



## Global South-South Development Expo 2022 Concept Note

### I. The Global Development Context

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In 2015, world leaders adopted the United Nations’ 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The 2030 Agenda, which introduced 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), 169 targets and over 231 indicators, sets out an ambitious and transformative vision for humanity and the planet. It aims to promote environmental sustainability, shared prosperity and continued progress on sustainable broad-based development that leaves no one behind. The 2030 Agenda envisages a secure planet without hunger and abject poverty, with productive and decent work, the promotion and achievement of gender equality with the empowerment of girls and women. It integrates environmental, economic, and social dimensions of sustainable development as well as good governance, peace, and justice elements.

While tremendous progress has been made since the launch of the SDGs, governments have failed to advance at the speed and scale required. Socio-economic impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic have derailed progress towards the attainment of the SDGs. As a result of the ongoing global health emergency – which has been transformed into an intertwined political, economic, housing and food crisis, progress towards the achievement of the 2030 Agenda has been set back <sup>1</sup>. The pandemic is believed to have wiped out years of tremendous progress in ending extreme poverty internationally. According to the World Bank, some 119 to 124 million people could be pushed into extreme poverty in 2020, representing the first increase in extreme poverty since 1998.<sup>2</sup> In 2019, the United Nations called for the “Decade of Action” to promote progress towards the attainment of the SDGs by 2030. With only less than 9 years left to deliver on the 2030 Agenda, it is more important than ever for the global community to mobilize for accelerated action.

In an effort to amplify the Decade of Action, the United Nations will draw on the important and continued support of not only global and national partners but also local stakeholders to help secure and energize collective efforts on the ground. The necessity of this decade requires that

<sup>1</sup> <https://dashboards.sdgindex.org/chapters/executive-summary>

<sup>2</sup> <https://blogs.worldbank.org/opendata/updated-estimates-impact-covid-19-global-poverty-looking-back-2020-and-outlook-2021>

all segments of society to come together to help ensure increased participation and effective leadership and governance, increased flow of resources (human and financial), and transformative solutions needed to help respond to intractable development challenges, such as climate change and increasing inequality.

Recent years have also seen agreements on a number of complementary development frameworks. These include the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030, the 2015 Addis Ababa Action Agenda of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development, the Agenda for Humanity, and the 2015 Paris Agreement under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, National Urban Framework, Beijing Declaration, Buenos Aires outcome document of the second High-level United Nations Conference on South-South Cooperation (BAPA+40 outcome document). In these complementary development frameworks, Member States have continued to emphasize the importance of South-South and triangular cooperation for action.

Additionally, Southern countries and regions are developing their own strategies, plans and cooperation initiatives to facilitate sustainable development. Examples include the Belt and Road Initiative championed by China, the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCTFA), the Agenda 2063 of the African Union, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) Community Vision 2025, the Small Island Developing States (SIDS) Accelerated Modalities of Action [S.A.M.O.A.]. Pathway, and the Initiative for the Integration of Regional Infrastructure in South America. The comprehensive and complex modalities for international cooperation provided by such agreements is essential for the alignment of SSC and sustainable development; one led by Southern economies and guided by Southern interests and values.

Taken together and working in concert with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Sustainable Development Goals, these agreements and strategies strengthen each other and pave the way towards eliminating all forms of poverty and creating the equitable, peaceful, prosperous, and sustainable future.

## **II. The Changing Global Landscape with COVID-19**

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The world has seen some dramatic changes that has shaped the global development context. From the advances made in food security and agriculture to digital innovations and transformations, the facet of human development has entirely changed. In the past decade, it has become clear that established global systems are not resilient enough in combatting major crises, such as the COVID-19 pandemic, the global financial meltdown, climate change, and rampant inequality.

In this context, and with the stepping into the “Decade of Action” and COVID-19 the United Nations development system has reformed by offering a more coordinated approach of adopting a new Resident Coordinator (RC) network, which provides all UN country teams with the ability

to adopt tailor made approaches specific to country contexts and local situations<sup>3</sup>. It is important for countries to own their UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework, which is a primary instrument in the planning and implementation of UN development activities at the country level with the host government.

