cooperation is conducted among countries of the South, including but not limited to the economic, social, cultural, environmental, and technical domains, that can take place in a bilateral, regional or interregional context for developing countries to meet their development goals through concerted efforts, taking into account the principles of South-South cooperation” (para. 7).
- iii. The Buenos Aires outcome document of the second High-level United Nations Conference on South-South Cooperation(A/RES/73/291) recognizes “the value of inclusive multi-stakeholder approaches to South-South and triangular cooperation led by Member States whereby governments create enabling environments that mobilize collective action by a growing number of diverse actors in South-South and triangular cooperation” (para. 31).

21. In the Strategy, the operational definitions of South-South and triangular cooperation are based on the 2016 framework of operational guidelines on United Nations support to South-South and triangular cooperation.<sup>9</sup> South-South cooperation is a form of partnership whereby “two or more developing countries pursue” through concerted efforts “their individual and/or shared national development objectives through exchanges of knowledge, skills, resources and technical know-how and through regional and interregional collective actions, including partnerships involving Governments, regional organizations, civil society, academia and the private sector” and other relevant actors, “for their individual and/or mutual benefit within and across regions” and taking

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<sup>8</sup> <https://www.unsouthsouth.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/N1911172.pdf>

<sup>9</sup> SSC/19/3. Available at <https://documents.un.org/doc/undoc/gen/n16/081/68/pdf/n1608168.pdf>.

into account the principles of South-South cooperation. “South-South cooperation is not a substitute for, but rather a complement to, North-South cooperation.”<sup>10</sup>

### ***b. Triangular cooperation***

22. “Triangular cooperation involves Southern-driven partnerships between two or more developing countries supported by a developed country(ies)/or multilateral organization(s).”<sup>11</sup> It “is a modality that builds partnerships and trust, between all partners, and that combines diverse resources and capacities, under the ownership of the requesting developing country, to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals; and that it provides added value by leveraging and mobilizing additional technical and financial resources, sharing a wider range of experiences, promoting new areas of cooperation, and combining affordable and context-based development solutions under flexible arrangements and agreed shared modalities”.<sup>12</sup>

## **2. Principles**

23. The implementation of the Strategy by the United Nations entities will be guided by the standing principles identified in the 2009 Nairobi outcome document of the High-level United Nations Conference on South-South Cooperation<sup>13</sup> as reaffirmed in the BAPA+40 outcome document.<sup>14</sup>

24. The following normative principles will guide United Nations implementation of the strategy:

- i. national sovereignty;
- ii. national ownership and independence;
- iii. equality;
- iv. non-conditionality;
- v. non-interference in domestic affairs; and
- vi. mutual benefit.

25. Operational principles guiding United Nations support (the same as in the framework of operational guidelines<sup>15</sup>) are:

- i. mutual accountability and transparency;
- ii. development effectiveness;
- iii. coordination of evidence- and results-based initiatives; and
- iv. a multi-stakeholder approach.

## **C. Main elements of the Strategy**

26. The purpose of the United Nations System-wide Strategy on South-South and Triangular Cooperation, 2026-2029, is to leverage the United Nations comparative advantage and clearly define what the United Nations can uniquely achieve as a system in promoting South-South and triangular cooperation in a coherent manner. The Strategy adopts a system-wide approach with a shared vision and value proposition. Collective responsibility for implementing the Strategy across each United Nations entity will enhance shared accountability for results and contribute greatly to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals. The Strategy is operationalized through the following core elements:

- i. A system-wide scorecard, composed of a limited set of core indicators, through which United Nations entities will report annually on their progress in mainstreaming and advancing South-South and triangular cooperation to advance the Sustainable Development Goals;
- ii. A results-based annual action plan, which operationalizes the Strategy through jointly agreed priority activities aligned with the Sustainable Development Goals, which is reviewed on an annual basis;

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<sup>10</sup> Ibid., para. 10.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid., para. 11.

<sup>12</sup> A/RES/73/291, para. 28.

<sup>13</sup> A/RES/64/222, para. 11.

<sup>14</sup> A/RES/73/291, para 8.

<sup>15</sup> Framework of operational guidelines on United Nations support to South-South and triangular cooperation (SSC/19/3, 14 March 2016).

- iii. A reinvigorated United Nations Inter-Agency Mechanism for South-South and Triangular Cooperation, composed of United Nations entities represented at the director and expert levels, which will serve as the principal coordination platform to advocate for, mainstream and advance South-South and triangular cooperation across policies, strategic plans, programmes and reporting at the global, regional and country levels;
- iv. An updated South-South Galaxy digital and artificial intelligence-enabled monitoring platform, to track implementation of the Strategy across global, regional and national levels and to support system-wide data aggregation and analysis, including inputs to the annual report of the Secretary-General on the state of South-South cooperation; and
- v. A mid-term review and a final independent evaluation, which will assess implementation progress, enable course correction during the Strategy cycle and capture lessons learned to inform future system-wide strategies.

27. This approach aligns with the UNOSSC Strategic Framework 2026-2029, particularly the proposed Global Alliance for South-South and Triangular Cooperation, which is a voluntary, multi-stakeholder platform (Annex 3). The High-level Committee on South-South Cooperation will, in line with its mandate, provide intergovernmental review and policy guidance, and a reinvigorated Inter-Agency Mechanism for South-South and Triangular Cooperation will serve as the basis for channeling the full and effective engagement of the United Nations development system in support of the activities of the Alliance.

28. This Strategy takes into account the UN80 workstreams/initiative, with particular attention to the new architecture for delivering more integrated and coherent support from the global to the regional and national levels. It will leverage and align to any emerging regional strategies and frameworks that focus on South-South and triangular cooperation and to strengthen intraregional and interregional cooperation. The structure of the Strategy, as set out below, corresponds to the scorecard framework section D.

