



**Executive Board of the
United Nations Development
Programme, the United Nations
Population Fund and the United
Nations Office for Project Services**

Distr.: General
24 November 2021

Original: English

First regular session 2022

31 January – 4 February 2022, New York

Item 12 of the provisional agenda

United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation

**Draft strategic framework of the United Nations Office for
South-South Cooperation, 2022–2025**

Summary

Leveraging the support of the United Nations system to Member States and enabling developing countries to inform and support one another are essential to implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and delivering sustainable development in responding to the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic and building resilience for the future. South-South cooperation contributes to this agenda through regional integration and neighbourhood initiatives, trade, investments, the transfer of tested solutions, and platforms for the co-design and coordination of responses to some of the most dynamic and complex development challenges.

Against this background, the United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation strategic framework, 2022–2025, aims to enhance South-South and triangular cooperation as means to accelerate the speed and scale of action towards the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals. To contribute to this goal, the Office will focus on 3 outcomes covering the following areas: (a) advance South-South and triangular cooperation policymaking and implementation; (b) strengthen United Nations capacity to provide South-South and triangular cooperation support; and (c) promote South-South and triangular cooperation knowledge exchange, capacity development, and technology development and transfer to enable developing countries to pursue more resilient and sustainable development.

Those outcomes will be delivered through five services: (a) facilitation of, and reporting on, intergovernmental processes and reporting; (b) capacity development; (c) knowledge co-creation and management; (d) a South-South and triangular cooperation solution lab; and (e) trust-fund management.

In implementing the strategic framework, 2022–2025, the Office will integrate the perspective of women's empowerment and gender equality into all its proposed work programmes; prioritize knowledge, results management, transparency and accountability; recalibrate communications, partnerships and funding; maintain a diverse, talented and innovative workforce; reduce its carbon footprint while delivering its services; and encourage the transfer of green technologies through the trust funds that it manages.



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I. Introduction

1. Leveraging the support of the United Nations system to Member States and enabling developing countries to inform and support one another are essential to implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in the Decade of Action and delivering sustainable development in responding to the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic and building resilience for the future. South-South cooperation contributes to this agenda through regional integration and neighbourhood initiatives for impact at scale, trade and investment, the transfer of tested solutions among developing countries, and the co-design of responses to increasingly dynamic and complex development challenges.
2. As a complement to, not a substitute for, North-South cooperation, South-South cooperation is a development cooperation modality based on a shared solidarity born out of similar experiences and sympathies and guided by the principles of respect for national sovereignty, national ownership and independence, equality, non-conditionality, non-interference in domestic affairs and mutual benefit. Traditional donor countries and multilateral organizations may contribute to Southern-country-owned and -led initiatives through triangular cooperation arrangements that provide funding, training, management and technological systems, and other forms of support.
3. The United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation, hosted by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) since 1974, contributes to the achievement of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development by serving as the focal point for promoting and facilitating South-South and triangular cooperation for development on a global and United Nations system-wide basis. Guided by this mandate, the United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation strategic framework, 2022–2025, articulates the past results of the Office and lessons learned, its present development context, and the vision and proposed programme of the Office for the next four years.
4. The overarching goal of the strategic framework, 2022–2025, is to enhance South-South cooperation and triangular cooperation as means to accelerate the speed and scale of action towards the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals. To contribute to this goal, the United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation will play a catalytic role, fostering South-South and triangular cooperation intergovernmental support, knowledge exchange and capacity development.
5. The strategic framework thus proposes that the United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation focus its work programmes on three interlinked, interdependent outcomes: (a) advancing South-South and triangular cooperation policymaking and implementation; (b) strengthening the capacity of United Nations entities to provide support for South-South and triangular cooperation to developing countries; and (c) enabling developing countries to implement the 2030 Agenda through harnessing South-South and triangular cooperation knowledge exchange and capacity development as well as facilitating technology development and transfer.
6. The strategic framework also sets out how the United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation will, at the request of Member States, support the achievement of the three outcomes through five services: (a) facilitation of, and reporting on, intergovernmental processes; (b) capacity development; (c) co-creation and management of knowledge; (d) a South-South and triangular cooperation solution lab; and (e) trust-fund management.
7. In implementing the strategic framework, 2022–2025, the United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation will integrate the perspective of women's empowerment and gender equality throughout all its proposed work programmes.

II. Past cooperation, results and lessons learned

8. Following the call by Member States to strengthen and further invigorate South-South cooperation (A/RES/64/222) and the mandate reaffirmed by the General Assembly (A/RES/73/291), the United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation serves as ‘the focal point for promoting and facilitating South-South and triangular cooperation for development on a global and United Nations system-wide basis’. Its strategic framework responds to General Assembly resolution A/RES/71/243, in which the General Assembly ‘reiterates that the United Nations development system should mainstream and enhance its support to South-South and triangular cooperation, at the request and with the ownership and leadership of developing countries, through a system-wide approach’ (para. 23), and the General Assembly resolution (A/RES/75/233), which ‘reiterates that United Nations development system should enhance its support to South-South and triangular cooperation, at the request

and with the ownership and leadership of developing countries, through a system-wide approach’ (para 35).