### **Overview**

There have been various advances made in terms of global development. For instance, we know that close to 1 billion people have been lifted out of extreme poverty within a generation<sup>4</sup>. However, with COVID-19, close to 100 million people may have been pushed into extreme poverty<sup>5</sup>. The number of global under-five deaths dropped to its lowest in 2019, to 5.2 million compared to 12.5 million in 1990. This progress in reducing child mortality globally has been nothing short of remarkable<sup>6</sup>.

This is accompanied by advances in global health indicators, food security, increasing globalized financial flows and trade, and the unprecedented digital technological revolution. Beyond the implications on healthcare and education, the role of the digital economy in the achievement of SDGs has been substantial in e-commerce activities by small producers, sellers, and consumers throughout the Global South.

Financial inclusion, for instance, represents the ability of digital technologies to empower and advance the development of communities that have struggled to drive economic growth. Mobile money, digital identification and e-commerce have opened many doors for people to engage in secure and efficient cashless transactions, positively impacting small business growth and development in the Global South. Inclusive e-commerce is also crucial to the promotion of small businesses in the digital economy. Digital technology is allowing Southern countries to increase quick delivery of broad-based, high-quality health care, education and other public services at any stage of their development trajectory.

As digitalization of the global economy continues to evolve, Southern countries have leveraged South-South cooperation to promote economic and social development in various sectors, such as infrastructure, foreign direct investment development projects, mining, finance and climate change. For instance, the exponential increase in e-commerce has created new jobs and income earning opportunities which have the potential to spur household income, lift people out of poverty, and increase resilience of rural communities. In China, e-commerce is helping to revitalize rural villages by widening market access for rural producers. In Chile, the Ministry of Agriculture has set up digital platforms to promote family farming products. In Ghana, a business-to-business e-commerce platform, Agrocenta, connects 10,000 farmers with buyers, allowing farmers to secure a higher price for their production<sup>7</sup>. From China to Mexico and from Kenya to Nigeria, countries in the Global South are collaborating together to harness digital technology to

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<sup>3</sup> United Nations news story <https://news.un.org/en/story/2021/05/1092192>

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/poverty.shtml>

<sup>5</sup> <https://blogs.worldbank.org/opendata/updated-estimates-impact-covid-19-global-poverty-looking-back-2020-and-outlook-2021>

<sup>6</sup> Child Mortality Report 2020 <https://data.unicef.org/resources/levels-and-trends-in-child-mortality/>

<sup>7</sup> UNDESA Policy Brief: Leveraging Digital Technologies for social inclusion

[https://www.un.org/development/desa/dspd/wp-content/uploads/sites/22/2021/02/PB\\_92-1.pdf](https://www.un.org/development/desa/dspd/wp-content/uploads/sites/22/2021/02/PB_92-1.pdf)

advance socio-economic development in the attainment of the 2030 Agenda. There is a proliferation of practical examples from across the Global South. While some take place at the bilateral level, others, like the China Belt and Road Initiative, are being implemented through collaborative multi-country arrangements.<sup>8</sup> A primary example of this being the Belt and Road Initiative's Digital Economy International Economy Cooperation Initiative, which was launched on 3 December 2017, during the Fourth World Internet Conference. This initiative aims to connect eight countries (China, Egypt, Laos, Serbia, Thailand, Turkey, Saudi Arabia and United Arab Emirates) and extend their cooperation in the digital economy to build an interconnected 'digital silk road' (also called the 'information silk road').

In addition, there have been significant changes in the composition of the global economy. Countries of the South now account for 40 per cent of world gross domestic product (GDP), which is estimated to rise to 55 per cent by 2025.

The international development cooperation architecture is also being complemented and reshaped by players from the South. Aside from OECD, Brazil, China and India, which are the three largest providers of development assistance, other countries including Bangladesh, Indonesia, Malaysia, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, Thailand, Turkey, and the United Arab Emirates, are also taking a lead in South-South cooperation<sup>9 10</sup>. The COVID-19 crisis has also highlighted the importance of Southern financial institutions, such as the New Development Bank, the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank, and the Islamic Development Bank, where they have redirected their lending programmes towards health-related projects<sup>11</sup>.