## **1. Strategic planning**

### ***a. Mainstreaming South-South and triangular cooperation***

29. United Nations entities are encouraged to mainstream South-South and triangular cooperation<sup>16</sup> in the workplans of Regional Collaborative Platforms; the United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Frameworks (UNSDCFs) and into agency specific strategic plans to promote shared ownership and accountability for implementation. Moreover, United Nations entities are encouraged to provide policy support in line with their mandates to Member States to mainstream South-South and triangular cooperation into United Nations resolutions, including those for which they serve as the substantive secretariat. This includes supporting Member States in integrating domestic resource mobilization priorities, including taxation, into national development and financing strategies.

### ***b. Ensuring coherence and coordination***

30. United Nations entities are encouraged to advocate and amplify messaging on the role of South-South and triangular cooperation in the UNSDG, including strengthening coherence and coordination and in the implementation, monitoring and reporting of this Strategy. UNOSSC will pursue increased UNSDG engagement through the UNDP Administrator, as Vice-Chair of the UNSDG, and in collaboration with the executive secretaries of regional commissions. Coherence and coordination at regional and country levels will be strengthened through increased interaction with the United Nations Development Coordination Office (DCO), Regional Collaborative Platforms, regional commissions and resident coordinator offices. Regular discussion of South-South and triangular cooperation will be undertaken and progress on the Strategy presented to the UNSDG annually.

31. The United Nations entities are encouraged to improve the sharing of good practices and models in a more dynamic and real-time manner, including through the use of AI in addition to knowledge repositories such as South-South Galaxy.<sup>17</sup> Aligning these efforts to the quadrennial comprehensive policy review of operational

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<sup>16</sup> A/RES/79/236, para. 19.

<sup>17</sup> <https://southsouth-galaxy.org/>

activities for development of the United Nations system (QCPR) resolution and its monitoring and evaluation framework is also encouraged.

## **2. Partnership and joint initiatives**

### ***a. Becoming part of an alliance***

32. In alignment with the UNOSSC Strategic Framework 2026-2029, the Strategy supports the operationalization of the Global Alliance for South-South and Triangular Cooperation as a practical platform for advancing collaboration, joint initiatives and demand-driven engagement. The Global Alliance will comprise Member States, entities of the United Nations system, multilateral development banks and international financial institutions, regional and subregional organizations, civil society organizations, private sector representatives, think tanks, academia and other relevant development partners. A Steering Group, with rotational participation among Alliance members, will support strategic guidance and help ensure shared ownership and responsiveness to evolving priorities of the Global South.

33. The Alliance will leverage capacities of the United Nations development system to achieve mutual benefits and explore new ideas, moving beyond the traditional models for development assistance. Triangular cooperation will be an increasingly important element of this new, transformational approach, with its potential to bring together a more diverse combination of technical and financial resources from the North and the South. It can also open new and innovative avenues for engagement not only with the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), but also with emerging development partners, philanthropic actors, the private sector, social enterprises and other non-traditional contributors to sustainable development.

34. The United Nations entities, along with other partners, will systematically catalyse and implement country-owned solutions and joint initiatives to accelerate Sustainable Development Goal progress in the high-priority areas through a fully functional Alliance (global, regional and national levels). The United Nations Inter-Agency Mechanism for South-South and Triangular Cooperation will coordinate and align the contributions of United Nations entities within the Alliance, ensuring coherence, division of labour and consolidated reporting of results.

35. The Alliance will facilitate a faster response to the requests of Member States for acceleration of the attainment of the Sustainable Development Goals; knowledge-sharing and capacity-building; advocacy; partnerships; and resource mobilization. Each of these functions will be associated with specific concrete results and captured in annual programmes of work as agreed upon by Member States and Alliance partners. In addition, members will have increased access to relevant expertise in priority thematic areas.

36. Drawing from existing UNOSSC partners, the initial members of this Alliance will encompass diverse types of organizations that are already applying South-South and triangular cooperation approaches. The proven experiences of Member-State alliances between countries will be critical sources of lessons learned in developing the Alliance model.

### ***b. Joint work***

37. The Strategy promotes joint work to respond to development priorities of Member States at the global, regional and country levels by working together as a system, building on the unique mandates and capacities of individual agencies. Joint resource mobilization linked to collective outcomes (including pooled and multi-partner financing) will reduce transaction costs, enhance transparency and engage with a diversified donor base, including the private sector. This approach prioritizes complementarity and strengthens the collaborative value proposition of the United Nations.

38. The United Nations entities are encouraged to jointly facilitate knowledge sharing on effective and successful South-South and triangular cooperation initiatives and development solutions and appropriate technologies of the South for learning and replication purposes, leveraging platforms such as South-South Galaxy, the South-South and Triangular Cooperation Solutions Lab and other platforms established by the United Nations system.

39. Working as part of the Alliance, and/or engaging in its workstreams as appropriate, United Nations entities, will assist the Alliance members in identifying critical thematic priorities across policy dialogue, strategic

planning and partnership-building. United Nations development system engagement in the Alliance will be organized and coordinated through the reinvigorated United Nations Inter-Agency Mechanism for South-South and Triangular Cooperation, which will align entity contributions with mandates and capacities and facilitate coherent joint support. Based on previous consultations and recent resolutions on South-South and triangular cooperation priorities,<sup>18</sup> these could include, but are not limited to:

- i. digital transformation, connectivity and AI governance: addressing the digital and AI divides, fostering collaboration on research and development, and supporting responsible technology development and transfer for sustainable development, including through leveraging diaspora expertise;
- ii. climate action and green transitions: facilitating Southern-led solutions for climate change adaptation, mitigation and resilience, including sustainable energy and responsible management of critical minerals;
- iii. innovative finance: supporting peer learning and knowledge-sharing regarding innovative and catalytic financing mechanisms, including blended finance and engagement with the private sector and Southern financial institutions to address critical Sustainable Development Goal roadblocks;
- iv. inclusive development: strengthening food systems, education, and social protection; mainstreaming refugees and displaced communities; advancing gender equality and women's empowerment; and integrating youth considerations across all initiatives. This includes levelling the playing field through capacity development and ensuring that the benefits from South-South and triangular cooperation reach those furthest behind, especially in situations of prolonged crisis.