9. In 2018, the Office further increased its support to the work of United Nations agencies, funds and programmes with countries and institutions of the Global South to strengthen their capacity to identify solutions, policy choices and expertise. It also worked to reaffirm global commitment to South-South and triangular cooperation and expand multi-stakeholder participation in South-South and triangular cooperation initiatives (DP/CF/SSC/6). That work culminated in the second High-level United Nations Conference on South-South Cooperation (BAPA+40) in 2019, marking the fortieth anniversary of the adoption of the Buenos Aires Plan of Action for Promoting and Implementing Technical Cooperation among Developing Countries, renewing international commitment to South-South and triangular cooperation, and charting the way forward in terms of promoting stronger ties across the Global South for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

10. In 2020, the United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation led the development of a United Nations system-wide strategy on South-South and triangular cooperation to galvanize a coordinated, coherent approach to United Nations policy and programmatic work on South-South and triangular cooperation. It also demonstrated its convening power across the United Nations system, Member States, intergovernmental organizations and research networks through the launch of the United Nations Inter-Agency Mechanism for South-South and Triangular Cooperation, the coordination and consolidation of proposals of United Nations entities regarding the BAPA+40 outcome document as a joint contribution, the compilation of evidence of United Nations system support to South-South and triangular cooperation, the creation of a global coalition of think tank networks, and the establishment of an ecosystem for solution and partnership exchange, among other results.

11. Past development cooperation efforts of the Office cooperation revealed the need to improve aspects such as the integration of South-South and triangular cooperation perspectives into United Nations intergovernmental processes as well as global, regional and country-level planning and programming; the uptake of United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation knowledge products and platforms; and Office funding and talent management. Those areas for improvement were included in the final evaluation of the United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation strategic framework, 2014–2018; the mid-term review of the United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation strategic framework, 2018–2021; United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation audit reports; and consultations with United Nations entities, Member States and intergovernmental organizations in the preparation of the strategic framework for 2022–2025.

Lessons learned

12. Lessons learned from the implementation of previous strategic frameworks indicate the following:

(a) *the imperative to underscore the catalytic nature of South-South and triangular cooperation*

13. South-South cooperation and triangular cooperation can better serve as means rather than as ends in achieving Member States development priorities and goals. The Office will thus integrate its services to promote South-South and triangular cooperation knowledge exchange and capacity development as well as to facilitate technology development and transfer so as to enable developing countries to pursue more resilient and sustainable development. It will also strengthen its support through intergovernmental processes, multi-stakeholder dialogues, evidence-based reports and policy briefs to advance South-South and triangular cooperation policymaking and implementation.

(b) *the need to integrate South-South and triangular cooperation into global, regional and country-level planning and programming*

14. The establishment of the United Nations Inter-Agency Mechanism for South-South and Triangular Cooperation has enabled United Nations entities to work together on various issues such as the development of the United Nations system-wide strategy on South-South and triangular cooperation for sustainable development and its action plan. The Office will continue to facilitate convening the Inter-Agency Mechanism as a platform to coordinate United Nations system support to Member States on South-South and triangular cooperation while equipping the United Nations system with the necessary guidance, tools and training to enhance support to Member States development priorities and goals through South-South and triangular cooperation.

(c) *the need to emphasize the co-creation and use of South-South and triangular cooperation knowledge*

15. The past several years have seen an upsurge in the production of South-South and triangular cooperation knowledge across United Nations entities, Member States, Southern think tanks and centres of excellence, and the private sector. The relevance of this knowledge increases as it is used in informing the formulation and implementation of policies, plans and programmes. To this end, the Office, in collaboration with relevant partners, will produce high-quality, evidence-based knowledge products that help to identify, implement and scale up South-South and triangular cooperation. It will further strengthen the role of South-South Galaxy as a one-stop-shop for knowledge dissemination and brokering of partnerships.

(d) *the need to adopt a programme-cycle management approach*

16. The mid-term review of the strategic framework for 2018–2021 showed that the application of a programme-cycle approach in designing and implementing initiatives and projects and partnership-building with adequate planning and financial allocations could better contribute to more tangible results. To this end, the Office will emphasize planning and implementation of initiatives, projects and partnerships, focusing on outcomes along with adequate financial allocations.

(e) *the need to enhance a results-based management culture*

17. The audit and the mid-term review highlighted the importance of results-based planning and budgeting across the work programmes of the United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation including trust funds. Decision 20/1 of the High-level Committee on South-South Cooperation (A/76/39) also emphasizes the need to

improve the impact and strengthen the efficiency, effectiveness and transparency of the Office. To this end, the Office will improve and operationalize monitoring-and-evaluation framework and business processes to strengthen the results orientation, operational efficiency, transparency and accountability across its work programmes and trust funds in compliance with UNDP policies and procedures.

III. Situation analysis

18. The COVID-19 pandemic disrupted supply chains, triggered a steep increase in debt across the Global South, and underscored the need for vaccine equity around the world. Progress in terms of reducing poverty and inequality, alleviating hunger, strengthening health and social protection systems, and closing the financing gap was reversed in many parts of the world and was felt particularly by women, requiring greater efforts to accelerate the speed and scale of action towards the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals in their last and most critical decade. Those compounded health, economic and social crises reinforced the significance of South-South cooperation and triangular cooperation, with several countries using those modalities to address the immediate impacts of the pandemic while calling for more solidarity-based cooperation models that promote technology development and transfer, knowledge exchange and capacity development to build resilience for the future.

