



**AGENCIA PRESIDENCIAL DE  
COOPERACIÓN INTERNACIONAL  
DE COLOMBIA APC-COLOMBIA**



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# **Assessing Development Effectiveness for South-South Cooperation (SSC): Perspectives from the Global South**

**July 2022**

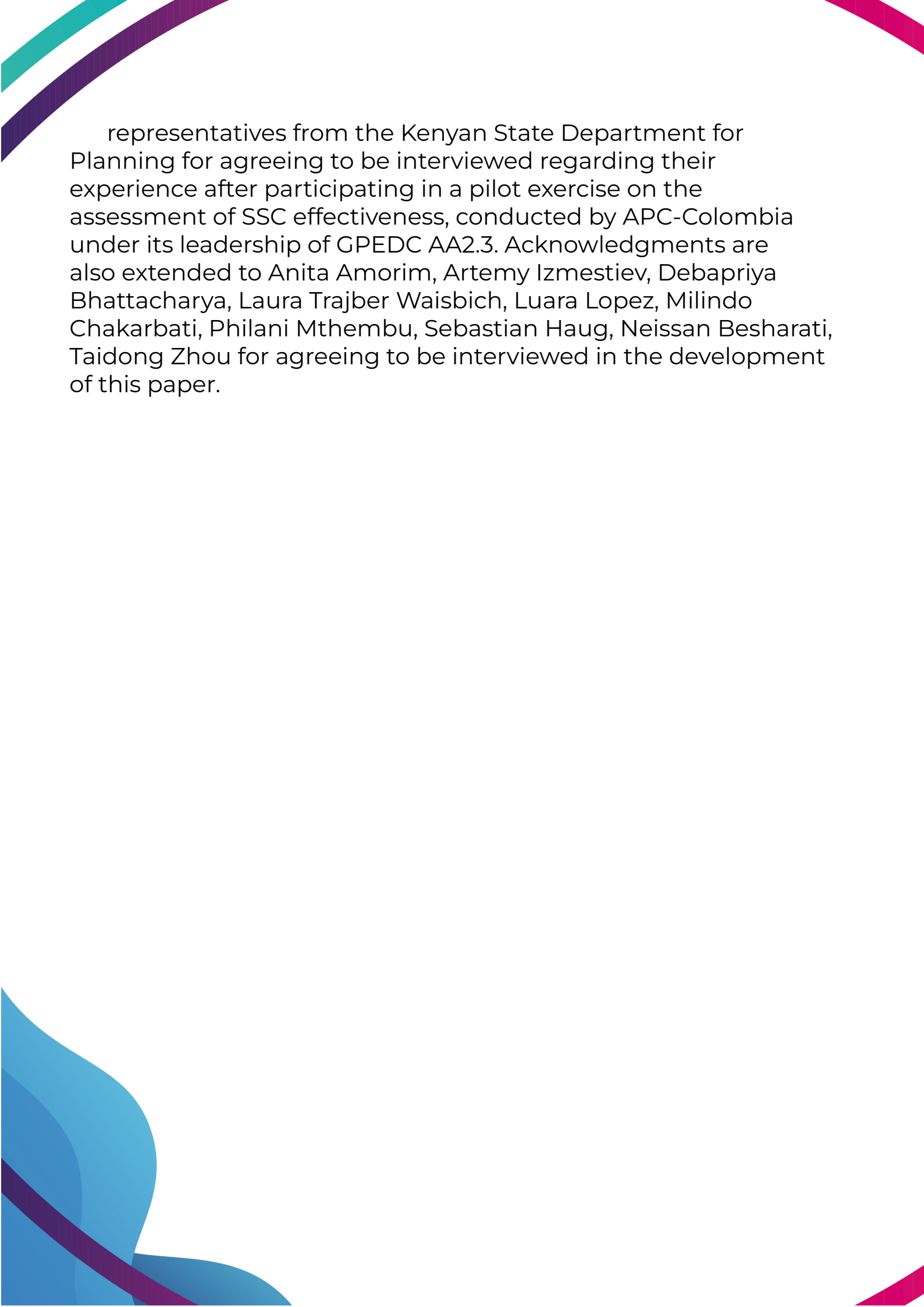
# Disclaimer

This paper is published as a discussion paper to inform the work programme of the Action Area 2.3 “Supporting country-led development effectiveness of South-South Cooperation (SSC)” of the Global Partnership for Effective Development Co-operation (GPEDC), Action Area led by APC-Colombia from 2020-2022. The publication was sponsored by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Seoul Policy Centre (USPC). The opinions expressed in this publication are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent the official views of APC-Colombia, the GPEDC, the OECD, the United Nations, UNDP the United Nations Member States nor the OECD Member Countries. This document, as well as any data and any map included herein, are without prejudice to the status of or sovereignty over any territory, to the delimitation of international frontiers and boundaries and to the name of any territory, city or area, and do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of the Secretariat of the United Nations, UNDP or OECD concerning the legal status of any country, territory, city or area or its authorities, or concerning the delimitation of its frontiers or boundaries.

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# Foreword

In the last couple of decades, Southern countries have steadily increased their performance in key economic indicators. Southern countries currently account for 50% or more of the total global share of Gross Domestic Product, Export-Import flows, Foreign Direct Investment, and remittances. Yet, despite this shift in economic weight, Southern countries don't seem to participate in global political fora in a similar proportion.

The politics of international cooperation play out in global agendas, that take decades to form and are hard to move once set in place. Yet, for countries such as Colombia, achieving middle-income status quickly alters international cooperation flows and the expectations that all cooperation actors need to meet, both internal and external.

For the Presidential Agency of International Cooperation of Colombia (APC-Colombia), the effectiveness agenda has provided a valuable lens to understand our work and how to improve it. Put simply, for APC-Colombia 'being effective' means improving our processes and engagement methodologies to meet internal and external expectations. It also is being better prepared to face unexpected challenges.

Over the last four years, Colombia has carried out 343 South-South Co-operation initiatives with partners from Africa, Asia, Eurasia, and Latin America and the Caribbean. We have developed a portfolio of best practices comprised of 25 successful experiences developed by public and private institutions, as well as civil society organizations.

We have created an International Cooperation Observatory, comprised of a knowledge management hub that promotes communities of practice, virtual courses, and collaborative tools to improve the conceptualization, execution, and monitoring of South-South Co-operation projects. We have increased efforts to develop strategic partnerships with public and private partners around the world, increasing the reach of our projects and



creating new funding mechanisms to promote sustainable development.

Since assessment frameworks are crucial to gather evidence and act on it, this document and its conclusions are enlightening: that effectiveness is an important element for Northern and Southern countries; that assessment methodologies vary greatly according to the nature and mandate of the institution in charge of international cooperation; and that the effectiveness principles don't manage to capture the totality of South-South Cooperation activities.

As a think piece that complements the work that APC-Colombia has led on effective South-South Co-operation at the Global Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation, we hope that this document helps improve our thinking about how to move from achieving results to generating strategic impact, to promote well-being for our countries and for the world.

**Viviana Manrique Zuluaga**  
**Director General**  
**Presidential Agency for International Cooperation of Colombia,**  
**APC-Colombia**



# List of Acronyms

- **AA2.3:** GPEDC Action Area 2.3 Supporting country-led development effectiveness of South-South Cooperation
- **ABC:** Brazilian Cooperation Agency
- **AUDA-NEPAD:** African Union Development Agency
- **AGECI:** Ecuadorian Agency for International Cooperation
- **AMEXCID:** Mexican Agency for International Development Cooperation
- **APC-Colombia:** Colombian Presidential Agency of International Co-operation
- **BAPA:** Buenos Aires Plan of Action
- **BAPA+40:** Buenos Aires outcome document of the second High-level United Nations Conference on South-South Cooperation
- **BPPS:** Bureau for Policy and Programme Support
- **DAC:** Development Assistance Committee
- **DCF:** Development Cooperation Forum
- **FOCAC:** Forum on China-Africa Cooperation
- **GPEDC:** Global Partnership for Effective Development Co-operation
- **FO.AR:** Argentine Fund for South-South and Triangular Cooperation
- **IAFS:** India-Africa Forum Summit
- **INECI:** Ecuadorian Institute for International Cooperation
- **IOM:** International Organisation for Migration
- **ILO:** International Labour Organisation
  - **IAEG-SDGs:** Inter-agency and Expert Group on SDG Indicators
  - **IsDB** : Islamic Development Bank
  - **IAEG-SDGs:** Inter-agency and Expert Group on SDG Indicators

- **LOC:** Lines of Credit
- **ODA:** Official Development Assistance
- **OECD:** Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
- **MCAV:** Quantification and Value Addition Model
- **M&E:** Monitoring and Evaluation
- **NAM:** Non-Aligned Movement
- **NAP:** National Development Plan
- **NeST:** Network of Southern Thinktanks
- **NIMES:** National Integrated Monitoring and Evaluation Strategy
- **NSC:** North-South Co-operation
- **PIFCSS:** Programa Iberoamericano para el Fortalecimiento de la Cooperación Sur-Sur
- **RBM:** Results-based management
- **RIS:** Research and Information System for Developing Countries
- **SDGs:** Sustainable Development Goals
- **SEGIB:** Ibero-American General Secretariat
- **SETECI:** Technical Secretariat for International Cooperation
- **SIDICSS:** Integrated Ibero-American Database System on South-South and Triangular Cooperation
- **SSC:** South-South Cooperation
- **SSCAF:** South-South Cooperation Assistance Fund
- **SSTC:** South-South and Triangular Cooperation
- **SDG:** Sustainable Development Goal
- **TCDC:** Technical Cooperation among Developing Countries
- **TOSSD:** Total Official Support for Sustainable Development
  - **TrC:** Triangular Cooperation
  - **UNDP:** United Nations Development Programme
  - **UNOSSC:** United Nations Office of South-South Cooperation
  - **USPC:** UNDP Seoul Policy Centre



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# Executive summary

The notion of assessing the effectiveness of South-South Co-operation (SSC) has existed since the 1978 Buenos Aires Plan of Action (BAPA)<sup>1</sup> but has increasingly come to the fore in recent decades because of experimentation by different development actors as well as growing demands for greater visibility about the use and impact of SSC. This paper contributes to the efforts of the Presidential Agency for International Cooperation of Colombia (APC-Colombia) to take forward the activities under the work programme of the Global Partnership for Effective Development Co-operation (GPEDC) "[Action Area 2.3](#)" (AA2.3) on "Supporting country-led development effectiveness of SSC." In particular, it intends to examine how various aspects of effectiveness<sup>2</sup> can be, or are being, applied in the context of assessing SSC, and to spark discussion on what Southern actors should consider when practically developing SSC assessment systems with a view to enhancing the effectiveness of SSC.