### **3. Organizational ownership**

#### ***a. Capacity development***

40. Strengthening the capacity of the United Nations development system to foster and advance South-South and triangular cooperation is essential. UNOSSC, through the Inter-Agency Mechanism, will support mainstreaming of South-South and triangular cooperation into policies and programmes; identification of capacity gaps and the provision of learning opportunities, including an e-learning module and other targeted training tools.

#### ***b. Communication and advocacy***

41. The United Nations system is encouraged to integrate the South-South and triangular cooperation agenda into its communication and advocacy strategies/plans/campaigns. Joint communication actions/initiatives will be coordinated through the Inter-Agency Mechanism for South-South and Triangular Cooperation; and implemented to elevate South-South and triangular cooperation on specific occasions, including the United Nations Day for South-South Cooperation. Furthermore, the system will ensure an organizational culture that recognizes and values the contribution(s) of South-South and triangular cooperation in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals.

42. Building on the established networks, relationships and expertise of entities working on South-South and triangular cooperation, entities will advocate, through strategic messages, regarding the catalytic role of South-South and triangular cooperation in accelerating progress on achieving the Sustainable Development Goals.

#### ***c. Human and financial resources***

43. United Nations entities are encouraged to put in place adequate capacity or a mainstream approach for South-South and triangular cooperation. This will entail better use of current resources and their alignment with expected outcomes, while recognizing that, where necessary, additional resources may need to be mobilized. Regular reporting will be undertaken to monitor pooled resources allocated/used.

## **IV. Entity accountability framework**

### **A. Overview**

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<sup>18</sup> Derived from a synthesis of the agenda-setting documents and relevant United Nations General Assembly resolutions and Secretary-General's reports (included in the Preamble of this document) and decisions, and consultations with stakeholders.

44. The accountability framework, will track the implementation of the Strategy, and contains a scorecard with core common-system indicators, against which all United Nations entities will report annually. It focuses on the following three areas: 1) strategic planning; 2) partnership and joint initiatives; 3) and organizational ownership – for greater impact, acceleration and efficiency. Each of these components will be closely aligned with one or more specific flagship South-South and triangular cooperation initiatives that are supported by partnership structures which facilitate engagement at the scale needed for impact.

45. The framework assesses the collective contribution of the United Nations system to South-South and triangular cooperation, and effective implementation of this Strategy, with UNOSSC providing overall coordination and guidance. Annex 1<sup>19</sup> outlines the structured roles under the accountability framework, and Annex 2<sup>20</sup> provides details on the institutional arrangements.

## **B. Implementation** <sup>21</sup>

### **1. UNOSSC**

46. UNOSSC will convene and serve as the secretariat of the United Nations Inter-Agency Mechanism for South-South and Triangular Cooperation, support United Nations entities to mainstream South-South and triangular cooperation in their strategies, programmes and activities,<sup>22</sup> and coordinate system-wide implementation and results reporting of the present Strategy in a coordinated, collaborative and results-oriented manner. In addition, UNOSSC will serve as the secretariat for the Alliance, supporting alignment across partners and facilitating linkages between country priorities and expertise across the United Nations system and partner institutions.

### **2. United Nations Entities**

47. In line with the Accountability Framework, entities will be invited and encouraged to report on an annual basis, through the Inter-Agency Mechanism, on their progress and challenges against the agreed indicators, remedial measures, and action plans to address gaps – via an AI-enabled platform (see para 50). Agencies are encouraged to ensure director level engagement and relevant technical expertise in the Inter-Agency Mechanism to reinforce collective responsibility and make the best use of their comparative advantage. The timing and approach of this reporting will be aligned with the preparation of the annual report of the Secretary-General on the state of South-South cooperation and communicated to entities in advance by UNOSSC.

### **3. Inter-agency actions**

48. Inter-agency networks and mechanisms will play an essential and mutually reinforcing role in the implementation of the Strategy, at the country, regional and global levels. The Inter-Agency Mechanism will facilitate collaboration, encourage joint initiatives and help to create a supportive environment for United Nations entities to engage meaningfully with the agreed indicators. In line with the UNOSSC Strategic Framework 2026-2029, the Alliance will provide the multi-stakeholder platform through which Member State demand is matched with coordinated United Nations system support and partnerships to catalyze and scale joint South-South and triangular cooperation solutions.

## **C. Monitoring, evaluation and reporting**

49. The accountability and oversight of the Strategy will be strengthened through annual planning and monitoring under a results-based action plan, introduction of a scorecard to be reviewed annually by the Inter-Agency Mechanism, and advocacy for inclusion of South-South and triangular cooperation in United Nations strategic planning instruments.

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<sup>19</sup> Terms of reference: United Nations Inter-Agency Mechanism for South-South and Triangular Cooperation.

<sup>20</sup> Annex 2. Institutional arrangements

<sup>21</sup> Annex 2. provides details on institutional arrangements for implementation of this United Nations System-wide Strategy on South-South and Triangular Cooperation 2026-2029

<sup>22</sup> See annex 1.

