

## TRIANGULAR CO-OPERATION: A MODALITY FOR THE ASIAN CENTURY

Global South-South Development Expo | Side Event  
13 September 2022, 3:55pm – 5:10pm (Bangkok time)

Conference Room 3, United Nations Conference Centre  
Bangkok, Thailand

Hybrid | Zoom link: <https://bit.ly/3RtZfNJ>

### Concept Note and Programme

At the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, the word of “Asian Century” spread. Long-term forecasts of the Asian Development Bank predicted that the region will likely generate more than 50% of the world’s GDP by 2040 and account for 40% of world consumption. The analysis concluded that in order to sustain Asia’s growth trajectory while approximating sustainable development, action is needed on three levels: the national action agendas, regional co-operation and collaboration, and the global agenda.

However, the current decade started with unprecedented global challenges. The COVID-19 pandemic posed a severe setback in progress toward the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The economic recovery from the pandemic is now imperilled by the direct and indirect consequences of Russia’s invasion of Ukraine. The challenges are enormous, and resources available for sustainable development to either developed and developing countries are under stress. Therefore, there is a pressing need to harness new forms of partnership for knowledge sharing and innovative thinking on global development. And due to their strong economic development in the early 21<sup>st</sup> century, some of the most important partners for global development hail from Asia.

**Triangular co-operation**, a relatively new modality promoting horizontal co-operation for sustainable development, sparks much interest and debate in this context. It fosters capacity building and joint learning, realizes complementarities, intensifies coordination and boosts synergy in the allocation of resources. The modality is on the rise globally, and GPI<sup>i</sup> members use it more strategically to engage with partners across the globe to drive sustainable development. Finding it adaptable and flexible, the development community engages in triangular co-operation across all regions, with the fastest growth in Africa and Asia, according to OECD data.

These trends call for a discussion about how triangular co-operation can be a practical tool for Asian providers of South-South Co-operation in furthering the achievement of the SDGs. The Asian region hosts pioneers of triangular co-operation, such as Japan, India, Indonesia and Thailand – who worked in triangular partnerships long before the modality gained global popularity. Topics addressed include climate change mitigation, governance and institutional capacity, tackling inequalities, competition for finite natural resources, and fostering trade co-operation between countries and sub-regions in Asia. Therefore, there is a wealth of experience in Asia on triangular co-operation ready to be shared.

Data from the OECD repository of triangular co-operation projects indicate that 13% of projects are in Asia and the Pacific, and almost half of the multi-regional projects involve an Asian partner. Since 2021, the German “Regional Fund for Triangular Cooperation with Asia”<sup>ii</sup> aims to foster innovative triangular co-operation initiatives among Asian partners through projects, capacity development and policy dialogue.

This side event aims to reflect on triangular co-operation against the background of Asia's development – once home to classic drivers of growth but increasingly generating new drivers of transformation amidst a time of global challenges. The goal is to provide a space for policy dialogue and exchange on how triangular partnerships can be a tool to foster sustainable development in the “Asian Century”.

## Programme

### Opening remarks

**Mr Wattanawit Gajeseni**, Deputy Director-General, Thailand International Cooperation Agency (TICA)

### Keynote speaker

**Ms Anthea Mulakala**, Senior Director for International Development Cooperation, The Asia Foundation

### Panel discussion

- **Mr Jochen Weikert**, Head of the German Fund for Triangular Cooperation with Asia – GIZ, Germany
- **Ms Jia Yu**, Director of International Development and Cooperation Department from Institute of New Structural Economics, Peking University
- **Mr Anir Chowdhury**, Policy Advisor, Access to Information (a2i) Programme, ICT Division and the Cabinet Division of the Government of Bangladesh
- **Mr Yulius Purwadi Hermawan**, Lecturer, Researcher and Consultant, International Development Cooperation and Foreign Policy – Parahyangan Catholic University, Bandung Indonesia
- **Ms Natalia Vargas Talero**, Social Cohesion and South-South Cooperation – Ibero-American General Secretariat (SEGIB)
- **Mr Eiji Wakamatsu**, Director Office for Global Issues and Development Partnership – JICA, Japan

### Q&A with the audience

*Moderator: Ms Geovana Zoccal, Focal Point, GPI on Effective Triangular Co-operation*

---

<sup>i</sup> The [Global Partnership Initiative \(GPI\) on Effective Triangular Co-operation](#) is a global initiative fostering the dynamic, innovative, and contemporary definition of triangular co-operation. Triangular co-operation supports the goals and implementation of the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The modality is on the rise globally with an increase in the number of projects and budgets allocated to it. In the current development landscape, triangular co-operation is expanding its scope to include multi-stakeholder relationships between governments, international organisations, civil society, and the private sector. It provides comparative advantages by complementing North-South and South-South co-operation.

<sup>ii</sup> The [Fund for Triangular Cooperation with Asia](#) is commissioned by the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) and implemented by the *Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit* (GIZ). The Fund seeks to promote sustainable development in developing countries via triangular cooperation. To this end, the Fund creates a support mechanism that encompasses three fields of action: Implementation of Triangular Cooperation projects, Policy Dialogue and Capacity Development.