SSC forms a key feature of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, although importantly, this modality of co-operation is fundamentally distinct from North-South Cooperation (NSC) and should not be seen as a substitute, but rather as a complement to NSC. Actors from the Global South continue to stress the importance of common but differentiated responsibilities, while also emphasising the role of the Global South in contributing to global debates on the principles of effective development co-operation.

This paper asserts that there are four key elements for assessing data on SSC effectiveness: institutionalisation, documentation of good practices for replicability, SSC facts and figures and SSC process. Firstly, it is important to gather institutional data

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<sup>1</sup>The precursor to SSC was Technical Cooperation among Developing Countries (TCDC).

<sup>2</sup>The paper looks at aspects of SSC effectiveness efforts from Southern actors, but also examines this in the context of the four GPEDC effectiveness principles, namely country ownership, a focus on results, inclusive partnerships, and transparency and mutual accountability

on SSC, since this determines how SSC is conceptualized and implemented.

Secondly, case studies are often used as a non-controversial means for scaling up SSC, as they focus on mutual learning, the exchange of lessons and 'stories of change' which can be used to replicate, deepen, and give visibility to SSC efforts, including on SSC assessment frameworks and efforts to enhance SSC effectiveness.

Thirdly, qualitative monitoring and reporting assessments systems of SSC have been developed, which this paper labels as "SSC facts and figures", detailing the who, where, what and when of engagements. These efforts enable countries to assess trends on how their SSC is being conducted with regards to national priorities and to deepen partnerships, as well as to understand areas of support required, the nature of SSC flows and other relevant indicators. National SSC monitoring and reporting systems demonstrate that measurement is determined by country definitions and could pave the way for better quantitative assessments in the future. In some countries, such as Colombia, there have been efforts to develop a model that goes beyond quantification but that also focusses on a country's comparative advantage and the non-monetary aspects of SSC.

Fourthly, there have also been efforts to develop SSC effectiveness assessments by the well-established normative principles of SSC and other aspects that a country may consider important for its own context, which this paper labels as "process". The referred SSC principles being respect for national sovereignty, national ownership and independence, equality, non-conditionality, non-interference in domestic affairs and mutual benefit. SSC principles have also been divided into normative and operational aspects, but the operational elements continue to be contested by some Southern scholars and practitioners. In addition to the normative principles of SSC, the paper also analyses the four GPEDC Effectiveness Principles. Agreed in 2011 during the High-

Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness in Busan, the effectiveness principles are country ownership, focus on results, inclusive partnerships and transparency and mutual accountability.

This paper tests out how the four GPEDC effectiveness principles are applied to SSC. On the first GPEDC effectiveness principle of country ownership, this paper finds that national ownership is a firm principle in SSC dynamics. However, for Southern actors, national ownership emphasizes the demand-driven nature of assistance, and the ongoing quality of how national ownership is carried out. On the second GPEDC effectiveness principle, a focus on results, this paper finds that a results-based approach is deemed important by Southern countries, and therefore institutionalization through the development of monitoring and reporting systems is key. For Southern actors, results can speak to ongoing qualitative assessments and the end result. The third GPEDC effectiveness principle, inclusive partnerships, is considered useful for countries wishing to demonstrate the full extent of their SSC. For SSC actors, this principle emphasizes the factor of equality among partners, recognizing the relevance of horizontality in partnerships. The final GPEDC principle is transparency and mutual accountability. This paper argues that accountability is important for Southern actors, who often publish annual reports, and also speak of joint accountability, while transparency remains a source of debate that could benefit from further discussion. Additional elements are also considered important to Southern actors, such as country-context and relevance, and empowerment.

This paper therefore proposes a set of considerations that can move towards practical means of developing SSC assessment frameworks and enhancing the effectiveness of SSC more broadly. This is outlined as follows:

- **Institutionalisation.** This can cover governance, regulatory and administrative data. Institutionalisation is key to developing a strong SSC assessment framework and systems such as a central country agency involving ministries and partners at the highest

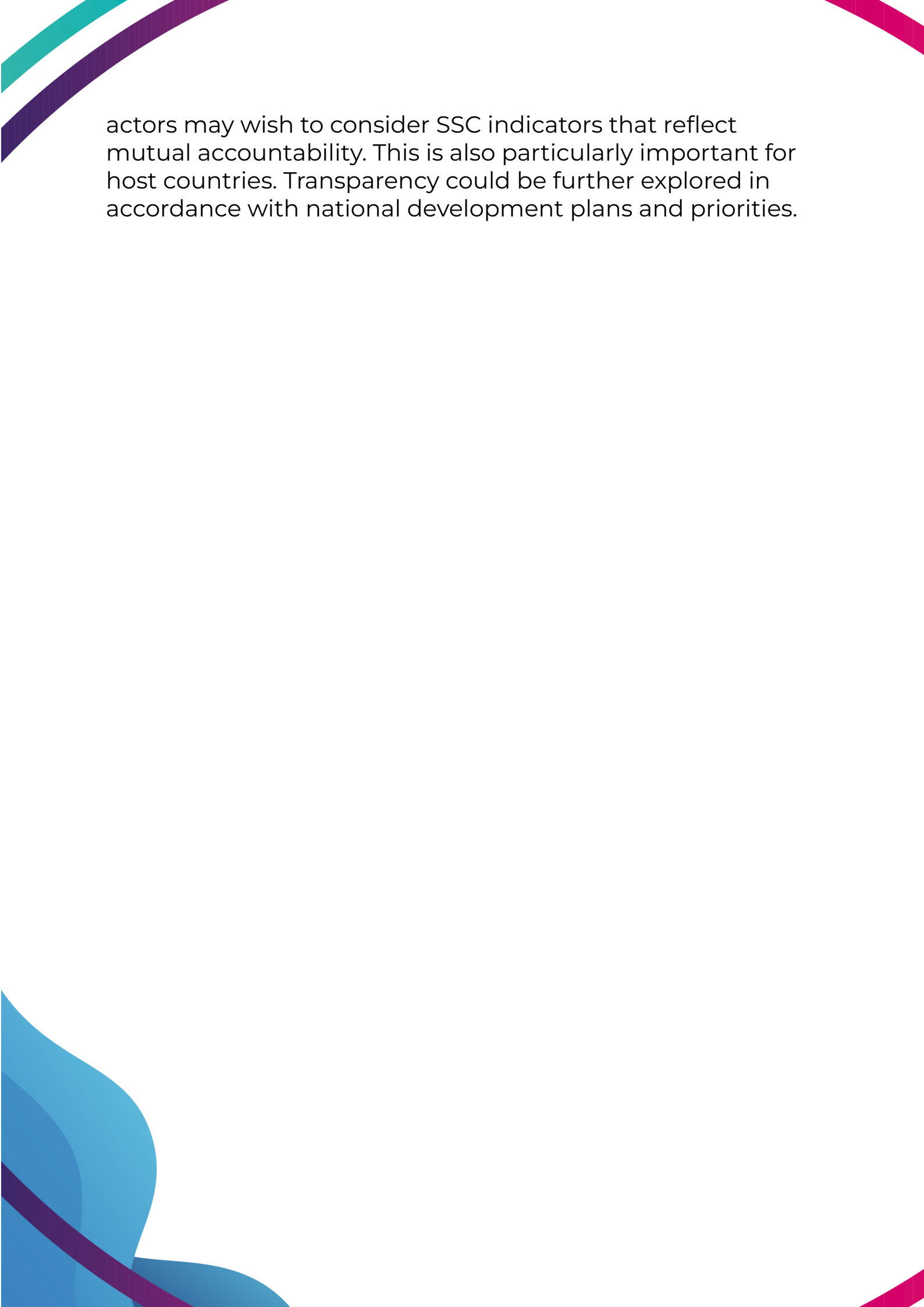
levels with coordination mechanisms.

- **Documentation of good practices for replicability.** To facilitate learning and knowledge-sharing, Southern actors often illustrate their good practices (including on SSC assessment systems and enhancing the effectiveness of SSC) by case studies. SSC actors can also consider how to replicate these good practices to scale up SSC in an effective manner by considering levels of demand, applicability to country context, the type of partnership needed, and the best modalities for doing so. This also speaks to enhancing visibility of SSC.
- **SSC Facts and Figures.** SSC facts and figures can assess both qualitative and quantitative information. Countries can develop qualitative systems that detail the who, what, when and where. As these systems become more institutionalised, they can develop their own reporting or monitoring systems that disaggregate data according to technical or financial cooperation modalities. The modalities can be linked to the SDGs and national development priorities. Should countries wish to develop their own quantitative systems, they may wish to develop a methodology that considers the added value of technical exchange. Assessments of SSC facts and figures identify trends that allow actors to adjust or correct operations, and to scale up, deepen or explore new partnerships.
- **Process**
  - SSC principles**
    1. National ownership. National ownership is the central tenet of any SSC process. Alignment with national priorities is a part of the SSC principle of ownership, showing that it can also be operationalised. However, for Southern actors, national ownership could focus more on commonalities between the sharing and host countries' priorities and be demand driven by being based on ongoing country requests. Predictability of funding is important, although this also needs to allow for flexibility and innovation. National ownership should be gauged at all stages of the project cycle and should also examine quality of SSC.