50. System-wide reporting on progress will rely on existing mechanisms to avoid duplication and additional resource implications. Building on the accountability scorecard, a digital, AI-enabled platform will be established by UNOSSC to track progress in implementing the Strategy at the global, regional and country levels, drawing on lessons from other United Nations system-wide frameworks. Progress reported by United Nations entities through this platform will inform the annual report of the Secretary-General on the state of South-South cooperation as well as the biennial reports of the High-Level Committee on South-South Cooperation, prepared by UNOSSC in line with its mandate.

51. UNOSSC, as the secretariat of the Inter-Agency Mechanism, will consolidate inputs, document progress and report on the contribution of the United Nations system on South-South and triangular cooperation to achieve sustainable development. Regular updates on the implementation of this Strategy will be provided to the Executive Office of the Secretary-General and the United Nations Executive Committee and Deputies Executive Committee (EC/DC).

52. A mid-term review and a final independent evaluation will be conducted during the Strategy cycle to assess results and targets, capture lessons learned and inform decision-making to strengthen United Nations support for South-South and triangular cooperation. UNOSSC, through the Inter-Agency Mechanism, will develop the terms of reference and coordinate oversight of the final evaluation.

53. In collaboration with the United Nations Evaluation Group and the evaluation offices/units of the Inter-Agency Mechanism, guidance on integrating South-South cooperation into evaluation processes will be developed and rolled out. This will enhance inclusivity, national ownership and context-specific learning in evaluation practices. Furthermore, it will strengthen the role of evaluation as a strategic tool for leveraging South-South cooperation through the systematic exchange of evidence-based good practices.

#### **D. South-South and Triangular Cooperation Scorecard**

54. The indicators below were developed through consultative processes described in para 13 and 14 of this Strategy, providing a common framework for United Nations entities to assess and report on their progress in implementing the United Nations system-wide strategy on South-South and triangular cooperation. The table is structured on three thematic dimensions: strategic planning, partnership and joint initiatives, and organizational ownership, which reflect key areas of institutional performance.

55. For each indicator, three graduated performance levels expected from the United Nations entities are defined: “approaches requirements,” “meets requirements” and “exceeds requirements.” These levels represent increasing degrees of alignment with the objective of this system-wide strategy and are intended to support consistent self-assessment, reporting and comparative analysis across United Nations entities. The three performance levels are cumulative. “Meets requirements” builds on “Approaches requirements”, and “Exceeds requirements” reflects performance that goes beyond the minimum and full requirements.

## Scorecard: main elements and indicators\*

Strategic planning	Partnership and joint initiatives	Organizational ownership
1. Mainstreaming South-South and triangular cooperation	3. Becoming part of the Alliance for South-South and Triangular Cooperation	5. Capacity development
2. Coherence and coordination	4. Joint work	6. Communication and advocacy
		7. Human and financial resources

\*Note 1. “Entity” as used in the table refers to the reporting United Nations agency.

\*Note 2. The strategy encourages the entities to report on results achieved at the global, regional, subregional and country levels (wherever applicable).

\*Note 3. “Approaches requirements” in the following tables refers to the performance expected from the United Nations entities under each indicator.

<b>Indicator 1. Mainstreaming South-South and triangular cooperation.</b> Entities are encouraged to mainstream South-South and triangular cooperation into their strategic planning documents and/or related strategies while fostering ownership and accountability for their implementation.		
Approaches requirements	Meets requirements	Exceeds requirements
1.a.i. Entity’s commitment to South-South and triangular cooperation is reflected in the main strategic planning document or related strategies (e.g. cooperation strategy/resource mobilization strategy).	1.b.i. Satisfies “Approaches requirements”.  1.b.ii. Entity’s strategic planning documents include at least one result with an indicator on South-South and triangular cooperation, and the target is met.	1.c.i. Satisfies “Approaches requirements” and “Meets requirements”.  1.c.ii. Entity’s strategic planning documents include more than one result with indicators on South-South and triangular cooperation, and the targets are met.  1.c.ii. 25% or more of entity’s regional/country programming documents include at least one result with an indicator on South-South and triangular cooperation, and the target is met ( <i>where applicable for the entities that have regional and/or country-level presence</i> ).

<b>Indicator 2. Coherence and coordination</b> are strengthened across the planning and implementation of initiatives, promoting or leveraging South-South and triangular cooperation.		
Approaches requirements	Meets requirements	Exceeds requirements
2.a.i. Participates in UN mechanisms (at global, regional and/or country level, where applicable) that can be leveraged for planning and promoting South-South and triangular cooperation in support of Member States.	2.b.i. Satisfies “Approaches requirements”.  2.b.ii. Participates in UN Inter-Agency Mechanism for South-South and Triangular Cooperation to promote/coordinate South-South	2.c.i. Satisfies “Approaches Requirements” and “Meets Requirements”.  2.c.i. Engages in the implementation of UN initiatives, ensuring coherent and coordinated action promoting

	and triangular cooperation in line with the UN system-wide strategy on South-South and triangular cooperation.	and/or leveraging South-South and triangular cooperation.
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**Indicator 3. Becoming part of the Global Alliance for South-South and Triangular Cooperation.** As members of the Alliance, UN entities contribute to a multi-stakeholder platform that accelerates Member State requests through facilitation in support of the Sustainable Development Goals, knowledge-sharing, capacity development, advocacy, partnership mobilization and resource mobilization. Entities are expected to demonstrate active engagement and substantive contributions that enhance collective action across priority thematic areas.

Approaches requirements	Meets requirements	Exceeds requirements
3.a.i. Entity is a member of the Global Alliance for South-South and Triangular Cooperation.	3.b.i. Satisfies “Approaches Requirements”  3.b.ii. Entity demonstrated active engagement and substantive contributions that enhance collective action across priority thematic areas of the UN system-wide strategy on South-South and triangular cooperation.	3.c.i. Satisfies “Approaches Requirements” and “Meets Requirements”.  3.c.iii. Entity actively champions and advocates for the mandate, vision and goals of the Alliance.