19. Many of the Southern countries have also strengthened institutional capacities for South-South and triangular cooperation through the formulation of national and regional policies and strategies, the establishment of stand-alone development cooperation agencies or South-South and triangular cooperation units, the development of information and management systems, and the transition from stand-alone initiatives to structural transformation projects and programmes. The creation of new Southern-led development finance institutions, credit programmes and special funds has expanded the options for mobilizing South-South finance while reconfirming South-South cooperation and triangular cooperation as a complement to, rather than a substitute for, North-South cooperation in closing the financing gap to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals.

20. Many developing countries are also at the epicenter of major global transformations. The transition to a digital economy is expected to boost competitiveness, increase access to overseas markets and global e-value chains, and improve governance and government service delivery in several parts of the Global South. Following the Paris Agreement on climate change, pledges by major developing countries to decarbonize their economies will likely impact trade and investments, pushing global supply chains to adapt while unleashing new opportunities in low-carbon industries to reverse the climate crisis. Many parts of the Global South are experiencing rapid urbanization and demographic transition, which, for their part, are affecting the growth trajectory of cities. These benefits are not without risks such as increasing the digital divide, social exclusion, unemployment, food insecurity, and income and gender-based inequality in the Global South. As development becomes more dynamic in nature and unprecedented in scale, developing countries are called upon not only to share their experiences but also to come together in multiple directions (South-South, East-East, South-North, North-South) and levels (national, subregional, regional, interregional and global), across sectors, to co-design solutions that accelerate the speed and scale of action towards the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals.

21. Cooperation at the subregional, regional and interregional levels plays an increasingly important role in this process and in leaving no one behind by:

- (a) igniting action in line with the long-term development priorities articulated in national and regional development plans. Through these cooperation platforms and frameworks, countries identify common challenges and areas of interest, establish coordination mechanisms and pool resources for joint project implementation;

- (b) designing strategies that facilitate South-South finance in the context of subregional, regional and interregional development finance institutions, credit programmes and special funds, and that fully align it with the 2030 Agenda. For example, national development banks and funds have played a key role in promoting South-South and triangular cooperation in Arab States. In parts of Asia, the increase in the number of private creditors signals a new trend whereby public-private partnerships are being used to supplement state-led aid programmes, since they help to alleviate political and financial risks associated with aid programmes of countries while expanding sources of development finance. Other innovative sources of development finance in the region include the use of endowment funds for South-South and triangular cooperation, whereby the yields are used to finance development cooperation programmes and grant assistance, reducing the reliance of countries on government budgets; and
- (c) recognizing the diversity within the Global South and adapting South-South and triangular cooperation to the national strategic priorities and needs of countries in different country categories, mainly least developed countries, fragile States and low-income countries that have recently graduated to middle-income status. Different from South-South and triangular cooperation involving an emerging economy or geographically distant developing countries, issues such as stabilization and reform of core government institutions are central to South-South and triangular cooperation among least developed countries and fragile States because neighbours of fragile States have a clear interest in stability and improved performance of government institutions, which will eventually lead to improved economic performance, enhanced trade and regional political stability. Adaptation can also happen at the funding level through the combination of official development assistance-like aid and commercial forms of economic engagement to respond more flexibly to the development needs of countries and regions. Having dealt with development issues, low-income countries that have recently graduated to middle-income status have relevant experiences to share with others while benefiting from South-South and triangular cooperation to position themselves in the global arena. For most of these countries, however, the fear persists that they may lose the support that they had as low-income countries and find themselves sliding back.

22. Over the past decade, many United Nations entities have expanded and strengthened South-South and triangular cooperation in their policies and programmes. This can be seen in the number of mechanisms and initiatives launched, such as the creation of the United Nations Inter-Agency Mechanism for South-South and Triangular Cooperation; the elevation of South-South cooperation and triangular cooperation as two of the key modalities of engagement in some corporate strategic plans and development assistance frameworks of those United Nations entities; the creation of dedicated units and budget lines for South-South and triangular cooperation; the development of platforms for brokering demand and supply among South-South partners; the assignment of South-South and triangular cooperation focal points in United Nations entities; the compilation of examples of United Nations system support to South-South and triangular cooperation; and the upsurge in the number of South-South and triangular cooperation activities reported across the United Nations system.

23. As South-South cooperation and triangular cooperation become more multilateral, these initiatives and policy spaces begin to occupy a place at the heart of the United Nations system or to be supported by it. This can be seen in the growing United Nations support to intergovernmental agreements and blocs that promote cross-border trade and regional integration, the facilitation of trade-related legislation to stimulate competition and consumer protection, the development of multilateral early warning systems, and the establishment of regional and interregional cooperation platforms. This evolution revealed areas for improvement, as pointed out

in, for example, the 2020 report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of the quadrennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities for development of the United Nations system (QCPR) (A/75/79-E/2020/55): the strengthening of South-South and triangular cooperation monitoring, evaluation and reporting across the United Nations system to enhance the sustainability and replicability of activities; the increase in the resources and capacities for South-South and triangular cooperation initiatives; greater staff awareness of the potential of South-South and triangular cooperation and their programming modalities; and more South-South and triangular cooperation policies and frameworks at the national level.