2. Equality This considers the horizontal aspects of SSC engagement, including communication (such as the way feedback is jointly discussed), working by consensus, trust and flexibility. It also speaks to shared decisions and resources.
3. Mutual benefit. This signifies benefits to both the host and sharing country. Mutual benefit refers to the result, but also to the process.
4. Non-conditionality. Non-conditionality is a key principle of SSC that also promotes national ownership and trust-building.
5. Non-interference in domestic affairs. This is a key principle of SSC, relating to the fact that SSC engagements should not influence political processes or undermine the official positions of the partnering government. SSC is a key component of the foreign policy of some countries.

### **Additional elements of SSC process**

1. Project context and relevance. For Southern actors, it is important to identify what is most important to a host country. SSC assessment frameworks would need to examine the relevance of the project to the host country's needs. This could also include an examination of how the project contributes to the progress of SDGs contextualized to the development priorities of the country.
  2. Self-reliance and sustainability. Empowerment is a key element of SSC and speaks to knowledge and technology transferred, capacities built, and other elements presented in the following sections. By building their own national capacity, countries can become less dependent on others in the long-term.
  3. Inclusive and multi-stakeholder partnerships. While many Southern actors aspire to assess the involvement of non-state actors in their development cooperation, this is not always easily achieved due to the lack of capacity to assess these efforts. At the same time, SSC can speak to networking and relation building at different levels.
  4. Accountability. Annual reports and monitoring are key for countries providing SSC and speak to strengthening SSC visibility. However Southern



actors may wish to consider SSC indicators that reflect mutual accountability. This is also particularly important for host countries. Transparency could be further explored in accordance with national development plans and priorities.

# Section 1: Introduction

## 1.1 Background to the study

Rapidly changing shifts in governance, trade and development co-operation continue to demonstrate the critical contribution of SSC to the development agenda. As some countries have transitioned away from receiving Official Development Assistance (ODA), others have engaged in sharing their experiences of development cooperation as well. This has led to a conceptual distinction between ‘Northern’ and ‘Southern<sup>3</sup>’ partners, while at the same time, many countries continue to hold a dual role of receiving ODA and engaging in SSC<sup>4</sup>. The notion of ‘development in transition’ has also arisen, which shifts the focus on financial assistance in development co-operation to recognising shared but differentiated responsibilities across multidimensional spheres.<sup>5</sup>

The Buenos Aires outcome document of the second High-level United Nations Conference on South-South Cooperation (BAPA+40) sets out the basis, rationale, principles and actors for SSC, leading to the operational definition of SSC in the United Nations System-Wide Strategy on South-South and Triangular Cooperation for Sustainable Development (UN System Wide Strategy on SSTC) 2020-2025 as “a form of partnership whereby two or more developing countries pursue, through concerted efforts, their individual and/or shared national development priorities through exchanges of knowledge, skills, resources and technical know-how and through regional and interregional

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3 Countries from the Global South.

4 The terms ‘provider’ and ‘recipient’ are controversial terms in SSC, given that SSC is meant to operate on a horizontal basis with equal relationships between partners. This paper takes cognizance of these debates and uses the terms ‘host’ and ‘sharing’ country in situations of equal partnership.

5United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), Development in Transition: Concept and Measurement Proposal for Renewed Cooperation in Latin America and the Caribbean, 2021, [https://repositorio.cepal.org/bitstream/handle/11362/47167/3/S2100500\\_en.pdf](https://repositorio.cepal.org/bitstream/handle/11362/47167/3/S2100500_en.pdf)



collective actions, including partnerships involving Governments, regional organizations, civil society, academia, the private sector and other relevant actors, for their individual and/ or mutual benefit within and across regions and taking into account the principles of South-South cooperation. South-South cooperation is not a substitute for, but rather a complement to, North-South cooperation.”<sup>6</sup>

In addition to technical expertise and knowledge transfer, SSC now encompasses trade, foreign direct investment, efforts at regional integration and other exchanges. Using the above definition, the scope of SSC is much broader than ODA, which has been clearly defined as financial and technical flows that are developmental in purpose, concessional in nature and undertaken through official channels, whether bilateral or multilateral.

Varying SSC approaches have evolved that use a wide variety of modalities and actors, leading to debates on how SSC should be assessed and how this relates to traditional measures of development cooperation. The second High-Level Conference on SSC (BAPA+40), held in 2019, urged partners to enhance the effectiveness of SSC, while at the same time acknowledging the diversity of approaches. Efforts to develop common principles of development effectiveness originated at the 2011 Busan High-Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness, in which the Global Partnership for Effective Development Co-operation (GPEDC) was born. At the forum, there was an effort to get Southern partners to join the GPEDC, but the process was highly politicised and has ultimately led to the recognition that Southern actors should be engaged based on self-differentiated engagements.<sup>7</sup>

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6 United Nations, United Nations System-Wide Strategy on South-South and Triangular Cooperation for Sustainable Development 2020-2025, <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>


7 Bracho, G., The Troubled Relationship of the Emerging Powers and the Effective Development Cooperation Agenda: History, Challenges and Opportunities, 2017, <https://www.die-gdi.de/en/discussion-paper/article/the-troubled-relationship-of-the-emerging-powers-and-the-effective-development-cooperation-agenda-history-challenges-and-opportunities/>

The GPEDC is a multi-stakeholder platform that aims to maximize the effectiveness of all forms of co-operation for development for the shared benefits of people, planet, prosperity and peace. Its framework for driving development effectiveness is based on four principles: i) country ownership, ii) focus on results, iii) inclusive partnerships and iv) transparency and mutual accountability. The GPEDC has developed a 2020-2022 Global Partnership Work Programme, with a number of work streams (“Action Areas”). This paper contributes to efforts to take forward “Action Area 2.3” (AA2.3) on “Country-led development effectiveness of South-South Cooperation”. This Action Area is led by the Colombian Presidential Agency of International Co-operation (APC-Colombia) in their role as GPEDC Steering Committee Member, and building on a previous initiative by Mexico (former Co-chair and Steering Committee Member of the GPEDC).

This research paper is borne out of the collaborative engagements between APC-Colombia, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP’s) Bureau for Policy and Programme Support (BPPS) at the UNDP Headquarters in New York and the UNDP Seoul Policy Centre (USPC) and forms part of the GPEDC AA2.3 workplan. Specifically, it aims to increase knowledge on SSC effectiveness by examining how various aspects of effectiveness can be or are being applied in the context of SSC. UNDP supports the work of the GPEDC through its Global Project on Managing Development Cooperation, with a focus on enhancing effectiveness at country level, and to include evolving modalities and coordination structures.<sup>8</sup> This paper is based on a review of the existing literature on efforts to assess SSC development effectiveness as well as 16 interviews, including three conducted with countries piloting a self-assessment on the effectiveness of SSC as part of the activities of AA2.3 (namely Colombia, Kenya, Indonesia) and Mexico as a predecessor of such efforts, international

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8 UNDP, Annual Status Report, 2020, <https://www.undp.org/sites/g/files/zsk-gke326/files/2021-06/UNDP-Global-Project-on-Managing-Effective-Development-Cooperation-Annual-Status-Report-2020-EN.pdf>



organisations, policy makers and academics, between March and June 2022. The paper is intended to spark discussion on SSC effectiveness and should not be seen as reflecting the views of UNDP, the GPEDC, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) or APC-Colombia. Instead, it attempts to find ways to move towards practical considerations for enhancing SSC effectiveness, noting that this should be based on demands from the Global South and subject to be adapted to the context and priorities of an interested country.

The paper first begins by setting out a conceptual framework for SSC effectiveness. It then explains why SSC effectiveness is important, looking at its historical context to SSC and plurality, the growing demand for SSC accountability, and how the 2030 Agenda has also strengthened the momentum for SSC assessment frameworks and for enhancing the effectiveness of SSC. After that, past efforts to develop SSC assessment frameworks are analysed, as well as points of divergence and convergence on these frameworks. Previous efforts are broadly categorized into efforts on institutionalisation, the showcasing of good practices for replicability, SSC facts and figures, and SSC process. The paper then goes on to look at efforts to improve the effectiveness of SSC through the piloting exercise conducted by the GPEDC AA2.3 which seeks to contribute to the design and characterization of a more robust methodology to measure SSC effectiveness, and finally makes recommendations on flexible and multi-dimensional considerations for SSC assessment frameworks.

## 1.2. Effective SSC: A conceptual framework

### 1.2.1. Terminology

Currently, there is no commonly understood definition of development effectiveness. It has been argued that the notion has “changed from aid effectiveness (how well aid is delivered) to organisational effectiveness (how well the organisation has achieved its stated objectives and goals) to policy coherence in development (the systemic promotion of reinforcing actions across government departments and agencies to achieve increased development results in recipient countries).”<sup>9</sup> In this context, SSC effectiveness could include a holistic understanding of the development outcomes of co-operation, including the economic, social and political aspects of development co-operation rather than looking simply at its technical elements.<sup>10</sup> In this regard, it is worth noting that the development effectiveness, regardless of how it is conceptualized, can either be ‘assessed,’ ‘evaluated,’ or ‘measured.’

The term ‘assessment’ refers to the process of collecting, reviewing and utilising data to improve current performance, including on development effectiveness. When applied to SSC, Esteves notes that “the establishment of assessment systems appears to be part of a broader process of institutionalization of SSC within the structures of the respective states.”<sup>11</sup>

Institutionalisation determines how SSC is conceptualized and implemented, including the definition used, the types of

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9 Bhattacharya, D. & Khan, S., Rethinking Development Effectiveness; Perspectives from the Global South, 2020, <http://southernvoice.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/Rethinking-Development-Effectiveness-Bhattacharya-and-Khan-2020.pdf>

10 Ibid

11 Esteves, P., How Governments of the South assess the results of South-South Cooperation: Case studies of South-led approaches. DCF Policy Brief (Vol. 20), 2018, as cited in UNDP, Designing a survey of the institutional architecture of South-South Cooperation A feasibility study, 2021, <https://www.ssc-globalthinkers.org/system/files/2021-09/Designing%20a%20survey%20of%20the%20institutional%20architecture%20of%20South-South%20Cooperation%20A%20feasibility%20study.pdf>

modalities considered, and the partnerships involved.