**Indicator 4. Joint work:** As part of the broader Alliance, UN entities jointly identify Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) priorities, including, but not limited to, the four thematic priorities (*Digital transformation, connectivity and AI governance; climate action and green transitions; innovative finance; and inclusive development*) of the UN system-wide strategy, and design and implement South-South and triangular cooperation initiatives (programmatic, knowledge and advocacy) that address these gaps through collective action.

Approaches requirements	Meets requirements	Exceeds requirements
4.a.i. Entity participates in the design of annual action plan, including joint initiatives addressing SDG priorities, leveraging South-South and triangular cooperation.	4.b.i. Satisfies “Approaches requirements”.  4.b.ii. Entity engages in the joint implementation of at least one initiative of the annual action plan, <sup>23</sup> leveraging South-South and triangular cooperation per its mandate, indicating its role (lead implementer or contributor or equal partner).	4.c.i. Satisfies “Approaches requirements” and “Meets requirements”.  4.c.ii. Entity actively involved in implementation of transformational change initiative(s) under the annual action plan.  4.c.iii. At least 25% of an entity’s South-South and triangular cooperation initiatives at the global/regional/country level are undertaken jointly with other entities ( <i>where applicable, for the entities that have a global, regional and/or country-level presence</i> ).

**Indicator 5. Capacity development.** Strengthening the UN system capacity for South-South and triangular cooperation is key to integrating these cooperation modalities into policies and programmes.

Approaches requirements	Meets requirements	Exceeds requirements
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<sup>23</sup> To implement the United Nations system-wide strategy on South-South and triangular cooperation, annual action plans will be developed and rolled out collectively.

<p>5.a.i. Entity integrates South-South and triangular cooperation e-modules and other relevant resources and tools into their learning platforms or plans.</p>	<p>5.b.i. Satisfies “Approaches requirements”.</p> <p>5.b.ii. At least 10% of personnel per year complete South-South and triangular cooperation courses or training.</p>	<p>5.c.i. Satisfies “Approaches Requirements” and “Meets Requirements”.</p> <p>5.c.iii. Entity designs and implements South-South and triangular cooperation programmes, projects and/or activities.</p>
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**Indicator 6. Communication and advocacy.** The UN system is encouraged to include South-South and triangular cooperation in joint communication and advocacy initiatives.

<b>Approaches requirements</b>	<b>Meets requirements</b>	<b>Exceeds requirements</b>
<p>6.a.i. Communication and advocacy activities are spelled out as part of the annual workplan of the Strategy.</p>	<p>6.b.i. Satisfies “Approaches requirements”.</p> <p>6.b.ii. Entity co-organizes joint advocacy and communication campaigns on South-South and triangular cooperation, integrating key messages into high-level statements and external communications that position South-South and triangular cooperation as key development modalities for accelerating progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals.</p>	<p>6.c.i. Satisfies “Approaches requirements” and “Meets requirements”.</p> <p>6.c.ii. Entity highlights achievements in South-South and triangular cooperation in its corporate communication tools and reports.</p>

**Indicator 7. Human and financial resources.** UN entities are encouraged to allocate/mobilize resources (as appropriate) for the annual workplan of the Strategy to achieve expected results.

<b>Approaches requirements</b>	<b>Meets requirements</b>	<b>Exceeds requirements</b>
<p>7.a.i. Based on the annual workplan of the Strategy, entity contributes resources (technical and/or financial) for South-South cooperation- and triangular cooperation-related activities.</p>	<p>7.b.i. Satisfies “Approaches Requirements”.</p> <p>7.b.ii. Entity collaborates in joint resource mobilization efforts (that include pooling resources for joint South-South and triangular cooperation activities) and implements the actions reflected in the United Nations system-wide joint action plan.</p>	<p>7.c.i. Satisfies “Approaches requirements” and “Meets requirements”.</p> <p>7.c.ii. Entity systematically allocates resources for South-South and triangular cooperation and reflects them in corporate reports.</p>

## **Annex 1. Terms of reference: United Nations Inter-Agency Mechanism for South-South and Triangular Cooperation**

### **A. Background**

The United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation (UNOSSC), hosted by UNDP since 1974, was established by the United Nations General Assembly to promote, coordinate and systematically support South-South and triangular cooperation globally and within the United Nations system. UNOSSC receives policy directives and guidance from the General Assembly and through its subsidiary body, the High-level Committee on South-South Cooperation.

Prior to 2017, United Nations system-wide coordination was facilitated through the South-South and Triangular Cooperation Task Team under the United Nations Development Group. In 2017, the General Assembly, in its resolution 72/237, requested the establishment of a formalized, strengthened and more accountable inter-agency mechanism, coordinated by the Office, to encourage coherence, synergies, joint support and regular sharing of information on South-South and triangular cooperation development activities and results achieved by various United Nations entities. Following consultations with other United Nations organizations, in 2018, UNOSSC established the United Nations Inter-Agency Mechanism for South-South and Triangular Cooperation, with active membership of more than 30 United Nations entities.

The UNOSSC strategic framework (2026-2029) articulates a renewed and forward-looking vision to refocus the purpose of South-South and triangular cooperation by working with the High-level Committee and a reinvigorated Inter-Agency Mechanism for South-South and Triangular Cooperation to build a robust alliance of United Nations entities and partners for South-South and triangular cooperation. This broader alliance will continue to benefit from the overall guidance of a fully engaged and supportive High-level Committee and will include both United Nations development system agencies as well as other critical multilateral, bilateral, regional, academic and private-sector partners.