24. The reforms of the United Nations development system have created opportunities to strengthen the United Nations Inter-Agency Mechanism for South-South and Triangular Cooperation, to more closely connect the United Nations system with countries and regions, and to further advance South-South and triangular cooperation. The new modes of engagement and programming approaches emphasize the need for, and the importance of, actively facilitating South-South and triangular cooperation: (a) the United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Frameworks have started to capture the role of the United Nations as a facilitator, broker and supporter of South-South and triangular cooperation; (b) the renewed leadership of the United Nations resident coordinators and the United Nations country teams can contribute to further promote South-South and triangular cooperation within and across regions; (c) the new United Nations results groups are tasked with identifying possible new areas for subregional and regional cooperation to address development needs of countries as well as opportunities to highlight their good practices within various areas of South-South and triangular cooperation; and (d) the regional collaborative platforms and issue-based coalitions are expected to support regional knowledge exchanges and collaboration and to integrate South-South and triangular cooperation into their modus operandi.

IV. Vision and proposed programme

25. The United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation in its strategic framework (2022–2025) will continue to support the efforts of countries of the Global South in implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in the decade of action. It will also continue to contribute to the United Nations system efforts to support those countries in responding to the COVID-19 pandemic and in building resilience for the future. The Office envisions Member States and the United Nations system enhancing South-South cooperation and triangular cooperation as means to accelerate the speed and scale of action towards the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals through the financing, transfer, adaptation and co-design of solutions that address structural development challenges, improve productive capacities and prepare countries for major global transformations. To contribute to this vision, the Office will play a catalytic role, fostering South-South and triangular cooperation knowledge exchange and capacity development as well as facilitating technology development and transfer.

26. In line with Member States efforts to strengthen the means of implementation of, and revitalize, the global partnership for sustainable development (Sustainable Development Goal 17), under the guidance of the High-level Committee on South-South Cooperation, the United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation will focus its work on the following three outcomes. In implementing its strategic framework, 2022–2025, the Office will integrate the perspective of women's empowerment and gender equality into all its proposed work programmes.

Outcome 1. Policies to advance South-South and triangular cooperation are strengthened through effective, evidence-based support to intergovernmental processes, multi-stakeholder dialogues and reporting.

27. Priority under this outcome will be given to enhancing United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation thought leadership in support of intergovernmental processes and multi-stakeholder dialogues by: (a) expanding the scope and

improving the quality and the usefulness of mandated reports by the Office through evidence-based knowledge and research, including the annual report of the Secretary-General on the state of South-South cooperation, the annual report to the General Assembly Economic and Financial Committee (Second Committee), the biennial report of the Secretary-General to the High-level Committee on South-South Cooperation, and the biennial report of the Administrator of UNDP to the High-level Committee on South-South Cooperation. Additional reporting requirements may arise with the launch of the United Nations system-wide strategy on South-South and triangular cooperation; (b) facilitating action-oriented dialogue among Member States, United Nations entities, regional mechanisms, Southern think tanks and centres of excellence to substantiate United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation reports, inform the General Assembly Second Committee and the High-level Committee on South-South Cooperation, and strengthen their interaction with the United Nations high-level political forum on sustainable development, the follow-up to the forum on financing for development, the Development Cooperation Forum, and other normative and intergovernmental processes and follow-up and review platforms where South-South cooperation and triangular cooperation are discussed or could play a relevant role; and (c) serving as the secretariat to the High-level Committee on South-South Cooperation and supporting the Second Committee of the General Assembly.

28. To achieve this priority, the United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation will produce a biennial report on South-South and triangular cooperation that reflects key issues and trends in South-South knowledge exchange, technology development and transfer, and capacity-building as well as the contribution of South-South and triangular cooperation to the preparation of developing countries for global transformations such as COVID-19 recovery, digitalization and climate change. The biennial report will provide the basis for the report of the Secretary-General on the state of South-South cooperation and other reports that the Office is mandated to produce. In collaboration with relevant partners, the Office will organize a series of workshops and discussions to disseminate the findings of the biennial report on South-South and triangular cooperation. The mandated reports and other policy briefs will be more analytical, evidence-based and action-oriented. They also will include the ideas and recommendations from Global South platforms, including those facilitated by the United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation such as the South-South and Sustainable Development Directors General Forum (formerly the High-level Forum of Directors General for Development Cooperation), the South-South Global Thinkers Network and the Global South-South Development Expo as well as other existing and new regional forums, country-level platforms and policy dialogues on South-South and triangular cooperation.

29. The United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation will also lead the substantive preparations for the biennial sessions of the High-level Committee on South-South Cooperation in response to relevant resolutions of the General Assembly and decisions of the High-level Committee. It will prepare thematic policy briefings and convene thematic policy dialogues at the global, regional and interregional levels to support dialogues in the context of the High-level Committee on South-South Cooperation and other intergovernmental processes on South-South and triangular cooperation.

30. Through this process, the United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation will contribute to advancing South-South and triangular cooperation policymaking and implementation through the integration of South-South and triangular cooperation perspectives into resolutions of the United Nations system and of regional mechanisms. The Office also aims to contribute to the implementation of the actions recommended in the report of the Secretary-General on the state of South-South cooperation and the decisions of the High-level Committee on South-South Cooperation.

