

COLLABORATION AMONG CITIES FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT



Nepalese delegates visiting farmers market in Yuxi, China

In response to the increasing demands from the cities and potential partners, UNOSSC and the China International Center for Economic and Technical Exchanges (CICETE) expanded the scope of the South-South and Triangular Cooperation Maritime-Continental Silk Road Cities for Sustainable Development Project (Cities Project) in early 2019 to focus on the advancement of SDGs through leveraging the opportunities and resources offered by the Belt and Road Initiative. In 2019, the Cities Project continued advocacy and partnership-building efforts and substantially increased its visibility to development partners from over 60 new cities. It received requests for South-South cooperation support from 11 cities across the Global South. The Project has further defined and demonstrated its value proposition, expanded focus areas and gained stronger momentum.

LOCAL DEVELOPMENT KNOWLEDGE DEEPENED THROUGH DEMAND-DRIVEN NEEDS ASSESSMENT

Three demand-driven needs assessments were conducted in Khajura (Nepal), Chust (Uzbekistan) and New-Koidu (Sierra Leone) in close coordi-

nation with UNDP, the World Food Programme (WFP), the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat) and the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), focusing on the needs of the cities for agriculture supply-chain development, waste management and infrastructure development. The Cities Project also supported advocacy and outreach efforts towards the concept of sectoral and thematic cooperation among cities in developing countries.

CITY-TO-CITY SOUTH-SOUTH COOPERATION ENHANCED

South-South exchanges between cities in Nepal (Khajura) and China (Yuxi) regarding the development of sustainable agriculture were completed, which helped to increase the knowledge of the participants. Both Nepalese delegates and Chinese counterparts said that they were inspired and looked forward to advancing the collaboration. The Yuxi Government and representatives from the Ministry of Agriculture in China agreed to provide the necessary technical advisory support to the Nepalese city.

Participants engaged in discussions during demand-driven needs assessment



Together with local stakeholders, the Cities Project team, UN Habitat and WFP are conducting needs assessment in Koidu City, Sierra Leone

SKILLS IN E-COMMERCE INCREASED

The project supported increasing skills in cross border e-commerce. A total of 82 people (56 per cent women) representing 15 developing countries from Africa, Asia and Latin America increased their skills in that area. In addition, 95 per cent of the participants passed the post-training online test and reported that the training had helped to increase their knowledge of South-South cooperation in e-commerce.

LESSONS LEARNED

- More interest in, and requests for, collaboration were received from various cities and partners in an ad hoc manner. To better address the requests and encourage new cities to collaborate, a systematic procedure and guidance are essential to be established for effective expansion of partnerships with the cities.
- The ongoing COVID-19 pandemic resulted in uncertainties in project implementation and planning. Significant impacts of COVID-19 on the global community in the economic, social and environmental spheres are anticipated. Financial resources to support the joint implementation of the pilot projects likely to be further challenged given the foreseen negative impact of COVID-19 on the global economy. A flexible project management modality and contingency planning would help to better address the risks and challenges faced during the uncertainties.

WAY FORWARD

- The Cities Project will focus on fully establishing and institutionalizing the clusters of cities conceptualized on the basis of multiple themes, such as agriculture cities, port cities, tourism cities and civil-aviation-hub cities, through South-South cooperation. It will also focus on establishing and institutionalizing the new sectoral clusters, including those on e-commerce, public health and waste management, and engage existing thematic and regional networks of cities.
- The Project will emphasize the development of standard tools and processes for establishing and operationalizing the clusters of cities and will expand its support to the partner cities' needs and priorities related to the COVID-19 pandemic.

RESULT HIGHLIGHTS



60

Over 60 cities engaged in advancing South-South cooperation in a number of thematic areas: agriculture, transportation, waste management, e-commerce, etc.



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8 UN Agencies and 22 other organizations partnered in facilitating city to city South-South cooperation.



82

Representatives from:
15 developing countries
increased e-commerce skills

56%

women



11

11 cities' good practices in climate change and South-South investment were documented and shared