The UNOSSC strategic framework highlights the need to improve and enhance the level of United Nations engagement by reinvigorating the Inter-Agency Mechanism. This reinvigoration will build on recent experience with the United Nations Advisory Group established to oversee the evaluation of the previous system-wide strategy, shifting towards a lighter but sharper United Nations system-wide inter-agency strategy that is fully aligned with this strategic framework. This renewed focus will also ensure closer and more systematic interaction with the United Nations Sustainable Development Group at the highest levels, strengthening the integration of South-South and triangular cooperation into the daily work of United Nations resident coordinators and United Nations country teams to respond better to national development priorities and community needs.

As part of a strategic realignment, UNOSSC will transition away from direct implementation of activities while expanding its current role as secretariat to the High-level Committee and the United Nations Inter-Agency Mechanism for South-South and Triangular Cooperation to serve as a convening platform for this broader alliance. This platform, hosted by UNOSSC, would be a shared resource, co-owned and potentially co-financed by the members of the Alliance.

The Inter-Agency Mechanism enhances UNOSSC's role as a coordinator for the promotion and facilitation of South-South and triangular cooperation for development within the United Nations system, including the preparation of sectoral and inter-agency reports on South-South and triangular cooperation. The effective coordination of the Inter-Agency Mechanism also enabled the Office to facilitate the system-wide engagement of many United Nations entities in the preparatory process for the second High-level United Nations Conference on South-South Cooperation and other relevant global forums. The United Nations system-wide strategy on South-South and triangular cooperation, its action plan and accountability framework, which were formulated in a highly inclusive and consultative manner, also guide the work of this Mechanism.

The Inter-Agency Mechanism, chaired by UNOSSC, will meet four times a year and will be coordinated at both the director and the expert levels. Ad hoc or extraordinary meetings may be convened by the Chair, in consultation with members, in response to emerging priorities or urgent developments. It also organizes thematic focus group discussions on topics such as integrating South-South and triangular cooperation into UNSDCF's and regional work,

the report of the Secretary-General on the state of South-South cooperation and its potential actionable recommendations, and measurement of South-South cooperation.

## **B. Purpose and tasks**

### **1. Coherence**

The United Nations Inter-Agency Mechanism for South-South and Triangular Cooperation aims to:

- (a) facilitate collaboration, coordination and greater coherence in the work of the United Nations system on South-South and triangular cooperation;
- (b) enhance the level of strategic engagement to foster greater coherence and alignment across the entire United Nations development system;
- (c) share information on priorities, ongoing and planned activities, relevant developments and results achieved by United Nations organizations through their respective business models in support of South-South and triangular cooperation; and
- (d) report on progress in implementing the United Nations system-wide strategy on South-South and triangular cooperation and on the initiatives of the United Nations entities through the reports of the Secretary General on the state of South-South cooperation, the reports of the Secretary-General and UNDP Administrator to the High-level Committee on South-South Cooperation, and reports emanating from the enhanced strategic framework accountability tools such as the scorecard, among other key reporting mechanisms.

### **2. Advocacy**

The United Nations Inter-Agency Mechanism for South-South and Triangular Cooperation aims to:

- (a) facilitate the mainstreaming of South-South and triangular cooperation into the corporate strategies and operational activities of United Nations entities;
- (b) support, facilitate and contribute to the development, implementation and monitoring of United Nations system-wide policies, strategies and action plans on South-South and triangular cooperation, in alignment with mandates of the United Nations Sustainable Development Group, the High-level Committee and other governing bodies;
- (c) co-develop specific joint initiatives or tools where the Mechanism adds unique value (e.g. South-South Galaxy platform, joint advocacy messages);
- (d) coordinate and curate inputs from agencies to feed into official United Nations system-wide policy processes;
- (e) enhance a more robust United Nations system-wide approach to implementing the Sustainable Development Goals;
- (f) jointly develop capacity development programmes and tools to support the mainstreaming of South-South and triangular cooperation into the work of the United Nations at the global, regional and country levels;
- (g) develop a joint communication strategy, common messages and advocacy at the global level in order to contribute effectively to the promotion of South-South and triangular cooperation; and
- (h) promote and raise awareness of one another's products, including guidance materials and tools, to enhance the visibility of the work of the agencies. Raise awareness of, and share information on, resource mobilization opportunities, including innovative financing, blended finance mechanisms and private-sector engagement.

### **3. Joint initiatives**

The United Nations Inter-Agency Mechanism for South-South and Triangular Cooperation aims to:

- (a) identify synergies and opportunities for cooperation among the agencies using the UNOSSC South-South Galaxy platform and the Solutions Lab, resulting possibly in the design and implementation of joint projects and activities;

- (b) undertake joint projects and activities in support of South-South and triangular cooperation initiatives. This could include organizing relevant events jointly in a coordinated manner or back-to-back with those of other organizations; and
- (c) map good practices in South-South and triangular cooperation and design joint strategies and programmes for scaling up such practices upon request by Member States.

### **C. Composition**

The Inter-Agency Mechanism is comprised of senior staff at the director level, formally nominated by the Heads of United Nations entities and regional commissions. Meetings of the Inter-Agency Mechanism will be convened at the technical level as needed. The designated focal point should:

- (a) have institutional responsibility for South-South and triangular cooperation in their agency;
- (b) be empowered to engage substantively in policy, partnership and programmatic discussions to contribute to the strategic work of the Mechanism;
- (c) ensure internal dissemination of the outcomes of the Inter-Agency Mechanism meetings across their organizations as well as pursue the implementation of the terms of reference of the Mechanism at the level of their own entities; and
- (d) contribute actively to joint workstreams, thematic focus groups and reporting exercises established under the Mechanism.

UNOSSC, through its regional engagement plan, will ensure that maximum inputs from members in the Mechanism are obtained to source regional and country-level perspectives.

Membership is inclusive and dynamic, with the possibility of engaging non-resident United Nations agencies, specialized bodies and other relevant United Nations-affiliated entities in line with emerging priorities.