### **Emerging Challenges**

In a short span of time, the COVID-19 quickly spread from becoming a public health emergency to one of the worst international crises, changing the world as we knew it<sup>12</sup>. While COVID-19 has affected all segments of the economy and population, it is important to note that its effect on the world's poorest and most vulnerable people has been the worst by exacerbating the existing inequalities and disparities among countries. The pandemic has also put to a certain extent a stand-still and disruption to the implementation of the SDGs and undone years of hard work towards achieving sustainable development.

Of the forecasted 100 million people who have been pushed back into extreme poverty, the majority are working in the informal economy with a lot of livelihood and job losses faced during the pandemic. The impact has also been serious for the world's one billion slum dwellers who already suffer from inadequate housing, lack of basic healthcare, infrastructure, or sanitation<sup>13</sup>.

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<sup>8</sup> Chatzky and McBride, 2020

<sup>9</sup> ESCAP, South-South Cooperation in Asia and the Pacific – A brief overview; 2018, [https://www.unescap.org/sites/default/files/SSC\\_Paper\\_v04\\_20180621\\_FINAL\\_formatted.pdf](https://www.unescap.org/sites/default/files/SSC_Paper_v04_20180621_FINAL_formatted.pdf)

<sup>10</sup> Report of the Administrator of UNDP 2021 <https://www.unsouthsouth.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/SSC201E.pdf>

<sup>11</sup> *ibid*

<sup>12</sup> United Nations SDG Report 2020 <https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/report/2020/The-Sustainable-Development-Goals-Report-2020.pdf>

<sup>13</sup> *ibid*

Additionally, the pandemic has also taken a toll on persons with disabilities, elderly people, women, and children. Healthcare access in many countries was already limited and COVID-19 further reduced access to food and nutrition services, thereby resulting in additional under-5 deaths and maternal deaths. While mortality rates in general have declined, the number of child and adolescent deaths in 2019 alone were at 7.4 million, which was largely due to infectious diseases.

Progress has also been uneven across the world. In sub-Saharan Africa, for example, in 2019, 1 in 13 children died before reaching their fifth birthday– a rate that is 20 times higher than the rate of 1 in 264 in the region of Australia and New Zealand, and 20 years behind the world average, which achieved a 1 in 13 rate by 1999. Furthermore, it is important to note that UNDP’s 2020 Global Multi-dimensional poverty index reported 476 million children were out of school globally<sup>14</sup>.

Young people have been in particular hit by the pandemic, where young workers are twice as likely to be living in extreme poverty as adult workers. Unemployment among the young is one of the greatest global challenges, with estimates suggesting that 600 million jobs have to be created over the next 15 years to meet youth employment needs<sup>15</sup>. Close to 96.8 per cent of all young workers in developing countries are in the informal economy, and over the last 15 years the proportion of young people not engaged in employment, training or education remained at 30 percent for young women and 13 per cent for young men worldwide<sup>16</sup>.

Even the world’s richest countries could experience up to 18 fewer days of extreme weather each year within our life-time because of the climate crisis, compared to the poorest countries facing up to 100 extra days of extreme weather. That number could still be cut in half if the Paris Agreement is fully implemented<sup>17</sup>. Unfortunate examples of the global climate change crises are the record-breaking 2020 Atlantic hurricane season, extraordinary fires across Australia, the Brazilian Pantanal, eastern Siberia in the Russian Federation, and the West Coast of the United States<sup>18</sup>, and scorching heat waves in 2021 across Northern America and other parts of the world.

In terms of food security, the UN World Food Programme estimates that in 2021, 957 million people across 93 countries do not have enough to eat, while 239 million people need life-saving humanitarian protection. The weaknesses in current food systems have also been exposed with the pandemic. For instance, with respect to food security, around one tenth of the global population, which equates between 720 million and 811 million people, were undernourished in 2020, with about 418 million of those individuals coming from Asia and 282 million in Africa<sup>19</sup>. In terms of nutrition, globally, 2.4 billion people did not have access to sufficiently nutritious food in 2020 – an increase of nearly 320 million people in one year. The UN Food System Summit calls on emerging multistakeholder initiatives and coalitions to help improve food security and related issues.

