



72nd Regular Session of the General Assembly of the United Nations

OFFICIAL SIDE EVENT

South-South and Triangular Cooperation in support of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development:

Leveraging knowledge exchange, technology transfer and tested solutions for accelerated development results

25 September 2017, Conference Room 11, in the UN Conference Building

CONCEPT NOTE

I. Background

Two years after the launch of the [Sustainable Development Goals](#) (SDGs), the United Nations SDG Report released in July 2017 highlights that **“while considerable progress has been made over the past decade across all areas of development, the pace of progress observed in previous years is insufficient to fully meet the SDGs and targets by 2030.”**¹

In this context, the stimulation of South-South cooperation (SSC), which has increasingly demonstrated its role in the development landscape, through a variety of flexible cooperation modalities, is imperative. In June 2017, in **his report to the ECOSOC on “Repositioning the UN development system to deliver on the 2030 Agenda”**, Secretary-General António Guterres stressed that **“the rapid evolution of alternative forms of development cooperation, including the scaling up of SSC, is beginning to suggest bold, innovative means to strengthen cooperation to deliver the SDGs.”**²

While there is substantive evidence showing that South–South trade and investments have the potential to accelerate improvements in health, education and social welfare, it was also observed that the growing influence of the South in harnessing knowledge and experience, and in establishing critical partnerships, is instrumental to fast-tracking SDGs. There is overwhelming evidence of innovative, tested and scalable development solutions from the South that are contributing to accelerated results. In particular, there should be an emphasis on South-South matches that have important value-added and foster new ideas, and also complement existing bilateral cooperation between developing countries. In addition, these South-South matches should focus on empowering local communities and deliver concrete results.

Furthermore, the need to support Southern partners to stock-take and share development expertise, and scale these good practices globally, is also manifest. Knowledge exchanges, technology transfers, financing, peer support, or countries forming common development agendas and seeking collective solutions, all represent a unique opportunity in leveraging established solutions to global challenges.

The 2015 Outcome Document of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development (FfD) encourages ‘[...] developing countries to voluntarily step up their efforts to strengthen SSC, and to further improve its development effectiveness [...]’, in the context of poverty eradication and sustainable development³. It is thus paramount that the UN system harnesses its convening power to support Southern partners in scaling up their proven solutions, and in facilitating exchanges that address needs at the **country level**. In particular, UNDP’s role

¹ [United Nations “The Sustainable Development Goals Report” 2017](#)

² [Remarks to Economic and Social Council on Repositioning the UN Development System to Deliver on the 2030 Agenda](#)

³ [Third International Conference on Financing for Development Addis Ababa, 13-16 July 2015 \(paragraph 57\)](#)

as a knowledge broker⁴ is fundamental, to enable an environment where partners can exchange knowledge, establish peer-to-peer collaborations, ascertain themselves as thought leaders globally, and scale up their solutions. This is the purpose behind the launch of [SSMART for SDGs](#) system, a global marketplace accessible to all development stakeholders that provides easy and broad access to demand for and supply of development solutions, to address challenges in achieving the SDGs.

II. Objective and Expected Outcomes

The special event will provide the opportunity for Southern partners to share their development solutions and identify potential linkages with other Southern partners who are keen to learn and benefit from development expertise. The event will focus on the opportunities associated with building this unique evidence base of development solutions that can contribute to achieving SDGs. Important development solutions from the South, with high potential to be scaled globally to deliver on the 2030 Agenda, will be showcased.

The side event will focus on the following objectives:

1. Highlight the pivotal role of South-South and Triangular Cooperation (SSC/TrC) in utilizing the existing wealth of knowledge and development expertise in order to support the achieve the Sustainable Development Goals;
2. **Discuss and identify opportunities and challenges associated with “matching” development solutions and needs at country level;**
3. Present and discuss SSMart for SDGs as a tool to source, curate and disseminate high-quality knowledge and know-how on tested development solutions.

And on the following expected results:

1. The necessity to capitalize on the vast knowledge from developing countries is reaffirmed at the highest level;
2. **The opportunities and challenges associated with “matching” development solutions and needs at country level are clearly demonstrated;**
3. A call to action is launched, to ask development stakeholders to contribute to a robust knowledge base of high-quality development solutions and demands at country level through SSMart for SDGs;
4. Facilitate and support in brokering partnerships that may result during the side event.

III. Panel Discussion

- **Uganda** has established a model for refugee management, which is now recognized as a global best practice due to its advanced policies and strategies to protect and promote the rights of refugees as enshrined by international law. **Uganda’s refugee laws are among** the most progressive in the world.
- **Rwanda** has established YouthConnekt, which is designed to provide skills development, entrepreneurship, access to jobs and finance to the youth, as well as conduct awareness raising on issues related to youth development, and the promotion of youth citizenship through community work and inclusion in local and national policy dialogue.
- **Morocco** established a General Delegation of the Penitentiaries and Reinsertion Administration strategy, which aims to promote tolerance among the prison population by guiding high-risk inmates through mutually-reinforced, parallel and inclusive processes.
- **The World Food Programme** will showcase a South-South match as part of their role as partner of SSMart for SDGs initiative.

Remarks from the floor: Representative of the Republic of Korea, Group of 77, UNDP GEF Small Grants Programme, BRAC

IV. Targeted Audience

This high-level event will convene development partners and in particular southern Member states, UN agencies, international and national NGOs. The event will highlight solutions and demands at country level, and the brokering of matches between Southern partners.

⁴ [The 2013 Human Development Report states that “UNDP is able to play a useful role as a knowledge broker, and as a convener of partners—governments, civil society and multinational companies—to share experiences. We have a key role too in facilitating learning and capacity building.”](#)