### **D. Secretariat**

The Inter-Agency Mechanism is convened by UNOSSC and meetings are chaired by the UNOSSC Director. To foster shared ownership and visibility across the United Nations system, rotational co-chairmanship by senior leadership of other United Nations entities is encouraged on a voluntary basis. UNOSSC serves as the secretariat.

The secretariat is responsible for:

- (a) organizing and servicing meetings, including preparing agendas, minutes and follow-up action matrices;
- (b) facilitating information exchange across members and ensuring linkages with the High-level Committee, UNSDG and other intergovernmental processes;
- (c) tracking decisions and commitments made by the Mechanism and supporting their implementation; and
- (d) providing periodic analytical updates and maintaining knowledge platforms (e.g. South-South Galaxy, Solutions Lab) to enable joint learning and collaboration.

### **E. Annual Action Plan**

To implement the UN System-wide Strategy, UNOSSC will coordinate the development and implementation of the annual action plan – in close collaboration with the Inter-Agency Mechanism, outlining key activities, milestones, including joint initiatives. The development of the Annual Action Plan will take into account the four priority areas highlighted in the Strategy (digital transformation, connectivity and AI governance; climate actions and green transitions; innovative finance; and inclusive development) and the Sustainable Development Goals to ensure maximum integration with the United Nations system-wide strategy.

Progress in implementing the action plan will be reviewed in Inter-Agency Mechanism meetings, with a consolidated annual report prepared for the High-level Committee and UNSDG. To strengthen accountability, Inter-Agency Mechanism members are expected to report progress updates on their entity's contributions.

## Annex 2. Institutional arrangements

Effective implementation of the United Nations System-wide Strategy on South-South and Triangular Cooperation also in alignment with the UNOSSC strategic framework requires clear roles, strong coordination and integrated planning mechanisms across the United Nations development system.<sup>24</sup> The institutional arrangements presented in this annex are designed to leverage existing mandates, reduce fragmentation and ensure that South-South and triangular cooperation become standard modalities across global, regional and country levels. This framework also emphasizes a simplified, impact-oriented approach to managing results, focusing on emerging impacts and continuous learning.

### A. United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation (UNOSSC): Secretariat and system-wide coordinator

**Role:** The primary coordinating body for South-South and triangular cooperation across the United Nations development system, serving as the secretariat for the High-level Committee on South-South Cooperation as well as the coordinator for the broader Global Alliance for South-South and Triangular Cooperation.

#### Accountabilities:

- (a) acts as the secretariat for the High-level Committee and a coordinator for the revitalized Inter-Agency Mechanism for South-South and Triangular Cooperation;
- (b) transforms and sharpens its functions in support of broadening the alliance of Member States, United Nations agencies and other strategic partners with regard to South-South and triangular cooperation priorities;
- (c) oversees South-South knowledge and alliance platforms (e.g. South-South Galaxy), convenes the Global Alliance for South-South and Triangular Cooperation, and tracks results achieved through the Alliance;
- (d) provides technical and policy support and quality assurance for United Nations agencies and Member States engaged in South-South and triangular cooperation initiatives;
- (e) harmonizes efforts, reduces duplication and ensures that South-South and triangular cooperation is increasingly employed as a core element in efforts by the United Nations and its partners to accelerate achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals;
- (f) continuously reviews and realigns its internal functions and capacities to operate efficiently as the secretariat for the High-level Committee and the coordinator for the Inter-Agency Mechanism and as the driving force behind a South-South and triangular cooperation alliance, ensuring efficiency, enhanced operational agility and effective strategic communications.

### B. High-level Committee on South-South Cooperation

**Role:** The main policymaking body on South-South cooperation in the United Nations development system, providing overall intergovernmental review and policy guidance.<sup>25</sup> It is a subsidiary body of the whole (all member states participate) of the United Nations General Assembly.

#### Indicative examples of responsibilities:

- (a) provide policy directives and guidance to UNOSSC and the broader Global Alliance for South-South and Triangular Cooperation, proactively guiding collaborative efforts and overseeing the implementation of a comprehensive multi-year action plan;
- (b) with support of UNOSSC, prepare reports on progress made in implementing key South-South cooperation frameworks (e.g. Buenos Aires Plan of Action for Promoting and Implementing Technical Cooperation among Developing Countries, Nairobi outcome document) and adopt relevant decisions; and
- (c) support new policies and innovative approaches to further the development of South-South and triangular cooperation, including considering the availability and effective use of financial resources.

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<sup>24</sup> These proposed institutional arrangements apply equally to the new United Nations system-wide strategy on South-South and triangular cooperation for sustainable development.

<sup>25</sup> As per recommendation 37 in the Buenos Aires Plan of Action for Promoting and Implementing Technical Cooperation among Developing Countries (1978), in line with the United Nations General Assembly resolutions and the decisions of the High-level Committee on South-South Cooperation and the Rules of Procedure: High-level Committee on the Review of Technical Cooperation among Developing Countries (currently the High-level Committee on South-South Cooperation) (TCDC/2/Rev.1).

### **C. United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)**

**Suggested role:** serve as the administrative host and key collaborator for UNOSSC.

**Suggested responsibilities:**

- (a) provide UNOSSC with comprehensive administrative hosting services, including human resources, financial management and logistical support, in line with UNDP corporate policies;
- (b) engage UNOSSC in corporate strategic foresight exercises, including joint analysis of emerging trends relevant to South-South and triangular cooperation and innovative development finance;
- (c) leverage its global presence and expertise to support the mainstreaming of South-South and triangular cooperation within its own programming and across the broader United Nations development system, and drawing on UNDP expertise in key policy and programme areas;
- (d) engage as a member of the reinvigorated United Nations Inter-Agency Mechanism, contributing substantively to implementation of the United Nations system-wide strategy on South-South and triangular cooperation; and
- (e) jointly develop and implement UNDP-UNOSSC collaborative frameworks, building on the existing UNOSSC-UNDP Collaboration Framework and identifying concrete areas of collaboration at the global, regional and country levels.