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<sup>14</sup> Report of the Administrator of UNDP 2021 <https://www.unsouthsouth.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/SSC201E.pdf>

<sup>15</sup> World Youth Report 2020

<sup>16</sup> Ibid

<sup>17</sup> UNDP Human Development Report 2020 <http://hdr.undp.org/sites/default/files/hdr2020.pdf>

<sup>18</sup> UNDP Human Development Report 2020

<sup>19</sup> State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World 2021 (SOFI) <https://news.un.org/en/story/2021/07/1095672>

The economic fallout from the pandemic has also been extreme, with the world trade estimated to plunge by 13 to 32 per cent, foreign direct investment expected to drop by 40 per cent, and most importantly, some drop in remittances. The private sector contributes the vast majority of capital to emerging economies. Foreign direct investment (FDI) was expected to account for approximately one-third of all external funding flows to developing countries in 2019<sup>20</sup>. During the pandemic, foreign direct investment flows to Southern countries dropped sharply by 30-45% in 2020 while private finance in the Global South was reduced by \$700 billion in the same year<sup>21</sup>.

### **Opportunities**

While these emerging challenges are very difficult to handle, they also provide the global community with an opportunity to re-think our approach and find sustainable development solutions.

The global landscape has shifted significantly in recent decades. Since the 1990s, the world has seen important economic and demographic changes, a rise in global conflict and refugee flows, and rapid advancement in the availability and use of digital technologies. These developments have fundamentally changed the way that populations live, work, connect and socialize. They offer new challenges but also provide new opportunities for human development.

In terms of global hunger due to climate disasters, countries with the COVID-19 crisis, when we are thinking about building more resilient societies, climate foresight and preventive planning, have to be included there as well<sup>22</sup>.

Social entrepreneurship offers a way to contribute to the sustainable and inclusive job creation, with characteristics of creativity, resilience, job creation, inspiration and action orientation. There is tremendous potential to leverage key strengths and opportunities offered by young people and entrepreneurs to utilize frontier technologies and to tackle social issues innovatively and effectively. The 2030 Agenda gives a unique opportunity to empower and strengthen relationships between different development agents such as young people, the private sector, and policymakers to reach innovative and sustainable development solutions.

Another opportunity and challenge that needs to be captured and utilized is digital technologies. With COVID-19 and global populations under lockdown, businesses, schools, universities and much more were forced to go digital overnight. Many governments and businesses have already turned to digital platforms and solutions. However, many have been left behind and existing digital divides have far worsened during the pandemic. There is no doubt, COVID-19 has accelerated the pace of digital transformation, leading to opportunities for digital inclusion. Therefore, there is a need for a comprehensive and holistic approach for promoting digital inclusion, and a shared vision on digital cooperation and a digital future must become a priority.

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<sup>20</sup> [https://www.un.org/sites/un2.un.org/files/financing\\_for\\_development\\_covid19\\_part\\_ii\\_hosg.pdf](https://www.un.org/sites/un2.un.org/files/financing_for_development_covid19_part_ii_hosg.pdf)

<sup>21</sup> OECD 2020, Global Outlook on Financing for Sustainable Development 2021: A New Way to Invest for People and Planet, OECD Publishing, Paris

<sup>22</sup> Article April 2021 is going to be bad year for world hunger <https://un-food-systems.medium.com/2021-is-going-to-be-a-bad-year-for-world-hunger-6a7c43a294cf>

As countries emerge from the COVID-19 crisis and seek to lay foundations for more inclusive, resilient and sustainable economies, closing the digital divide will be key<sup>23</sup>.

There is also a good opportunity for countries to step toward a greener future in the post-pandemic era. As countries are designing and issuing policies and stimulus packages to boost their economy, resources can be allocated more wisely to secure long-term sustainability and environmental prosperity. Recovery investments need to be steered into combating climate change, protecting nature and fighting pollution and avoid “locking in” on a dependence on polluting coal, oil and gas.