Outcome 2. The capacity of United Nations entities to respond to requests by developing countries to address specific development challenges in

implementing the 2030 Agenda through South-South and triangular cooperation is strengthened.

31. Priority under this outcome will be given to developing and/or strengthening capacities within the United Nations system and Member States and an ecosystem that is more conducive to South-South and triangular cooperation by: (a) strengthening the United Nations Inter-Agency Mechanism for South-South and Triangular Cooperation as a platform for United Nations entities to review progress and lessons learned regarding the implementation of the United Nations system-wide strategy on South-South and triangular cooperation and improve system-wide coordination and collaboration; (b) developing the capacity of United Nations entities, regional commissions and United Nations country teams to integrate South-South and triangular cooperation into United Nations global strategies and service offers as well as regional and country programmes such as the regional cooperation frameworks, United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Frameworks, common country analyses, Country Programme Documents, and annual reports; (c) supporting developing countries in establishing and/or strengthening national institutions to plan and manage South-South cooperation, upon request by Member States and United Nations country teams as applicable; and (d) strengthening the South-South and Sustainable Development Directors General Forum and Regional Mechanisms as a space for Member States to share lessons learned on strengthening national institutional mechanisms and ecosystems to promote and facilitate South-South cooperation, and coordinate action in line with recommendations in the BAPA+40 outcome document.

32. To achieve this priority, the United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation will continue to coordinate and strengthen the United Nations Inter-Agency Mechanism for South-South and Triangular Cooperation and facilitate the implementation of the United Nations system-wide strategy on South-South and triangular cooperation. This will include the creation of working groups to mainstream South-South and triangular cooperation thematically within the United Nations system, review progress, and exchange knowledge, lessons learned and good practices in the implementation of the United Nations system-wide strategy on South-South and triangular cooperation and develop guidance for United Nations entities on how to report progress against the related United Nations system-wide action plan.

33. The United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation will also coordinate with the Development Coordination Office, the regional commissions and the Department of Economic and Social Affairs, as applicable, to develop and roll out guidance, tools and training modules to implement the United Nations system-wide strategy on South-South and triangular cooperation. This guidance as well as tools and training modules will focus on how to: (a) mainstream South-South cooperation and triangular cooperation into corporate planning and budgeting and in-country programmes; (b) identify, categorize, implement, evaluate and report on ongoing and new South-South and triangular cooperation initiatives across the portfolios of United Nations agencies, funds and programmes; (c) support developing countries in establishing and/or strengthening national institutions to plan and manage South-South cooperation, and integrate South-South and triangular cooperation perspectives into voluntary national review reports; and (d) generate evidence on higher-level outcomes, for example contributions of South-South and triangular cooperation to changes in the capacity of national actors to design policies/programmes and how these changes in turn contribute to progress on national targets for the Sustainable Development Goals.

34. Through this process, the United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation will contribute to the increase in global, regional and country-level United Nations strategic plans and planning documents that follow the United Nations system-wide strategy on South-South and triangular cooperation and/or include South-South and triangular cooperation-related indicators and activities. In doing so, the Office also will contribute to increasing the United Nations system response to Member States requests for support and capacity development with respect to South-South and triangular cooperation. It further will contribute to the integration of South-South and

triangular cooperation perspectives into national development cooperation strategies and voluntary national review reports on sustainable development.

35. The South-South and Sustainable Development Directors General Forum and Regional Mechanisms, along with South-South Galaxy, the Global Coalition of Think Tank Networks for South-South Cooperation and the Global South-South Development Expo, will be designed as a package of integrated services for Member States to share lessons learned on developing and/or enhancing national institutional mechanisms, strategies and ecosystems for South-South cooperation. This will enable the United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation to take an integrated approach to the capacity development of Member States, further catalysing its support to developing countries in addressing specific development challenges in implementing the 2030 Agenda through South-South and triangular cooperation, upon their request.

Outcome 3. Developing countries are enabled to implement the 2030 Agenda through harnessing South-South and triangular cooperation knowledge exchange, capacity-building, and facilitation of technology development and transfer.

36. Priority under this outcome will be given to brokering and scaling up, upon request, South-South and triangular cooperation initiatives that enable countries to pursue more resilient and sustainable development by: (a) continuing to map, document and disseminate good practices in South-South and triangular cooperation to enable South-South knowledge exchange, capacity-building, and technology development and transfer, including from trust funds managed by the United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation; (b) identifying and brokering knowledge, capacity and technology needs across the South, including through the United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation-managed trust funds, on a demand-driven basis; (c) establishing a South-South and triangular cooperation solution lab to incubate innovative solutions and adapt and scale them up together with Member States, United Nations entities, financial institutions of the Global South, Southern universities and centres of excellence, and other relevant partners. The lab will function on a demand-driven basis to address issues critical for the Global South; (d) continuing to manage South-South trust funds more effectively and efficiently to promote knowledge exchange and the transfer of good practices to alleviate poverty; and (e) on a demand-driven basis, identifying additional sources of sustainable financing and enlarging investments in South-South cooperation, building collaboration mechanisms with regional development banks and Southern-led financing institutions, triangular cooperation arrangements with traditional donor countries and multilateral organizations, and other initiatives around common Sustainable Development Goals to maximize resources and scale up and increase the impact of South-South and triangular cooperation.