The usage of the term 'assessment' for SSC has grown in response to frameworks that traditionally use the term 'evaluation.' From the outset, Southern partners see accountability as mutual and prefer not to use frameworks that have been defined by others. The term 'evaluation' often raises the question of why and for whom it is being conducted – implying a judgement by sharing countries. Traditional M&E frameworks use pre-defined targets and criteria for efficiency and effectiveness, and therefore do not take the views and principles of Southern actors into account.<sup>12</sup> Therefore, the term assessment suggests an ongoing process instead of signalling closure, is more tailored to different contexts as it is not measured against existing standards, and is more positive rather than judgemental. Both assessment and evaluation use criteria and measures that are evidence-driven. Nevertheless, the proposition to use the term 'assessment' rather than evaluation has not been widely adopted and some Southern actors have continued to experiment with 'evaluations.'

The term 'measurement' is a narrower term than assessment or evaluation and refers to the process of assigning numbers or symbols to objects that allows things to be characterised according to a set of rules. It has been asserted that measurement functions not only to generate knowledge and comparisons, but also shapes power relations, since development-related measurement can create boundaries and demonstrate power hierarchies between host and sharing countries.<sup>13</sup> Since SSC focuses on equal partnerships, some Southern actors have rejected the notion of measurement in financial terms and prefer a focus on qualitative rather than

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12 UNOSSC, Impact Assessment on South-South Cooperation Initiatives: Video Message from Xiaojun Grace Wang for the Inter-Ministerial Conference on SSTRC, 2018, <https://www.unsouthsouth.org/2018/09/20/impact-assessment-on-south-south-cooperation-initiatives-video-message-from-xiaojun-grace-wang-for-the-inter-ministerial-conference-on-sstrc/>

13 Trajiber Waisbich, L., 'It Takes Two to Tango': South-South Cooperation Measurement Politics in a Multiplex World, 14 April 2022, <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/full/10.1111/1758-5899.13086>

quantitative assessment. Monitoring and reporting systems can form the basis for SSC assessment methodologies (both qualitative and quantitative), which should be built on information bases, with tracking systems to measure the effectiveness of SSC.

One key element of SSC assessment methodologies relates to the notion of 'impact'. In traditional monitoring and evaluation (M&E) terms, the word 'impact' usually refers to the change or improvement as a result of an intervention – i.e. how the activities have led to a developmental outcome as a result of inputs/ activities. It therefore speaks to the quality of SSC that is assessed. The challenge here is that some Southern countries feel that the end impact of a project is hard to isolate from factors such as changes in government administration, reversion in projects due to staff turnover, or by general changes in the country. This makes it difficult to determine the point at which a project should be assessed, meaning that some governments prefer to examine the process of SSC engagement (the way SSC principles and other specific country priorities are applied throughout the engagement) rather than establishing a specific timeline for assessment at the end of a project. SSC is also cross-cutting in nature, making changes as a direct result of the intervention harder to prove. As a result of these debates, discussions on a conceptual framework for SSC effectiveness have focussed on examining less controversial notions such as 'scaling up', 'institutionalisation' and 'good practices,' while avoiding specific measurement metrics. The focus has therefore been on voluntary and non-binding country systems, often demonstrated through the use of case studies.

## **1.2.2. Inclusion in development effectiveness**

A key aspect of development effectiveness debates relates to inclusion. While SSC institutionalisation (and related efforts to develop assessment systems) has often focused on government-led initiatives, there has increasingly been an emphasis on the role of non-state actors in enhancing development effectiveness. Inclusive multi-stakeholder partnerships are a key principle of SSC and actors such as the private sector and civil society can play a significant role in research and development, technical advice and implementation support, policy dialogue and capacity building. Therefore, efforts to assess or measure SSC without considering multi-stakeholder partnerships may result in SSC being undervalued, instead of moving towards models of inclusive development. The Centre for Global Development asserts that civil society and the private sector can be considered as knowledge actors (with context-specific expertise),<sup>14</sup> compared to process actors who drive official organisations and procedures at global, regional, and national levels. It is important to include these actors in development cooperation since knowledge actors can assist in strengthening national SSC responses and aligning these to regional and global developments.<sup>15</sup> Multistakeholder partnerships have been considered in SSC and it is therefore critical that there are continued efforts to bring these actors into discussions of development effectiveness, as the GPEDC does with its principle of inclusive partnerships.

With a growing focus on inclusion in the 2030 Agenda, there has also been an increasing emphasis on the need to incorporate the views of host countries in SSC assessment frameworks and on development effectiveness more broadly. These views have often been overlooked in traditional donor engagements, but since SSC focuses on principles of equality, host countries are

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14 Beyond being seen as resource actors

15 Centre for Global Development, Removing the Wedge between Process Actors and Knowledge Actors in Development Cooperation: A Step toward More Inclusive and Networked Global Governance, June 2021, <https://www.cgdev.org/blog/removing-wedge-between-process-actors-and-knowledge-actors-development-cooperation-step-toward>

seen as active players that have their own agendas. Importantly, the views of host countries are crucial for being truly inclusive, leaving no one behind and reducing marginalisation. As SSC has grown, host countries have embraced a wide range of modalities for assistance, but ultimately, it is important for them to continue developing their capacity to become self-sustainable.<sup>16</sup>

## **1.3. The importance of SSC effectiveness**

### **1.3.1. The plurality of SSC**

SSC effectiveness is important. At a national level, reporting on SSC can feed into country-led analysis on how to strengthen the means and modalities of their cooperation. It can enable countries to deepen strategic partnerships and to align these with national priorities, while promoting ownership through the dialogue process entailed in collecting data. This can allow SSC to develop solutions that are more appropriate to the local context, mutually beneficial, cost-effective and innovative. As such, it is important that these solutions are shared with partners so that they can be scaled up.<sup>17</sup> Assessing SSC can enhance the quality and the quantity of SSC, meaning that these engagements are maximised.

The need for SSC assessment frameworks and efforts to enhance the effectiveness of SSC have been touted by the Global South, and are reflected in the original Buenos Aires Plan of Action (BAPA), which states that one of the objectives of Technical Cooperation among Developing Countries (TCDC) – the precursor to SSC – was to “increase the quantum and enhance the quality of international cooperation as well as to improve

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16 Kamwengo, C., Beneficiary country ownership and the politics of partnership in trilateral development cooperation: a case study of Zambia, 2020, [http://etheses.dur.ac.uk/13696/1/CKamwengo\\_final\\_thesis.pdf](http://etheses.dur.ac.uk/13696/1/CKamwengo_final_thesis.pdf)

17 UNDP, First African South-South Cooperation Report, 2019, <https://www.africa.undp.org/content/rba/en/home/library/reports/first-african-south-south-cooperation-report.html>



the effectiveness of the resources devoted to over-all technical cooperation through the pooling of capacities.”<sup>18</sup> A discussion on “New Directions for Technical Cooperation among Developing Countries” also spoke of the need for data on successful and innovative projects,<sup>19</sup> while the First Cooperation Framework for Technical Cooperation among Developing Countries (1997 – 1999) outlined the need to establish qualitative and quantitative benchmarks for monitoring and evaluation.<sup>20</sup>

However, SSC is fundamentally distinct from North-South Cooperation (NSC) and SSC should not be seen as a substitute, but rather a complement to NSC, as noted in BAPA+40. While NSC is still often perceived of in terms of the historical colonial legacy and post-colonial dependency between the Global North and the Global South, SSC has grown out of solidarity politics. In response to the growth of these different forms of cooperation, a multitude of events have been held, aimed at enhancing cooperation between developing countries, as well as between the Global North and Global South.<sup>21</sup> The outcome has been a clear annunciation of SSC principles, which are characterized by the following: respect for national sovereignty, national ownership and independence, equality, non-conditionality, non-interference in domestic affairs and mutual benefit.

SSC approaches have differed. SSC has embraced plurality, given the underlying premise of strengthening and varying voices from

18 United Nations Special Unit for TCDC, Buenos Aires Plan of Action, 1978, <https://www.unsouthsouth.org/bapa40/documents/buenos-aires-plan-of-action/#:~:text=On%202012%20September%201978%20in,United%20Nations%20Conference%20on%20TCDC>.

19 United Nations High-Level Committee on the Review of Technical Cooperation among Developing Countries, New Directions for Technical Cooperation among Developing Countries, 1995, <https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/206620?ln=en>

20 United Nations Executive Board of the United Nations Development Programme and of the United Nations Population Fund, First Cooperation Framework for Technical Cooperation among Developing Countries, 1997 – 1999, <https://drive.google.com/file/d/0B-buq-yoV0jpSWVEyOHo4VUpPQVk/view?resourcekey=0-Q4Ho-6XamsETQX68Q4t5A>

21 This includes the UN Conference on Technical Cooperation among Developing Countries in 1978, which emphasized SSC principles and made provision for technical cooperation among developing countries; the first High-level UN Conference on South-South Cooperation, which was held in 2009 in Nairobi, Kenya and reaffirmed SSC principles; and the Delhi Conferences of Southern Providers, which have taken place annually since 2013 and outlined SSC principles, modalities and measures.

the Global South. From an ideological perspective, this has led to Northern and Southern development partners operating from different experiences and therefore using different frameworks.