Although it is undeniably clear that the COVID-19 pandemic has taken a toll on the global efforts towards achieving the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, it is important to take the COVID-19 pandemic as a vivid reminder of the need for global cooperation and solidarity. Fast-rising developments within the digital economy pose enormous challenges, costs, and risks to the Global South, especially because many Southern countries have underdeveloped capacity to operate fully in a digitalized manner. A significant portion of the population of countries in the Global South lacks access, or has inadequate access, to connection capabilities and may not have the required literacy level to fully benefit from the digital economy. This unequal access to low-cost and emergent digital technologies and a reduced capacity to make use of these technologies has created a structure of uneven circulation of benefits. This means that micro-, small- and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), including individuals with little or no education, and especially those in rural areas with a limited capacity to connect, are most likely to be left behind in this digital economy.<sup>24</sup>

The pandemic has also shown us the enormous potential of international cooperation for development. There is definitely scope to make tremendous progress in the coming decade: the “Decade of Action”, especially for the most vulnerable and the poorest of the poor, as the 2030 Agenda has been designed to address the exact fragilities and shortcomings that the pandemic has exposed<sup>25</sup>. Among the priorities identified by the Secretary General, one of the key priorities is inclusive and green COVID-19 recovery plans.

In the context of South-South financial institutions, most developing countries do not have large national development banks with access to significant funding at short notice. As such, Southern MDBs such as the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank, BRICS New Development Bank (NDB) and Islamic Development Bank are key to building a strong post-pandemic Southern economy. Currently, the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank has made available up to USD 10 billion to support member States in alleviating health pressures and plans to scale-up investments in social infrastructure, increase liquidity and budgetary support, and to do so in partnership with other MDBs. The New Development Bank has approved a \$1 billion emergency loan supporting Chinese provinces covering public health expenditures and is negotiating allocations of similar funding to

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<sup>23</sup> UNDESA Policy Brief: Leveraging Digital Technologies for social inclusion

[https://www.un.org/development/desa/dspd/wp-content/uploads/sites/22/2021/02/PB\\_92-1.pdf](https://www.un.org/development/desa/dspd/wp-content/uploads/sites/22/2021/02/PB_92-1.pdf)

<sup>24</sup> Osiakwan, 2017

<sup>25</sup> Guterres, Antonio Secretary General, United Nations Opening Remarks at Sustainable Development Goals

Moment, 18 September 2020 <https://www.un.org/sg/en/content/sg/statement/2020-09-18/secretary-generals-opening-remarks-sustainable-development-goals-moment-delivered>

India, Brazil and South Africa. The Islamic Development Bank has now prepared a ‘comprehensive integrated response package’ worth USD 2 billion aimed at strengthening health systems, financing trade and SMEs in core strategic value chains, supporting recovery and countercyclical spending more broadly.

On the other hand, the BRICS group of countries have the power to demonstrate its global leadership and extend their USD 100 billion Contingent Reserve Arrangement to a multitude of developing countries facing liquidity shortages. In this regard, there is a need to prioritize financial support for Southern economies for temporary relief and capacity building that can have immeasurable benefits in the long run for post-COVID-19 sustainable development.

### **III. The Expanded Scope of South-South Cooperation and Triangular Cooperation**

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Achieving the ambitious targets of the 2030 Agenda and adapting to the changing global context outlined above will require engagement from all stakeholders at all levels and in all countries, leveraging their diverse and unique advantages. South-South cooperation and triangular cooperation remain important cornerstones of development activities and will function as vital modalities for action as complements to North-South cooperation. “As the world recovers from the devastating impacts social, economic and human impacts of the COVID-19 crisis, along with existing threats of climate change, South-South and triangular cooperation (SSTrC) is the need of the hour” said Antonia Guterres, United Nations Secretary General in the UN system wide strategy on SSTrC.