### **D. Alliance for South-South and triangular cooperation**

**Suggested role:** An inclusive, multi-stakeholder platform for leveraging collective efforts to create demand-driven, country-owned and collaborative development solutions.

**Suggested responsibilities:**

- (a) provide a space for Member States, United Nations agencies and development partners to define and jointly pursue South-South and triangular cooperation strategies and programmes to address critical Sustainable Development Goal gaps;
- (b) facilitate new ways of working that position South-South and triangular cooperation as increasingly central to the international development cooperation paradigm;
- (c) engage in collaborative innovation, new learning relationships, matchmaking and solutions exchange, including through platforms such as the annual Global South-South Development Expo; and
- (d) collaborate in the design and implementation of sectoral strategies to address Sustainable Development Goal gaps in areas such as digital transformation, climate action and innovative finance;

### **E. Reinvigorated United Nations Inter-Agency Mechanism for South-South and Triangular Cooperation**

**Suggested role:** Serve as a revitalized mechanism to ensure alignment of South-South and triangular cooperation programming with agency mandates and strategic plans, fostering shared ownership and accountability for the implementation of a more focused inter-agency strategy that is fully aligned with the present strategic framework. This includes facilitating closer and more systematic interaction with the United Nations Sustainable Development Group at the highest levels through the United Nations Advisory Group that was established for the evaluation of the previous system-wide strategy. The reinvigorated United Nations Inter-Agency Mechanism is coordinated at the director level and the expert level.

**Suggested responsibilities:**

- (a) implement, monitor and report on the United Nations system wide strategy on South-South and triangular cooperation;
- (b) strengthen regional and field-level integration of South-South and triangular cooperation by coordinating with United Nations resident coordinators and United Nations country teams to ensure the effective mainstreaming of South-South and triangular cooperation into United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Frameworks (UNSDCFs), strategic plans and sectoral plans;
- (c) support peer learning and knowledge-sharing across agencies to build on successful models of inter-agency collaboration and contribute to broader Alliance-wide strategic dialogue and reflection;
- (d) maintain a strong accountability focus to ensure collective responsibility for strategy implementation;

- (e) develop agency-specific South-South and triangular cooperation action plans, with resources allocated in regular and extra-budgetary funding (integrated into strategic plans); and
- (f) contribute to shared knowledge platforms and joint monitoring efforts for United Nations inter-agency and broader alliance-level learning and adaptation.

#### **F. United Nations resident coordinators and United Nations country teams**

**Suggested role:** Essential to localizing South-South and triangular cooperation, ensuring that they respond to national development priorities and community needs, and serving as key operational arms of the strategy at the country level.

**Suggested responsibilities:**

- (a) mainstream South-South and triangular cooperation into UNSDCFs;
- (b) facilitate country-level South-South and triangular cooperation partnerships, including triangular cooperation with development partners;
- (c) identify and scale South-South cooperation solutions, supported by technical inputs from United Nations agencies and regional experts; and
- (d) promote capacity-building, learning opportunities, knowledge-sharing and proactive exchange of success stories.

#### **G. Regional commissions and hubs**

**Suggested role:** bring contextual expertise and convening power, helping the United Nations development system to implement South-South and triangular cooperation in ways that are geographically and politically attuned, and advancing regional integration goals.

**Suggested responsibilities:**

- (a) advance and support mainstreaming of South-South and triangular cooperation into the work of the Regional Collaborative Platforms;
- (b) support regional South-South and triangular cooperation strategies and act as knowledge and coordination nodes (e.g. the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP), and the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA);
- (c) promote cross-border and interregional South-South cooperation initiatives; and
- (d) contribute data, policy research and capacity-building tailored to regional development dynamics.

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### Annex 3. List of members of the United Nations Inter-Agency Mechanism for South-South and Triangular Cooperation

Member <sup>26</sup>	
	<b>SUBSIDIARY ORGANS: Funds and programmes</b>
1	UNDP
2	UNCDF
3	UNV
4	UNEP
5	UNFPA
6	UN-Habitat
7	UNICEF
8	WFP
	<b>SUBSIDIARY ORGANS: Research and training</b>
9	UNSSC
	<b>SUBSIDIARY ORGANS: Other entities</b>
10	UNCTAD
11	UNOPS
12	UN-Women
	<b>COMMISSIONS AND OTHER SUBSIDIARY ORGANS: Regional commissions</b>
13	ECA
14	ECE
15	ECLAC
16	ESCAP
17	ESCWA
18	RCNYO
	<b>DEPARTMENTS AND OFFICES</b>
19	DCO
20	DESA
21	DPPA/PBSO
22	OCHA <sup>27</sup>
23	UNOCT
24	UNDRR
25	UN-OHRLLS
26	Global Compact (under EOSG)
	<b>SPECIALIZED AGENCIES</b>

<sup>26</sup> Organized according to the [Secretariat chart](#) of the United Nations system.

<sup>27</sup> OCHA's participation in the strategy shall be without prejudice to its role and responsibilities pursuant to General Assembly resolution 46/182 and related resolutions

27	FAO
28	IFAD
29	ILO
30	ITU
31	UNESCO
32	UNIDO
33	UN TOURISM
34	UPU
35	PAHO/WHO
36	WHO
37	WIPO
38	World Bank
	<b>RELATED ORGANIZATIONS</b>
39	IAEA
40	IOM
41	World Trade Organization



**United  
Nations**



United Nations  
Office for South-South Cooperation