In addition, Southern actors continued to insist on the notion of differentiation, not only between Northern actors, but also amongst themselves. Different understandings of SSC can make a systematic analysis challenging. It has been argued that SSC is either interpreted as a set of technical cooperation modalities, a general political narrative, or a means of expressing any inter-state cooperation that is not North-South assistance.<sup>22</sup> The latter involves a huge range of different and diverse actors, leading to arguments that the use of the term 'Global South' should be considered along specific issues and uses.<sup>23</sup> Evidence on the nature, extent and impact of SSC remains a major challenge, often because SSC actors have not yet developed strong monitoring systems. This means that data is fragmented and hard to interpret.<sup>24 25</sup>

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22 Haug, S., Mainstreaming South-South and Triangular Cooperation: Work in Progress at the United Nations, 2021, [https://www.die-gdi.de/uploads/media/DP\\_15.2021.pdf](https://www.die-gdi.de/uploads/media/DP_15.2021.pdf)

23 Haug, S; Braveboy-Wagner, J. & Maihold, G., The 'Global South' in the study of world politics: examining a meta category, 2021, <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/01436597.2021.1948831>

24 UNCTAD, Defining and Quantifying South-South Cooperation, 2019, [https://unctad.org/system/files/official-document/ser-rp-2019d2\\_en.pdf](https://unctad.org/system/files/official-document/ser-rp-2019d2_en.pdf)

25 United Nations Office of South-South Cooperation, Cooperation beyond convention. South-South and Triangular Cooperation in a Changing World, 2019, [https://www.unsouthsouth.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/09/Independent-Report\\_webversion.pdf](https://www.unsouthsouth.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/09/Independent-Report_webversion.pdf)

### **1.3.2. Growing demands for greater visibility about the use and impact of SSC**

In the 2000s, demands for a greater visibility on the use and impact of SSC grew, partly in response to renewed pushes for mobilising resources to meet the SDGs.<sup>26</sup> This was accompanied by pushes from Southern civil society to develop better SSC monitoring frameworks.<sup>27</sup>

These concerns were raised because, using a tax-payer logic, all forms of development cooperation should be accountable to taxpayers, citizens and parliaments.<sup>28</sup> It is also important that sharing country efforts are accountable to their beneficiaries, while host countries should also be accountable in how they utilise the benefits of SSC exchanges. As Besharati notes, effectiveness can be a technical term that ensures objectives are met, and results are achieved. Data on effectiveness is important for learning refinement and improvement and can help inform the design of future programmes.<sup>29</sup> Furthermore, by communicating SSC engagements to citizens, involved governments can become more transparent and accountable. However, governments also face challenges in justifying development assistance to citizens who think that resources should be spent internally. In South Africa, for example, a loan to Cuba was halted after a civil society group claimed that the donation was unjustifiable given South Africa's recent loan from the International Monetary Fund.<sup>30</sup>

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26 Trajber Waisbich, L., The "Measurement Politics of South-South Cooperation, 2021, <https://www.iukdpf.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/The-%E2%80%98Measurement-Politics-of-South-South-Cooperation-1.pdf>

27 Trajber Waisbich, L. The "Measurement Politics of South-South Cooperation, 2021, <https://www.iukdpf.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/The-%E2%80%98Measurement-Politics-of-South-South-Cooperation-1.pdf>

28 However, initial piloting with the GPEDC has shown that some Southern actors do not always have the institutional architecture to account for this in Parliament.

29 Besharati, N., Measuring Effectiveness of South-South Cooperation, 2019, [http://southernvoice.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/191010-Occasional-Paper-Series-No.-52\\_final-1.pdf](http://southernvoice.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/191010-Occasional-Paper-Series-No.-52_final-1.pdf)

30 Mail and Guardian, Court Rules in favour of AfriForum to halt R50m donation

In 2014, an attempt to develop a separate mechanism – Total Official Support for Sustainable Development (TOSSD) was met with rejection by some Southern officials.<sup>31</sup> Efforts to develop agreement on TOSSD are ongoing. Most recently, the Inter-agency and Expert Group on SDG Indicators (IAEG-SDGs), through its Working Group on the Measurement of Development Support, has attempted to quantify SSC through a new framework, detailed later.

Even now, Southern actors have rejected the notion of a dualistic donor identity, rejecting what they see as imposed and rigid frameworks.<sup>32</sup> For example, ODA has been criticized for lacking legitimacy, as a result of the imposition of policies by foreign powers; the selectivity of the conditional approach; and the sustainability gap broadened with the dismantling of national capacities for policy design and implementation across the developing world, perpetuating in many cases aid dependency.<sup>33</sup> Increasingly, Southern partners have influenced norm setting and norm diffusion for development cooperation, arguing that development effectiveness frameworks can also be better tailored to the needs of the Global South.<sup>34</sup>

Moreover, the assessment of SSC can be used to influence dialogue on the international development architecture, to influence the debate on the measurement and effectiveness

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to Cuba, 23 March 2022, <https://mg.co.za/news/2022-03-23-court-rules-in-favour-of-afriforum-to-halt-r50m-donation-to-cuba/>

31 Network of Southern Thinktanks, *Methodological Pluralities in Impact Assessment of South-South Cooperation: A Synthesis from Efficiency Perspective*, 2021, [https://www.ssc-globalthinkers.org/system/files/2021-09/Methodological%20Pluralitiesin%20Impact%20Assessment%20of%20SSC\\_print.pdf](https://www.ssc-globalthinkers.org/system/files/2021-09/Methodological%20Pluralitiesin%20Impact%20Assessment%20of%20SSC_print.pdf)

32 Besharati, N., *Measuring Effectiveness of South-South Cooperation*, 2019, [http://southernvoice.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/191010-Ocassional-Paper-Series-No.-52\\_final-1.pdf](http://southernvoice.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/191010-Ocassional-Paper-Series-No.-52_final-1.pdf)

33 Esteves, P. & Klingebiel, S., *Diffusion, Fusion, and Confusion: Development Cooperation in a Multiplex World Order*. December 2020, [https://link.springer.com/chapter/10.1007/978-3-030-57938-8\\_9](https://link.springer.com/chapter/10.1007/978-3-030-57938-8_9)

34 Esteves, P. & Klingebiel, S., *Diffusion, Fusion, and Confusion: Development Cooperation in a Multiplex World Order*, December 2020, [https://link.springer.com/chapter/10.1007/978-3-030-57938-8\\_9](https://link.springer.com/chapter/10.1007/978-3-030-57938-8_9)

on NSC, and to allow for the inclusion of SSC experiences within principles of development effectiveness.<sup>35</sup> For example, SSC principles such as mutual benefit and other important concepts for SSC actors, such as accountability towards beneficiaries, could assist in conceptualising the alignment of development cooperation programmes and practices to national development priorities.

Despite arguments for more powerful forms of quantification and clear indicators of success, the issue of quantitative assessment continues to be challenged by Southern partners on four levels. Firstly, it has been argued that this type of assessment would undermine the political dimension of SSC; secondly that ODA metrics do not capture some types of SSC exchanges; thirdly that financial quantification would rank SSC lower than NSC and fourthly that efforts to conduct this type of assessment would overburden SSC actors.<sup>36</sup> This has not prevented the experimentation of measurement by Southern partners, as is explored later.

### **1.3.3. Development effectiveness for the 2030 Agenda**

Calls for a greater visibility about the use and impact of SSC have also gained momentum in response to efforts to mobilise funding for the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The assessment of SSC can be used to understand the contribution it makes to public goods, which can in turn enhance the role that SSC plays in international development. This can then be used to influence foreign diplomacy and international relations.<sup>37</sup>

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35 United Nations, *Cooperation Beyond Convention South-South and Triangular Cooperation in A Changing Global Landscape*, 2019, [https://www.unsouthsouth.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/09/Independent-Report\\_webversion.pdf](https://www.unsouthsouth.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/09/Independent-Report_webversion.pdf)

36 Trajber Waisbich, L., *The “Measurement Politics of South-South Cooperation*, 2021, <https://www.iukdpf.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/The-%E2%80%98Measurement-Politics-of-South-South-Cooperation-1.pdf>

37 UNCTAD, *Defining and Quantifying South-South Cooperation*, 2019, [https://unctad.org/system/files/official-document/ser-rp-2019d2\\_en.pdf](https://unctad.org/system/files/official-document/ser-rp-2019d2_en.pdf)

SSC provides opportunities for soft power and more symmetric relations in achieving the SDGs since Southern countries can have a greater input on the approaches taken to attain the goals and for other actors to present their respective strengths in jointly achieving these goals.

Against this backdrop, there have been calls for 'global financial responsibilities' as a means of ensuring commitment to the funding of the 2030 Agenda, which have been countered with Southern arguments for 'differentiated responsibilities'.<sup>38</sup> With Southern partners continuing to stress the importance of country-led efforts and the plurality of frameworks, the compromise from Southern actors has been one that allowed a 'differentiated integration' of frameworks for effectiveness and that stressed the importance of dialogue.<sup>39</sup>

Within the context of the SDGs, Triangular Cooperation (TrC) is also growing as a form of development cooperation and "involves Southern-driven partnerships between two or more developing countries supported by a developed country(ies)/ or multilateral organization(s)."<sup>40</sup> Initially, TrC was seen as a means of Northern partners providing financial support to SSC initiatives, but its evolution has continued to demonstrate the variety of partnerships and models that can be used (including in-kind contributions, resources, technologies and so on), with implications for monitoring since all partners should be accountable to one another.<sup>41</sup> Similarly, institutional data on TrC is thought to be important for sharing knowledge and joint learning, achieving global and regional goals and promoting complementarity and coordination in development goals.<sup>42</sup>

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38 Bracho, G., *The Troubled Relationship of the Emerging Powers and the Effective Development Cooperation Agenda, History, Challenges and Opportunities*, 2017, [https://www.die-gdi.de/uploads/media/DP\\_25.2017.pdf](https://www.die-gdi.de/uploads/media/DP_25.2017.pdf)

39 Trajber Waisbich, L., *The "Measurement Politics of South-South Cooperation*, 2021, <https://www.iukdpf.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/The-%E2%80%98Measurement-Politics-of-South-South-Cooperation-1.pdf>

40 United Nations, *United Nations System-Wide Strategy on South-South and Triangular Cooperation for Sustainable Development 2020-2025*

41 Global Partnership Initiative for Effective Triangular Cooperation, *Voluntary Guidelines for Effective Triangular Cooperation*, <https://triangular-cooperation.org/voluntary-guidelines/>

42 UNDP, *African South-South and Triangular Cooperation Responses to CO-*

Institutional data is also deemed important to help identify partners, for stimulating innovation and internal learning, allowing benchmarking and comparison, improving operational effectiveness and enhancing transparency.<sup>43</sup> Moreover, TrC partners can also benefit from SSC by, for example, gaining experience on how its technologies are applied in the South and how this differs from their experiences in the Global North, exposure to contacts/partnerships in the field in developing countries and so on. In this way, knowledge exchange is not only from North-South, but also vice-versa. Often, SSC is now combined with TrC, described as SSTC.<sup>44</sup>