The Buenos Aires Plan of Action, the new directions strategy, the Nairobi outcome document, and the Buenos Aires outcome document of the second High-level United Nations Conference on South-South Cooperation, have given a new impetus to effectively leverage South-South and triangular approaches to achieve sustainable development.

At the Second High-level United Nations Conference on South-South Cooperation (BAPA+40) held in Argentina, March 2019, member States re-affirmed the important role of South-South and triangular cooperation in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable development and renewed their commitment to work in solidarity towards achievement of the SDGs<sup>26</sup>.

In the context of COVID-19, these commitments have been tested and stretched, with a major bottleneck created slowing any continuing progress towards meeting the 2030 Agenda SDGs. At the same time, the pandemic has also made clear that there is nothing more important than international cooperation and collaboration among the countries of the Global South, to respond to COVID-19 and make progress towards meeting the SDGs. South-South and triangular cooperation have been identified as a critical component in many key areas of the BAPA+40 outcome document, such as the eradication of poverty, trade and investment, climate action, health, education, youth, job creation, and technology transfer, which has become even more clear after the COVID-19 crisis.

Leveraging South-South and triangular cooperation via its myriad of modalities, such as technical exchanges, peer-to-peer learning exchange of knowledge and solutions, and financial support,

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<sup>26</sup> Second High-level Committee on South-South Cooperation Outcome Document 2019

can play a catalytical role in building resilient, sustainable, and inclusive societies and achieving the SDGs.

The COVID-19 pandemic has put the spotlight on the overwhelming number of nurses, doctors and other essential workers from developing countries embedded in the workforce of developed countries. This global interdependence underscores the benefits of strengthening human solidarity as well as South-South and triangular cooperation by sharing vaccines and pooling resources to build back better from the pandemic. Between 2016 and 2021, the momentum for international cooperation and the scope and dynamism of South-South cooperation have been increasing amid many opportunities to be seized and challenges to be overcome<sup>27</sup>.

The first UN system-wide strategy on South-South and triangular cooperation was also developed through an inclusive inter-agency process where the strategy aimed to ensure a more coordinated and coherent approach in supporting member States to achieve the 2030 Agenda and deliver the “Decade of Action<sup>28</sup>.”

South-South and triangular cooperation have made contributions towards responding and recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic and its adverse impacts, with solidarity and cooperation through exchanging experiences, best practices and expertise and extending support to help countries to respond and recover from the COVID-19 pandemic<sup>29</sup>.

#### **IV. The Global South-South Development Expo 2022**

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The Global South-South Development (GSSD) Expo is an annual event organized by the United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation (UNOSSC) in its capacity as the General Assembly-mandated global and United Nations system-wide coordinator and facilitator for South-South and triangular cooperation. It is designed to showcase evidence-based successful development solutions and initiatives. The Nairobi outcome document adopted at the previous High-level United Nations Conference on South-South Cooperation, held in Nairobi, Kenya in 2009 and endorsed by the General Assembly in its resolution 64/222, refers to the Expo as a source of support for closer links among South-South centres of excellence, institutions, and regional and subregional groupings, among others.

The GSSD Expo 2022 will be co-hosted by the Government of Thailand and the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific and scheduled to take place from 12 to 14 September 2022.

***Overarching Theme: Advancing South-South and Triangular Cooperation for Sustainable COVID-19 Recovery: Towards a smart and resilient future***

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<sup>27</sup> Report of Secretary General 2021 <https://www.unsouthsouth.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/SSC202E.pdf>

<sup>28</sup> UN system-wide strategy on South-South and triangular cooperation <https://www.unsouthsouth.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/04/United-Nations-system-wide-strategy-on-South-South-and-triangular-cooperation-for-sustainable-development-2020%E2%80%932024.pdf>

<sup>29</sup> Operation activities for Development: SSC for development 21 December 2020 <https://documents-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/N20/382/00/pdf/N2038200.pdf?OpenElement>

COVID-19 has shown us that diseases know no borders. To combat this global pandemic, Thailand has done its utmost to procure more vaccines, to accelerate the vaccination drive and ensure equal access to the vaccines. We started our vaccination rollout in February 2021 and aim to inoculate at least 70 per cent of the population nationwide by the end of this year. We are near our goal. As of 7 November 2021, almost 80.5 million doses of COVID-19 vaccines have been administered, accounting for 65 per cent of the total population which also includes foreign nationals residing in the country. Moreover, Thailand has further enhanced development cooperation with its partners to build back better and smarter from COVID-19. We have also strengthened 'security' and 'resilience' in four areas namely, health security, job security, food security, and energy and environment security. Over the years, we have shared Thailand's successful development experiences in those areas through South-South and triangular cooperation.