37. To achieve this priority, UNOSSC will map and document good practices with partner commitment to support the transfer of knowledge and technology, including the detailed work of building capacities and jointly implementing practices in the partner country(ies). In close consultation with their respective Boards, the United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation will also work with trust-fund and programme partners to underscore the value proposition of knowledge and technology transfer and appropriation and the comparative advantage of expanding such elements within their trust-fund portfolios and programmes following South-South cooperation principles.

38. The United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation will respond to country requests to identify knowledge and technology holders and facilitate the brokering of partnerships through South-South Galaxy and projects supported by trust funds managed by the United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation. The Office will establish and operationalize the South-South and triangular cooperation solution lab. The lab will facilitate the coordination, co-design, incubation and scaling up of

initiatives that promote knowledge exchange, capacity development, and technology development and transfer while contributing to the Sustainable Development Goals.

39. The United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation will collaborate with United Nations entities, multilateral cooperation platforms, triangular cooperation partners, and other relevant actors and initiatives dedicated to meeting development challenges and contributing to Sustainable Development Goals. The expanded engagement of the Office through the United Nations system will support partners to develop and implement South-South and triangular cooperation funds, projects and other initiatives that follow the South-South cooperation principles in addition to helping projects to reach scale whenever possible and upon the request of Member States.

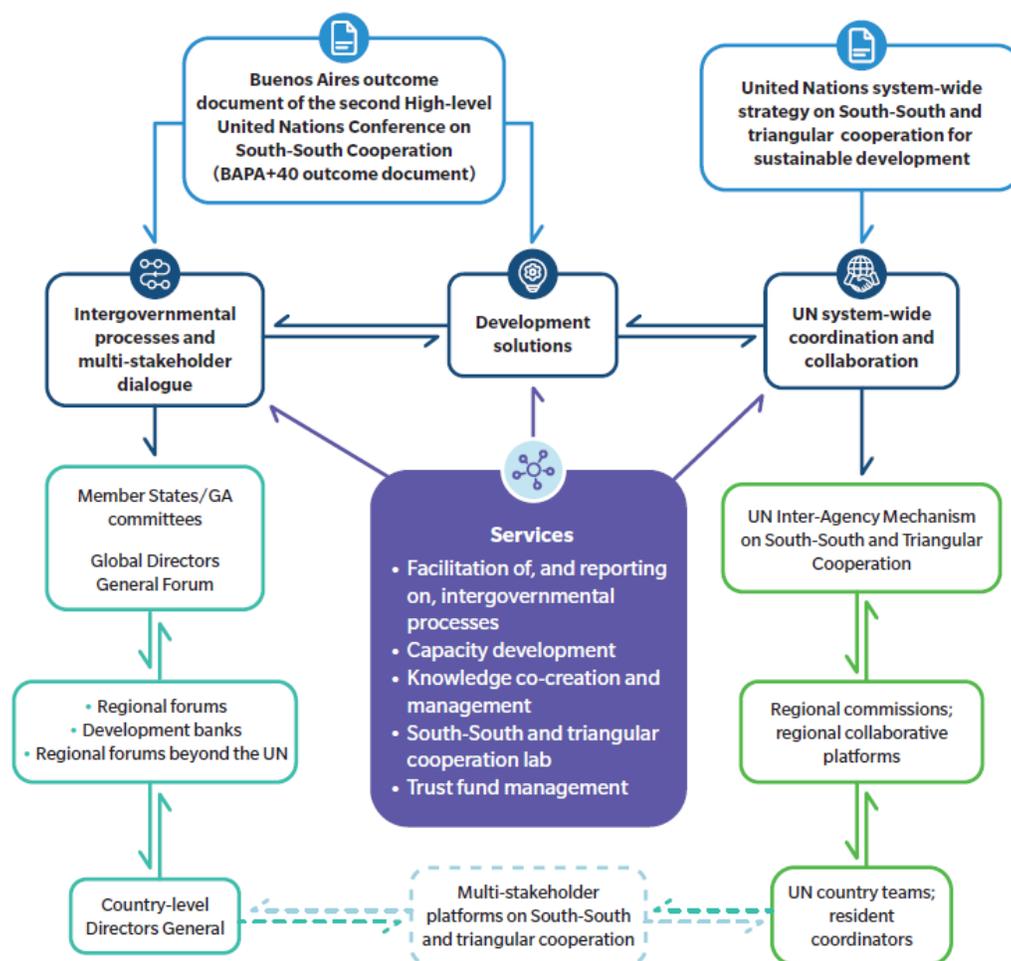
40. Through this process, the United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation will contribute to informing the design/implementation of developing-country policies, plans and/or projects through South-South and triangular cooperation knowledge exchange and brokering. It also will contribute to the transfer of good practices in South-South and triangular cooperation to developing countries through the support of trust-fund management.