The UN has also made efforts to enhance the effectiveness of SSTC. For example, UN organisations such as the International Labour Organisation (ILO) and the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) have developed guides inclusive of enhancing SSTC effectiveness in the context of the 2030 Agenda.<sup>45</sup> The UN System Wide Strategy on SSTC now notes that the United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF) provides the main entry points for United Nations system engagement and coordination of SSTC at the country level. This has also provided entry points for examining principles of development effectiveness, as the framework details the entire programme cycle, including monitoring, reporting and evaluation.<sup>46</sup>

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VID-19 and beyond, 2021, forthcoming

43 UNDP and UNOSSC, Designing a survey of the institutional architecture of South-South Cooperation A feasibility study, July 2021, <https://www.ssc-globalthinkers.org/system/files/2021-09/Designing%20a%20survey%20of%20the%20institutional%20architecture%20of%20South-South%20Cooperation%20A%20feasibility%20study.pdf>

44 Currently, terminology often refers to South-South and Triangular Cooperation (SSTC), but this paper uses the term SSC, since the primary focus in the past looked primarily at SSC assessment rather than South-South and Triangular Cooperation

45 International Labour Organisation (ILO), How-To-Guide on South-South and Triangular Cooperation design for Decent Work, 2019, <https://www.southsouthpoint.net/2019/11/22/how-to-guide-on-south-south-and-triangular-cooperation-design-for-decent-work-ilo-2019/> ; Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations, FAO's South-South and Triangular Cooperation Strategy in Action, 2016, <https://www.fao.org/3/i6249e/i6249e.pdf>

46 United Nations Sustainable Development Group, United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework Guidance, June 2019, <https://unsdg.un.org/re->

In March 2019, the second UN High-Level Conference on SSC was held in Argentina. BAPA+40 reaffirmed the key role of SSC in achieving the 2030 Agenda and encouraged relevant partners to enhance the effectiveness of SSTC and to assess the impact of this cooperation, while acknowledging the need to increase mutual accountability and transparency, in accordance with national development plans and priorities.<sup>47</sup> It also recognizes the role of the GPEDC in mapping, documenting and disseminating successful experiences.<sup>48</sup> In June 2021, the report of the High-level Committee on South-South Cooperation also outlined the need to enhance the effectiveness of SSTC.<sup>49</sup>

The next section examines efforts to develop models of SSC assessment in terms of institutionalisation, good practices, facts and figures and in terms of process. It then analyses how Southern countries have understood the application of the GPEDC principles to their own SSC frameworks and systems.

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sources/united-nations-sustainable-development-cooperation-framework-guidance

47 United Nations, Buenos Aires Report of the second High-level United Nations Conference on South-South Cooperation, March 2019, <https://www.unsouthsouth.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/07/N1920949.pdf>

48 United Nations, Buenos Aires Report of the second High-level United Nations Conference on South-South Cooperation, March 2019, <https://www.unsouthsouth.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/07/N1920949.pdf>

49 United Nations, Report of the High Level Committee on South-South Cooperation. Twentieth session (1-4 June 2021). The BAPA+40 outcome document refers to triangular cooperation on multiple occasions, and recognizes the role of the GPEDC in mapping, documenting and disseminating successful experiences.



# Section 2: SSC assessment frameworks and efforts

## 2.1. Categories of SSC assessment frameworks

As mentioned in Section 1.2.1 on terminology, multiple SSC frameworks have emerged due to differing levels of institutionalisation and because of divergent political perspectives and priorities on how SSC should be assessed and if/how it should be measured.

This paper asserts that, broadly speaking, SSC assessments have fallen into four general categories. This is as follows:

1. Institutionalisation: This determines how SSC is conceptualised (including the definition of SSC) and then implemented. National monitoring and reporting systems provide means of collecting centralised data built on information bases. Tracking systems can assist in assessing this data.
2. Good practices for replicability: Case studies are used to facilitate learning and knowledge-sharing and to enhance SSC visibility.
3. Facts and figures: This category would be used to assess SSC in terms of activities and outputs, different modalities of SSC, geographical reach partnerships (the types of actors involved) and other information that may be important to a country, including financial flows.<sup>50</sup>
4. Process: The fourth category would be used to assess

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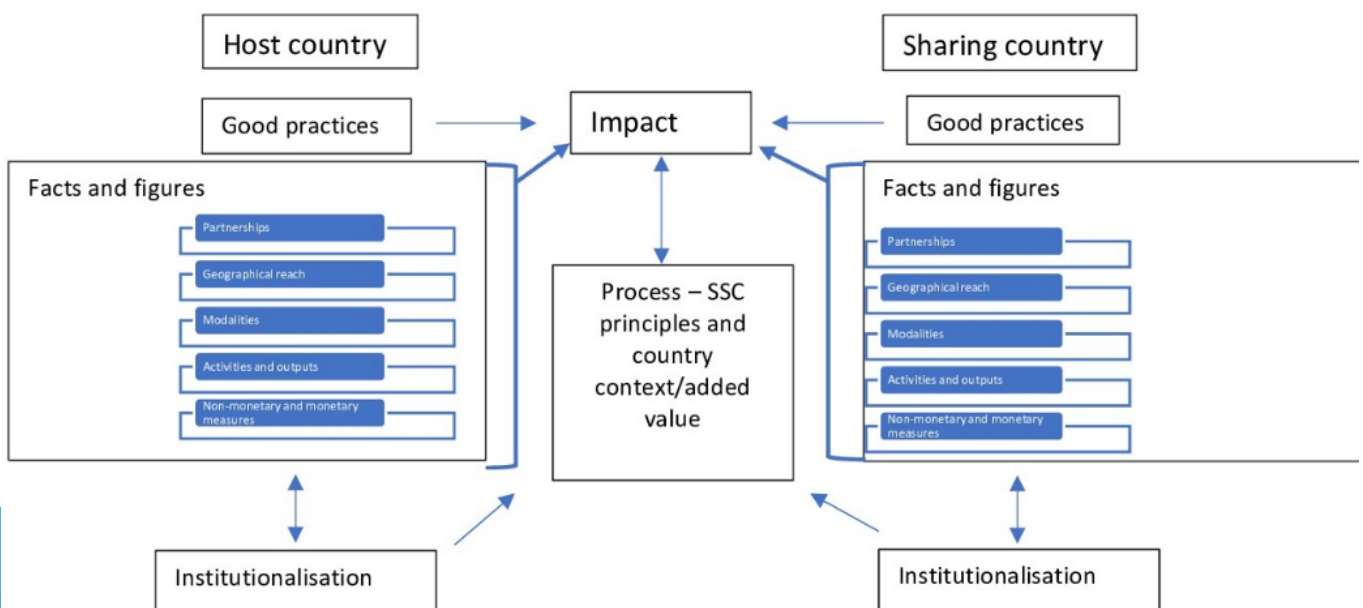
50 In one study, NeST proposes a three-level template, focusing on performance, process and impact (see Network of Southern Thinktanks, Methodological Pluralities in Impact Assessment of South-South Cooperation: A Synthesis from Efficiency Perspective, 2021, [https://www.ssc-globalthinkers.org/system/files/2021-09/Methodological%20Pluralitiesin%20Impact%20Assessment%20of%20SSC\\_print.pdf](https://www.ssc-globalthinkers.org/system/files/2021-09/Methodological%20Pluralitiesin%20Impact%20Assessment%20of%20SSC_print.pdf)). However, this paper also suggests the use of the terminology “facts and figures” rather than “performance” due to the negative connotations associated with the latter. This is because “performance” suggests the ranking of countries (often in monetary value) rather than considering all forms of SSC as complementary and useful to NSC. The study also mentioned impact assessment in a country-specific methodology. Nevertheless, as mentioned earlier, Southern providers prefer to see this in terms of process rather than an end change

adherence to principles of SSC and other aspects that a country may consider important for its own context.

This section explores past efforts to develop SSC assessment frameworks along these four categories. This is not to suggest that the categories are mutually exclusive, or that each category has only one methodology. Rather, efforts to develop SSC assessment frameworks can be classified under these general categories.

As figure 1 shows, institutionalisation determines the monitoring and reporting system used to gather both facts and figures and to analyse process. Good practices enhance the visibility of SSC facts and figures, SSC process and institutionalisation and allow for an exchange of knowledge on these systems. An assessment of facts and figures can be conducted by either the sharing country, host country, or both. Process is determined by both sets of partners and speaks to the consistent application of SSC principles across the entire project timeline. Impact is depicted as the end change as a result of inputs, activities, outputs and outcomes, as well as throughout the process.

Figure 1: Institutionalisation, good practices for replicability, facts and figures and process



Each of these categories are now considered in turn.

### **2.1.1. Institutionalisation**

Institutional data is important for SSC assessment frameworks as it refers to the national monitoring and reporting system that determines the definition of SSC used by a country as well as the modalities. In this regard, Dr. Nilima Gulrajani, as part of the South-South Global Thinkers Network, conducted a study on the feasibility of a global survey on the institutional architecture for SSTC, which could encourage systematic data collection for quality and impact. She suggests that it is important to gather SSTC data along three lines: governance structures belonging to the state involved in development cooperation; regulatory aspects, including the laws, strategies and guidelines that steer state SSTC actions; and administrative features that allow a government to achieve its development goals and ambitions.<sup>51</sup> At the initial stages of SSTC institutionalisation, regulatory data may therefore be most useful since it provides knowledge management data to build capacity, but as institutional structures are set up, there should be efforts to also gather administrative data, which speaks to efforts to assess SSTC. Taking this further, there are also lessons to learn from country-led efforts to develop specific SSC assessment systems. Annex 1 provides more details of these country-led efforts, based on a literature review conducted.