After battling COVID-19 for nearly two years, Thailand has adapted its strategies so that we can move forward towards the 2030 Agenda and SDGs during the Decade of Action. The Thai Government has pursued a policy called 'Smart Control and Living with COVID-19' and gradually reopened the country, starting from 1 November 2021. The reopening is about learning how to survive and thrive in a 'new normal' or 'next normal' setting. That means not returning to how we did things before but reopening to a safer environment with enhanced awareness.

The unprecedented socio-economic crisis resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic calls for unparalleled multi-sectoral responses. ESCAP is committed to promoting innovative partnerships and approaches to make South-South and triangular cooperation more effective among member States in building back better. ESCAP's priority is supporting member States in their COVID-19 pandemic recovery efforts while ensuring that the progress made to date in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals is not only maintained, but also taken forward.

The support of ESCAP for its member States in response to and in recovery from the COVID -19 pandemic focuses on three core areas of inclusiveness, resilience, and sustainability: (1) building more inclusive societies by promoting an employment-led recovery and closing social protection coverage gaps; (2) building more resilient economies by ensuring countries prepared for climate-disaster-health emergencies and creating more resilient regional supply chains; and (3) building a more sustainable environment by incorporating environmental sustainability into business investment processes and accelerating green-blue public investment, including clean energy and climate-resilient infrastructure.

In the Commission resolution 77/1, member States strengthened ESCAP's mandate to support building back better from crises through regional cooperation in Asia and the Pacific in cooperation with other concerned United Nations bodies, including on universal, equitable, timely access to quality, safe, efficacious and affordable diagnosis, therapeutics, medicines, vaccines and essential health technologies. It also reaffirmed the role of ESCAP in supporting North-South, South-South and triangular cooperation initiatives in harnessing the human and other resources of the relevant knowledge networks, partnerships, and technical and research capacity by exchanging experiences on best practices on relevant issues including the COVID-19 pandemic.

### ***Objectives***

Specific objectives of the GSSD Expo 2022 include the following:

1. To facilitate discussion on how South-South and triangular cooperation can best support recovery efforts, particularly in addressing extreme poverty, food insecurity, vaccination inequality, the digital divide and other global challenges with ensuring gender equality and leaving no one behind as a cross-cutting theme.
2. To identify, showcase, and facilitate the creation and strengthening of specific multi-stakeholder South-South and triangular cooperation initiatives that have the potential to contribute significantly towards a speedy recovery.
3. To review and discuss development policies and capacity-building efforts, identifying impediments and remedial measures to be introduced through South-South and triangular cooperation methodologies at the national, regional and global levels.
4. To support institutional capacity building of development agencies and south-south cooperation mechanisms in developing countries.

## V. Programme and Organization

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Each day will be divided into leadership roundtable, thematic sessions and other side events based on specific themes that may include the following:

<b>SMART</b>	<b>Digitalization and Smart Future</b>
	<b>SDG aligned South-South Trade and Investment</b>
<b>EQUITABLE</b>	<b>Role of Youth and Women, Volunteerism and Entrepreneurship</b>
	<b>Creative Economy &amp; Sustainable Tourism</b>
<b>SUSTAINABLE</b>	<b>Green Recovery, Environmental Sustainability and Climate Action</b>
	<b>Food Security and Supply Chain</b>
<b>RESILIENT</b>	<b>Disaster Risk Reduction and Resilient Cities</b>
	<b>Public Health Preparedness and Emergency Response</b>

The following sessions will be organized under these daily thematic focus areas:

### 1. High-level Opening Ceremony

Featuring distinguished and powerful champions of South-South and triangular cooperation. Prominent dignitaries and senior officials will deliver keynote statements to launch the Expo, set its tone and agenda, and share their ongoing commitment to innovative and inclusive South-South and triangular cooperation partnerships.