V. Implementation arrangements

41. In its strategic framework, 2022–2025, the United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation will emphasize a more programme-cycle and results-based management approach by integrating its different services into a platform that creates an ecosystem more favourable to South-South and triangular cooperation. This platform will be based on three interlinked and interdependent outcome areas: (a) support to intergovernmental processes and multi-stakeholder dialogues; (b) United Nations system-wide coordination and collaboration; and (c) development solutions. These three outcome areas will be delivered through five services: (a) facilitation of, and reporting on, intergovernmental processes; (b) capacity development; (c) knowledge co-creation and management; (d) a South-South and triangular cooperation solution lab; and (e) trust-fund management.

42. The United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation services will support the three outcomes in the strategic framework in terms of delivering impact from the global to the regional and country levels. At the country level, the Office envisions establishing a multi-stakeholder platform to support Member States in leveraging South-South and triangular cooperation for achieving their national development goals. The Office will strengthen working partnerships with the Development Coordination Office, regional commissions and other relevant United Nations entities to establish a sound basis for the creation and operationalization of such multi-stakeholder platforms, as the following diagram illustrates.

Delivery of UNOSSC South-South and triangular cooperation services



Results management and accountability

43. The United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation will continue to ensure the quality of its initiatives by integrating South-South cooperation principles and triangular cooperation components into their design in a results-oriented manner. It will also continue to ensure that its projects contain a theory of change and a results and resources framework establishing a strong logical chain, integration of South-South cooperation principles and triangular cooperation components (as applicable), lessons learned from evidence, risk-informed programming and a fully costed evaluation plan.

44. Programme and project evaluations will be based on quality evidence, and management action in response to the recommendations of the evaluators will be taken in a timely manner. The United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation will also strive to improve implementing partners' satisfaction with its services and to take a proactive role in embedding an effective approach to risk management in its decision-making and business model. The Office will comply with UNDP policies and procedures to ensure management for results and accountability

Strategic communications

45. The United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation will enhance its advocacy and strategic communications to increase the understanding and visibility of, and engagement in, South-South and triangular cooperation by underscoring the

positive impact and additional value of those modalities in accelerating the achievement of internationally agreed development goals and strengthening the role of the Office as a catalytic force in that process. Its communications strategy will emphasize the dissemination of information relevant to the Office as well as interaction on policy issues, advocacy initiatives and projects within the United Nations system and among partners in governments, Southern think tanks and centres of excellence. This will be done through the strategic placement of key messages, the publication of electronic bulletins, and the facilitation of social media engagements and targeted events. Workshops and meetings with United Nations entities and partners beyond the United Nations system will be organized to introduce the new strategic framework. The Office will also create a directory of South-South and triangular cooperation professionals by location and area of expertise for outreach, advocacy and communication purposes.

Strategic partnerships

46. In line with Sustainable Development Goal 17, the United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation envisions a revitalized global partnership that leverages the resources of all stakeholders to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals while ensuring full alignment with the strategic direction and proposed programme of the Office. This will involve:

- (a) strengthening working relationships with the Department of Economic and Social Affairs, regional commissions, offices of United Nations resident coordinators, and other United Nations entities offering secretariat services to normative and intergovernmental processes, and follow-up and review platforms where South-South cooperation and triangular cooperation are discussed or could play a relevant role to strengthen their interaction with the General Assembly Second Committee and the High-level Committee on South-South Cooperation;
- (b) enhancing relationships with the Development Coordination Office, regional commissions and United Nations country teams for the phased implementation and monitoring of the United Nations system-wide strategy on South-South and triangular cooperation, and for increasing effectiveness and efficiency in delivering results at the regional and country levels. As an intergovernmental, normative policy body and co-vice-Chair of United Nations regional collaborative platforms (RCPs), engagement with the regional commissions will be particularly important to enhance the United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation work at the regional level.
- (c) supporting the establishment of global and regional mechanisms and platforms that promote partnership and collaboration;
- (d) through the United Nations Inter-Agency Mechanism for South-South and Triangular Cooperation, initiating collaboration mechanisms with other United Nations entities and engaging multilateral cooperation platforms and triangular cooperation partners to accelerate projects facilitated by the United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation and help partners to strengthen their programmatic support to South-South and triangular cooperation;
- (e) whenever possible and upon the request of Member States, connecting individual as well as groups of Member States with United Nations entities, regional and interregional organizations, development finance institutions and special funds of the Global South, and Southern universities and centres of excellence in a platform to coordinate, co-design, incubate and scale up initiatives that promote knowledge exchange, capacity development, and technology development and transfer;

- (f) reviewing and updating existing partnership agreements and exploring synergies with United Nations agencies with thematic mandates, the Global Policy Network, UNDP Accelerator Labs, and private-sector networks in the regions and the United Nations Global Compact to cross-fertilize knowledge, innovation and collaboration; and
- (g) consolidating South-South Global Thinkers and expanding partnerships with Southern think tanks, universities and centres of excellence for increasing the relevance, usefulness and uptake of United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation knowledge products and reports.

Diverse, talented and innovative workforce

47. The United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation is committed to achieving workforce diversity in terms of gender, nationality and culture at all levels. It is equally committed to promoting talent and innovation among its workforce with regard to recruitment and career development. The Office will act as a catalyst rather than sole implementer, convening other United Nations entities with the substantive mandate to collaborate in joint initiatives, producing thematic briefings and delivering other services as appropriate. The Office will also provide catalytic resources to support collaborative South-South and triangular cooperation projects and initiatives in various fields of cooperation identified by developing countries. In doing so, it will draw from the expertise of relevant thematic United Nations entities and networks. This will enable the Office to continue to focus its workforce on the functional aspects of South-South and triangular cooperation to deliver the five services described in the strategic framework that cut across all thematic areas, contributing to all three outcomes in an interconnected manner.