Country-led efforts differ. However, multilateral actors such as UNDP and the Islamic Development Bank (IsDB) have argued that national monitoring and reporting systems for SSC form part of an SSC ecosystem – the main pillars of an effective national institutional framework. These pillars include an SSC strategy which outlines where SSC is located, how this should be reported, how knowledge management structures should be set up and ways that the effectiveness of the strategy can

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51 UNDP, Designing a survey of the institutional architecture of South-South Cooperation A feasibility study, July 2021, <https://www.ssc-globalthinkers.org/system/files/2021-09/Designing%20a%20survey%20of%20the%20institutional%20architecture%20of%20South-South%20Cooperation%20A%20feasibility%20study.pdf>

be evaluated. The IsDB explains that monitoring and reporting systems should be built on information bases that serve multiple purposes, such as areas of comparative advantage for the country, trends and developments, and good practices. They could include development indicators, project requests, project mechanisms, and a range of other information that can provide a unified means of recording information, although there should be many processes for data collection with designated roles and responsibilities.

Some countries, such as Brazil, Colombia, Egypt, Mexico, Morocco, Indonesia, and China have established agencies to administer their SSC, accompanied by resources dedicated to these endeavours. The use of international development cooperation agencies that coordinate SSC activities is particularly visible in the Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC) region. Certain mechanisms also facilitate SSC engagements. Joint Commissions, a preferred mechanism by Mexico, for example, have been used to continuously assess SSC on a mutual basis.

Both UNDP and the IsDB stress the importance of tracking systems to measure the effectiveness of SSC.<sup>52</sup> However, this will be dependent on where the focal point for SSC is located. In Botswana for example, SSC is located under the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, while Uganda has designated the Development Cooperation and Regional Cooperation Unit within the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development.<sup>53</sup> The establishment of an SSC fund, such as in Argentina and Indonesia, has proved useful in allowing countries to be more flexible and demand-driven in directing their SSC cooperation by centralising and recording SSC data flows that can enhance SSC assessment frameworks.

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52 UNDP, Guidelines for building national South-South and Triangular Cooperation strategies, 2019, <https://sdgfinance.undp.org/sites/default/files/Guidelines%20for%20Building%20National%20SSC%20and%20TrC%20Strategies.pdf>; Islamic Development Bank, Assessment Framework for National Ecosystem for South-South and Triangular Cooperation, 2020, [https://www.unsouthsouth.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/SSTrC\\_AFrame\\_LR.pdf](https://www.unsouthsouth.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/SSTrC_AFrame_LR.pdf)

53 UNDP, First African South-South Cooperation Report, 2019, <https://www.africa.undp.org/content/rba/en/home/library/reports/first-african-south-south-cooperation-report.html>

## 2.1.2. Good practices for replicability

Case studies are used as a means of scaling up SSC and demonstrating good practices for replicability, since they focus on mutual learning, the exchange of lessons and ‘stories of change’.<sup>54</sup> Therefore, case studies can enhance SSC effectiveness by analysing aspects of institutionalisation, facts and figures and the SSC process, which are then shared with other Southern actors. They also look at the impact of an SSC engagement on a project-specific basis, both in terms of the end change and throughout the process itself, providing important contextual details. This is one method used by UNOSSC, who publishes good practices as part of their “Good Practices” and “South-South Ideas” series. It is also a method used by the South-South Galaxy platform managed by UNOSSC<sup>55</sup>, although the platform also includes information on activities and outputs. In line with achieving the SDGs, it showcases good practices, lessons learned and fosters collaboration. As such, it serves as a “one-stop-shop” that the UN system and development partners can utilise.<sup>56</sup> Since the platform showcases SSC examples, it also serves the purpose of providing much needed communication for domestic audiences on how money is being spent, and to host country audiences on the nature of the engagement. It also offers a means of enhancing solidarity among Southern countries so that lessons can be shared, and future engagements can be improved. The showcasing of case studies highlights the principles of accountability, showing some points of similarity between Northern and Southern perspectives on assessing effectiveness.

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54 Trajber Waisbich, L., The “Measurement Politics of South-South Cooperation, 2021, <https://www.iukdpf.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/The-%E2%80%98Measurement-Politics-of-South-South-Cooperation-1.pdf>

55 <http://www.unsouthsouth-galaxy.org/>

56 United Nations, Cooperation Beyond Convention South-South and Triangular Cooperation in a Changing Global Landscape, 2019, [https://www.unsouthsouth.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/09/Independent-Report\\_webversion.pdf](https://www.unsouthsouth.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/09/Independent-Report_webversion.pdf)

## 2.1.3. Facts and figures

### 2.1.3.1. Modalities of SSC: what to include?

Some Southern actors, such as China and India, consider economic cooperation, such as trade, investment and development finance, to be part of SSC. For example, India's SSC is considered to take place through capacity building, Lines of Credit (LOCs), trade and investment, technology transfer and classical grants. The use of LOCs has been discarded from Northern measures of development cooperation since they are used for capitalist and not developmental purposes. In the Global North, commercial loans have also been distinguished by concessionality, but concessionality can differ depending on the calculation used.<sup>57</sup> This has implications on how concessionality should be measured if it forms part of SSC. Including commercially driven finance (as opposed to concessional finance) also raises questions on if and how non-state actors should be included in effectiveness measures.<sup>58</sup> There have been some suggestions that it is also possible to monetise the financial impact of trade policies.<sup>59</sup> Due to these considerations, India has opposed existing paradigms, and has not put in place any tool to monitor its SSC flows and rather focuses on the notion of a Development Compact. China, on the other hand, is developing a measurement system with aspects specific to its own cooperation.<sup>60</sup>

With some Southern actors pushing for the inclusion of economic measures, some have suggested that this may compel Northern actors to also argue for the addition of such statistics in their own metrics. In the past, this has faced backlash from civil society

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57 Ibid

58 UNCTAD, *Defining and Quantifying South-South Cooperation*, 2019, [https://unctad.org/system/files/official-document/ser-rp-2019d2\\_en.pdf](https://unctad.org/system/files/official-document/ser-rp-2019d2_en.pdf)

59 UNCTAD, *Defining and Quantifying South-South Cooperation*, 2019, [https://unctad.org/system/files/official-document/ser-rp-2019d2\\_en.pdf](https://unctad.org/system/files/official-document/ser-rp-2019d2_en.pdf)

60 Government of China State Council Information Office (SCIO), 2021, *White Paper on China's International Development Cooperation in the New Era*. Available from [http://www.xinhuanet.com/english/2021-01/10/c\\_139655400.htm](http://www.xinhuanet.com/english/2021-01/10/c_139655400.htm)

and Southern actors. Mthembu argues that broad definitions lack meaning since they classify all types of economic transaction. Using a definition of development cooperation as “official transfers of money, goods, and services to developing countries specifically for their economic development and welfare,” he therefore proposes that Southern development cooperation be classified as follows<sup>61</sup>:

Table 1. Classification of Development Cooperation from Southern Powers

	<b>Development Cooperation</b>	<b>Not Development Cooperation</b>
Tools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Grants</li> <li>• Interest Free Loans</li> <li>• Humanitarian Assistance</li> <li>• Volunteer Programmes</li> <li>• Technical Cooperation</li> <li>• Other Concessional Loans</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Military Aid</li> <li>• Commercial Lines of Credit</li> <li>• Commercial Export Sellers Credits</li> <li>• Commercial Export Buyers Credits</li> </ul>

Conceptually, Colombia has also warned against lumping together technical exchanges with loans and financial commitments, although is of the view that partnerships with non-state actors are also critical for enhancing the effectiveness of SSC.<sup>62</sup> Despite ongoing differences of opinion on what constitutes SSC, gathering data on these engagements can be a useful means of making it more effective. As such, there have been efforts to get around these conceptual distinctions in a way

61 Mthembu, P., Towards BAPA+40: Challenges in Defining South-South Cooperation and Development Cooperation from Southern Powers, 2018, [https://www.ssc-globalthinkers.org/sites/default/files/2018-12/Defining%20SSC\\_Mthembu.pdf](https://www.ssc-globalthinkers.org/sites/default/files/2018-12/Defining%20SSC_Mthembu.pdf)

62 Roa, L., Synergies to increase impact: South-South Co-operation and the Effec-

that best enables countries to direct their assistance.

Most recently, the Inter-agency and Expert Group on SDG Indicators (IAEG-SDGs), through its Working Group on the Measurement of Development Support, has attempted to overcome the impasse on the issue of quantification on SSC through a new framework. It identifies three groups of quantifiable items to be measured, namely financial modalities of South-South cooperation (reported directly through monetization); non-financial modalities suitable for monetization; and non-financial modalities quantified through non-monetized methods. Specifically, the IAEG-SDG framework includes amounts from developing countries on a) official sustainable development grants; b) official concessional sustainable development loans; c) official non-concessional sustainable development loans; d) foreign direct investment; e) mobilized private finance on an experimental basis (subject to review in the 2025 review of SDG indicators); and f) private grants. The work builds on previous efforts relating to TOSSD.<sup>63</sup> By disaggregating data, the IAEG-SDG working group allows for divergent opinions on what measures are included in SSC and provides an opportunity for Southern actors to also influence Northern perspectives on measurement.

Some Southern actors, such as Brazil, have engaged on discussions on TOSSD as it has a comprehensive approach that allows for the inclusion of Southern points of view, while clearly specifying that they refuse to engage on discussions aimed at the convergence between ODA and SSC because of their different principles, motivations, practices, and methodologies.<sup>64</sup> However, the focus of both the TOSSD and IAEG-SDG efforts remains on

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tiveness Agenda. 24 November 2020, <https://www.effectivecooperation.org/group/gpedc-program-me-work-action-area-23-supporting-country-led-development-effectiveness-south-0>

63 Financing for Sustainable Development Report 2022, Bridging the Finance Divide, <https://developmentfinance.un.org/fsdr2022>

64 Brazil only engages on Pillar 1 of TOSSD, namely tracking cross-border flows to developing countries, but does not engage on Pillar 2, which relates to tracking regional and global expenditures with substantial benefits to developing countries. This position was specified in a 'Community of Practice on Measurement and Quantification of South-South Cooperation – Current initiatives' webinar, held on 29 June 2022



quantity of SSC flows and not the quality of SSC effectiveness. As the next sub-section shows, quality has also formed part of SSC assessment frameworks. The development of monitoring and reporting systems has therefore evolved as a means of going beyond economic measures to enhancing facts and figures.