### 2. Leadership Round Tables (LRT)

Interactive dialogue held each morning in the main conference hall, intended to be held Davos style. An experienced moderator will facilitate an informal dialogue, with time available for questions from the audience. Each LRT will be 1.5 hours.

The discussion will serve to set the tone for the day's sessions. High-level representatives from the United Nations development system, member States and key stakeholders will discuss South-South and triangular cooperation in the context of the daily themes:

### **PROPOSED THEMES**

- Day 1 - Smart Recovery from COVID-19 (Led by Govt. of Thailand);
- Day 2 - Resilience Building (Led by ESCAP);
- Day 3 - UN System Reform and the implementation of UN System SSTRC Strategy (UNOSSC and UN-DCO);

### **3. Thematic Solution Forums**

Daily forums arranged by thematic focus and organized by Expo partners such as member States or United Nations entities. Each Solution Forum will have a concrete outcome such as the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU), the launching of a report, or the announcement of a new partnership. Solutions Forums will each last 1.5 hours.

### **4. Side Events**

Opportunities for member States, United Nations entities and other interested stakeholders to host smaller and more informal sessions. These are intended to complement the substance and outcomes of the other sessions and to focus on in-depth exchanges between solution providers and potential interested partners.

### **5. Online Exhibition Space**

This year, in view of the theme of the GSSD Expo, the exhibition will be through an online virtual space. Application Details to follow.

### **6. Premiere and Showcasing of Host Countries Special Initiatives and Field Projects**

TO BE PROPOSED.

### **7. Directors General/Heads of National Coordinating Authorities Forum and Regional Capacity Development Workshops**

Annual forum that brings together Directors General from cooperation agencies of national governments of the South and the North who are working on South-South and triangular cooperation initiatives. It is intended to facilitate learning exchanges on policy, strategy, institutional and financial arrangement, and tools for these partnerships. The Forum also serves as a space to facilitate national stocktaking exercises.

### **8. Due to time differences, the DG forum may separate into different regional breakout sessions. Closing Ceremony**

The Closing Ceremony will be a celebration of the successes of the Expo. Eminent leaders in South-South and triangular cooperation, including government officials, Heads of United Nations entities and intergovernmental organizations and other prominent Southern leaders, will share their impressions of the Expo and their future commitments to South-South and triangular cooperation.

## VI. Tentative Schedule of GSSD Expo

<b>22 November 2021</b>	
<b>1. Virtual Exhibition</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>GSSD Expo 10-year history</li> <li>Virtual exhibit floor open for Member States and Agencies to apply and submit materials</li> </ul>	
<b>2. Entrepreneurship Competition - Launch for Call for Applications</b>	
<b>March 2022</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Thailand’s virtual exhibition</li> <li><b>Youth Entrepreneurship Competition:</b> Roadshow and Training</li> </ul>	
<b>May 2022</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>ESCAP Virtual Exhibition &amp; Activities</li> </ul>	
<b>June/July 2022</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>GSSD Expo Media Networking (TBC)</li> </ul>	
<b>September 2022</b>	
<b>Day 1 Monday 12 September 2022</b>	
<b>Opening</b>	<b>GSSD Expo and 2022 UN Day for South-South Cooperation in Bangkok, Thailand</b>  <b>Venue: UNCC, Bangkok Thailand</b>
<b>LRT 1</b>	TBC
<b>Thematic Solutions Forums</b>	TBC
<b>Day 2 Tuesday 13 September 2022</b>	
<b>LRT 2</b>	TBC
<b>Thematic Solutions Forums</b>	TBC

Day 3		Wednesday 14 September 2022	
LRT 3		TBC	
DG Forum		TBC	
Closing		TBC	

For regular updates, please visit [Global South-South Development Expo 2022 \(southsouth-galaxy.org\)](https://southsouth-galaxy.org)

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