

ADVANCING THOUGHT LEADERSHIP ON SOUTH-SOUTH AND TRIANGULAR COOPERATION

U NOSSC and UNDP continued their joint facilitation of the initiative South-South Global Thinkers: The Global Coalition of Think Tank Networks for South-South Cooperation. Established in 2017 in partnership with various Southern-led think-tank networks and private-sector entities, the objective of the initiative is to contribute to the growing body of evidence and knowledge on issues pertinent to South-South cooperation.

This joint effort draws on the high-quality expertise of existing think tanks and experts from the South (as well as some from the North) for peer-to-peer learning, exchanges of knowledge and experiences, networking, policy dialogues, coordination and technical assistance. It provides an enabling environment to fill the knowledge gap by strengthening the scaling up of South-South and triangular cooperation and its impact and providing a bridge to link with SDGs and their implementation. This is done by strengthening the global knowledge base, undertaking research, deepening global dialogue and supporting intergovernmental forums.

UNOSSC and UNDP to date have formalized six partnerships with Southern think-tank networks from various regions that pool over 250 think tanks.

JOINT RESEARCH IMPLEMENTED

Eight research studies were produced and disseminated in the South-South Ideas series to enhance South-South and triangular cooperation to support accelerating progress towards the SDGs. Topics ranged from impact assessment of South-South cooperation and the role of CSOs in South-South cooperation to trade and investment. The studies were launched during BAPA+40, and several of the papers in that new series have been included on university reading lists and in learning resources on international development cooperation subjects. As of the end of 2019, the papers had been viewed over 1,000 times. In 2019, nine additional research studies were commissioned from the think-tank networks; the studies will address some of the important aspects mentioned in the BAPA+40 outcome document.



Policy dialogue entitled “South-South global think tanks reflect on the BAPA+40 outcome”, 2019, New York

POLICY DIALOGUES EXPANDED

The initiative convened a number of South-South policy dialogues and consultative processes that served as sources of ideas on how best to eradicate poverty and address other transnational challenges facing many countries of the South. Over 16 policy dialogues and workshops were convened with members of the Global Coalition. Through those policy dialogues and workshops with think tanks, which also engaged Members States and other development partners, they were provided with a platform to share their reflections on priority topics concerning South-South and triangular cooperation and propose research ideas and knowledge initiatives that would be important for Southern countries and development partners.

COLLABORATION ENHANCED TO PROMOTE INCLUSIVE SOUTHERN IDEAS

Southern think tanks and research institutions were frequently consulted to ensure that Southern voices, perspectives and inputs were shared, reflected and communicated in research documents. One notable example is consultations with the UNDP Human Development Report Office. Since 2019, the South-South Global Thinkers network has been consulted for inputs for the *Human Development Reports*. The consultation brought together over 30 Southern-based think tanks to share their knowledge and perspectives

through e-discussion on the topic of inequality via the South-South Global Thinkers online platform. The inputs provided were reflected in the *Human Development Report 2019*.

FUNCTIONAL DIGITAL PLATFORM

A South-South Global Thinkers online platform, developed and launched in late 2017, was used for number of e-discussions, which received hundreds of contributions. Contributions to those on-line discussions fed into the *Human Development Report* and other background papers. The platform has pooled over 140 publications and research pieces on South-South and triangular cooperation developed by members of the Global Coalition, which are being used as a source for research on South-South and triangular cooperation.

LESSONS LEARNED

- Think tanks from the Global South play a vital role in the political and policy arenas at the local, national and global levels and assist Governments in understanding and making informed choices about issues of domestic and international concern. Thus, they can strategically champion the thought leadership on South-South and triangular cooperation.
- Through the exchanges of knowledge and insights among think-tank networks on South-South cooperation, the diversified perspectives of South-South cooperation have become a strength that can be fully appreciated and leveraged to enrich the understanding of, and inform better decision-making in, South-South cooperation.

WAY FORWARD

- In response to the BAPA+40 outcome document, which includes recognition of the contribution of think tanks and research institutions to the improvement of South-South and triangular cooperation practices, UNOSSC, in collaboration with UNDP, will continue strengthening the sharing of knowledge and research on South-South cooperation in partnership with the think-tank communities and academia. The aim is to advance thought leadership and produce evidence-based research to inform policy dialogues and decision-making on South-South cooperation in the context of sustainable development.
- UNOSSC will continue its efforts to better incorporate the voices of the Global South into the *Human Development Reports* and other United Nations flagship publications through closely working with the South-South Global Thinkers networks in capturing required inputs and perspectives from think tanks in the developing countries.

RESULT HIGHLIGHTS



Provided an enabling environment to fill the knowledge gap by strengthening the scaling up of South-South and triangular cooperation



250 +



Think tanks from across the Global South working together



8



Research reports and studies developed and disseminated to enhance South-South and triangular cooperation to support the acceleration of progress towards the SDGs