Funding

48. UNDP has allocated \$30.7 million to UNOSSC for the period 2022–2025: \$9.7 million for its institutional budget and \$21 million for its core programming budget. Each of those amounts will be allocated to each outcome equally and will cover both human resources and programme activities. The positions directly working for projects funded from earmarked resources will be calculated under outcome three. On a needs basis, the United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation will explore collaboration with development finance institutions and special funds of the South and the North for special joint South-South and triangular cooperation initiatives to promote the South-South and triangular cooperation agenda. The Office will make sufficient efforts in collaboration with the funding partners to ensure operational sustainability of the trust-fund management.

Digital and green

49. The business continuity process adopted during the COVID-19 pandemic demonstrated that the United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation can deliver many of its services virtually. By using digital technologies, the Office can make its business process more cost-effective, engage a larger and more diverse number of stakeholders, and reduce its carbon footprint. The Office has also learned, however, that use of digital technologies can restrain the participation of countries where digital infrastructure and access are limited. The Office will therefore prioritize to organize hybrid events (online and in-person) to limit travel to the minimum necessary, ensure ample participation and inclusivity, and reduce its costs and carbon footprint. This hybrid approach will also underpin the Office work modality through the promotion of the use of digital technologies across its work and decrease business trips and in-person meetings. Whenever possible, the Office will encourage the development and transfer of green technologies in the projects supported by the Office.

VI. Monitoring, evaluation and reporting

50. Building on the achievement of the strategic framework, 2018–2021, the United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation will continue to strengthen monitoring, evaluation and reporting on the strategic framework, 2022–2025, in accordance with the decisions of the High-level Committee on South-South Cooperation and the recommendations of the evaluation of the strategic framework, 2014–2017, the mid-term review of the strategic framework, 2018–2021, and the 2020 audit of the United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation. The Office will continue enhancing a results-management culture across its work programmes including trust funds, which will ensure quality and a results orientation in the development, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of, and reporting on, its annual integrated work plans, annual work plans and trust-fund projects, following UNDP corporate policies and procedures.

51. Moving forward, the United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation will be more focused on tracking and analysing the extent to which its efforts contribute to transformative and systemic change at the outcome level in addition to monitoring and reporting on how efficiently and effectively it delivers on its own outputs. To this end, the integrated results and resources framework of the strategic framework includes outcome- and output-level results statements and indicators, which are also aligned with the QCPR monitoring and evaluation framework and the United Nations system-wide strategy on South-South and triangular cooperation and its action plan.

52. The United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation will enhance its collaboration with other entities to monitor the indicators included in the action plan for the United Nations system-wide strategy on South-South and triangular cooperation and the strategic framework integrated results and resources framework through QCPR surveys, the Development Coordination Office information management system, survey of headquarters of United Nations entities and the Sustainable Development Goals monitoring system, among others. The Office will also strengthen collaboration with the Department of Economic and Social Affairs and other United Nations entities to integrate a range of common South-South cooperation indicators into the QCPR monitoring, evaluation and reporting framework and monitor those indicators.

53. The United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation will develop a fully costed evaluation plan, covering the period of the strategic framework, 2022–2025, to assess progress towards agreed evaluation commitments, produce evaluation findings to support change, support knowledge-gathering and inform the work of the Office. The evaluation plan will be reviewed annually in collaboration with UNDP. United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation evaluations will follow UNDP and United Nations Evaluation Group evaluation policy and standards. A mid-term review and an independent final evaluation will be commissioned for this strategic framework. The UNDP Independent Evaluation Office will be invited to serve as a technical expert during recruitment of the evaluators and as a reference-group member during the commissioning of the final evaluation of the strategic framework. In collaboration with its trust-fund partners, the United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation will facilitate and/or encourage the commissioning of quality evaluations and impact assessments of the trust-fund portfolios and projects.

54. The United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation will collaborate with the United Nations Inter-Agency Mechanism for South-South and Triangular Cooperation to support the United Nations efforts in building the capacity of the evaluators of the Global South to evaluate South-South and triangular cooperation initiatives. The Office will also work with the United Nations Evaluation Group and evaluation offices of the various United Nations entities to develop and roll out guidance for evaluating South-South and triangular cooperation initiatives managed by United Nations entities.

55. The biennial sessions of the High-level Committee on South-South Cooperation will review reports of the Administrator on the implementation of the strategic framework, 2022–2025. In addition, the United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation will include information on its work in reports of the Administrator to the Economic and Social Council on the implementation of the UNDP Strategic Plan, 2022–2025, through the Executive Board of UNDP, the United Nations Population Fund and the United Nations Office for Project Services. The United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation will produce an annual report reflecting the delivery of results and resources of its strategic framework and trust funds. Information gathered through monitoring and evaluation will complement research and knowledge management and the production of the United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation high-quality analytical reports and policy briefs that facilitate South-South policymaking and programming processes.