### **2.1.3.2. SSC Facts and Figures**

One of the oldest and most comprehensive efforts to measure SSC according to facts and figures comes from the Ibero-American Programme to Strengthen South-South Cooperation (Programa Iberoamericano para el Fortalecimiento de la Cooperación Sur-Sur—PIFCSS) from the Ibero-American General Secretariat (SEGIB) in Latin America.<sup>65</sup> Together, they have produced annual reports for well over a decade, detailing SSC activities in Latin America. The system focusses purely on technical cooperation, rather than looking at economic cooperation, such as LOCs and loans, and examines the number of bilateral, regional South-South and TrC initiatives, who the partners are, the sectors they are involved in, and identifies key trends. The reports are gathered from an online platform for regional data collection, the Integrated Ibero-American Database System on South-South and Triangular Cooperation (SIDICSS), which allows the cross-checking of data among countries to ensure technical consistency and political legitimacy.

As noted by SEGIB, the process of collecting this data has encouraged stronger SSC partnerships and regional political and economic integration, thus also enhancing the quality of SSC.<sup>66</sup> However, the focus on measuring technical cooperation is challenging as some aspects, such as “in-kind” contributions, are hard to monetise. Moreover, comparing technical cooperation across different countries can be difficult, due to variations in

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65 There are 22 countries that make up the Ibero-American community: the 19 Spanish- and Portuguese-speaking countries in Latin America and those of the Iberian Peninsula, Spain, Portugal and Andorra.

66 UNDP, First African South-South Cooperation Report, 2019, <https://www.africa.undp.org/content/rba/en/home/library/reports/first-african-south-south-cooperation-report.html>

salaries and prices in each economy. This has led to some scholars and practitioners adjusting development cooperation figures to Purchasing Power Parities.<sup>67</sup> As a result, SEGIB also uses a 'valuation methodology' that aims to develop complementary measures to capture the non-monetary aspects of SSC.

Some countries with well-developed SSC institutional architectures have also developed strong monitoring systems that allow for analysis. Mexico arguably has one of the most advanced systems for assessing SSC. It distinguishes between principles of SSC at a meta and operational level and uses a log framework to assess its engagements, although more could be done to disaggregate this data. Brazil also uses a monitoring framework for results, focussing on deadlines, costs, phases and expected outputs.<sup>68</sup> Meanwhile, Colombia uses a "Quantification and Value Addition Model" (MCAV) that goes beyond financial costs to also consider indirect costs.<sup>69</sup> It is worth observing commonalities in that these countries only measure technical cooperation and have experimented with different ways of capturing SSC flows to demonstrate the added value of SSC. Indonesia on the other hand looks at the sum of activities and SSC by actor but wishes to further develop its monitoring systems.<sup>70</sup>

The African continent has also attempted to develop a continental monitoring and reporting system with technical support from SEGIB, the African Union Development Agency (AUDA-NEPAD) and UNDP.<sup>71</sup> UNDP proposes the disaggregation of data into technical and economic cooperation and then further into type of cooperation (e.g. provision of training, scholarships,

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67 UNCTAD, *Defining and Quantifying South-South Cooperation*, 2019, [https://unctad.org/system/files/official-document/ser-rp-2019d2\\_en.pdf](https://unctad.org/system/files/official-document/ser-rp-2019d2_en.pdf)

68 NeST Latam, *Institutional frameworks for South-South Cooperation in Latin America: Lessons from Argentina, Brazil and Mexico*, 2021, [https://www.effectivecooperation.org/system/files/2021-08/NeST%20LATAM\\_Web.pdf](https://www.effectivecooperation.org/system/files/2021-08/NeST%20LATAM_Web.pdf)

69 Presentation given by APC-Colombia, 29/06/22

70 Interview held with BAPENAS, 12/05/22

71 In total, 11 African countries, namely Benin, Botswana, Cote d'Ivoire, Djibouti, Ethiopia, Kenya, Lesotho, Madagascar, Rwanda, Sudan and Uganda, reported on their development cooperation activities undertaken in 2017 for the First African South-South Cooperation Report

policy advice etc).<sup>72</sup> The reporting system was formalised through ongoing dialogues with countries trying out the framework by April 2018.<sup>73</sup> It identified the type of cooperation, partners, dates, achievements, and financial amount. However, many countries did not input financial data but rather preferred to use the exercise to identify trends and to scale up partnerships.<sup>74</sup>

Based on this experience, it is noted that, although quantitative measures among some Southern partners are premature, the exercise had empowered countries to develop national planning systems, adding that “Recording such data will increasingly allow for estimates to be made on the cost and extent of SSC and could eventually pave the way for monitoring the effectiveness of SSC.”<sup>75</sup> It is also observed that the same framework was applied to all 11 participating African countries, suggesting that a common framework for facts and figures can be used by both host and sharing countries.

Other UN entities, such the International Labour Organisation (ILO) and Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) have used a system known as results-based management (RBM), which focuses on inputs, outputs, outcomes (linked to notions of activities and outputs, different SSC modalities, geographical reach, types of actors involved) and impact, irrespective of whether or not these include technical or economic types of cooperation.<sup>76</sup> RBM is “a management strategy by which all actors, contributing directly or indirectly to achieving a set of results, ensure that their processes, products and services contribute

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72 UNDP, Guidelines for building national South-South and Triangular Cooperation strategies, 2019, <https://sdgfinance.undp.org/sites/default/files/Guidelines%20for%20Building%20National%20SSC%20and%20TrC%20Strategies.pdf>

73 UNDP, First African South-South Cooperation Report, 2019, <https://www.africa.undp.org/content/rba/en/home/library/reports/first-african-south-south-cooperation-report.html>

74 The fact that countries did not want to input financial data was an observation made by the consultant during the workshops in the lead-up to the report and in analysing the data.

75 UNDP, First African South-South Cooperation Report, 2019, <https://www.africa.undp.org/content/rba/en/home/library/reports/first-african-south-south-cooperation-report.html>, p.45

76 Based on interviews with UN organisations in March 2022

to the achievement of desired results (outputs, outcomes and higher-level goals or impact)."<sup>77</sup>

Nonetheless, Southern civil society and academics specialising in development effectiveness, while appreciating the value of RBM approaches such as those of UN entities, have stressed that more could be done to integrate the SSC principle of mutual benefit by using assessment frameworks that recognise all parties' interests, benefits and objectives.<sup>78</sup> In this regard, RMB from an SSC perspective could consider a double-sided results chain, where both host and sharing country would examine activities, outputs and impact from their own perspectives. Therefore, it is important to go beyond facts and figures to also examining SSC principles and process when assessing its effectiveness. This is even more apparent when considering differences between what is considered important for assessment among sharing and host countries. A research study from UNOSSC, UNDP and the Centre for the Study of Economies in Africa<sup>79</sup> has suggested a similar conceptual framework for monitoring SSC facts and figures from both perspectives.<sup>80</sup> To test the framework, the study examined different NSC and SSC projects in Nigeria and concludes that SSC uses different and unique pathways, and that many components of development cooperation matter. It emphasises the importance of domestic national ownership, non-state engagement and predictability of funding for SSC, illustrating the need be more forward looking and based on

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77 United Nations Development Group, Results-based management handbook, October 2011, <https://unsdg.un.org/sites/default/files/UNDG-RBM-Handbook-2012.pdf#:~:text=RBM%20is%20a%20management%20strategy,higher%20level%20goals%20or%20impact>).

NeST Africa, Developing a Conceptual Framework for South-South Cooperation, 2015, [https://saiia.org.za/wp-content/uploads/2015/09/2015-09-23-Final-draft-SSC-Framework-rev\\_20151127.pdf](https://saiia.org.za/wp-content/uploads/2015/09/2015-09-23-Final-draft-SSC-Framework-rev_20151127.pdf)

78 NeST Africa, Developing a Conceptual Framework for South-South Cooperation, 2015, [https://saiia.org.za/wp-content/uploads/2015/09/2015-09-23-Final-draft-SSC-Framework-rev\\_20151127.pdf](https://saiia.org.za/wp-content/uploads/2015/09/2015-09-23-Final-draft-SSC-Framework-rev_20151127.pdf)

79 UNOSSC, UNDP, The Centre for the Study of Economies in Africa, South-South Cooperation Coherence in a Complex Assistance Framework for Development: The Case of Nigeria, 2019, <https://unsouthsouth.org/2019/03/18/south-south-ideas-south-south-cooperation-coherence-an-a-complex-assistance-framework-for-development-the-case-of-nigeria-2019/>

80 Specifically, it mentioned the need to include challenge addressed, geographical scope, level of priority, actors involved (provider country, recipient country, multilateral organisations involved, non-state actors involved), relationship between the countries involved, modalities of the cooperation, implementation strategy, time of implementation, reporting, and evaluation of impact

specific SSC processes.

Beyond efforts to develop monitoring and reporting systems, SSC principles and process keep coming to the fore as a means of enhancing SSC effectiveness. The next section examines how these have been used in previous efforts to develop SSC assessment systems.

## **2.1.4. Process**

### **2.1.4.1. Delineating SSC principles**

As mentioned previously, the “process” category of assessing SSC looks at adherence to principles of SSC and other aspects that a country may consider important for its own context. Some SSC academics and practitioners<sup>81</sup>, as well as the UN, have argued that SSC principles are a key element of SSC development effectiveness. As noted earlier, SSC principles have been clearly enunciated in the outcomes of SSC conferences, including BAPA+40, Nairobi (2009) and others. These are respect for national sovereignty, national ownership and independence, equality, non-conditionality, non-interference in domestic affairs and mutual benefit. From the outset, SSC actors have been very explicit about national sovereignty and non-interference. Yet discussions around BAPA+40 reflected the difficulty in ensuring consensus around operational issues such as effectiveness and mutual accountability in SSC, with propositions from the OECD failing to garner support among Southern countries. As such, transparency continues to be seen as an imposition mechanism.<sup>82</sup> BAPA+40 only makes one mention of transparency, emphasising the importance of national and voluntary systems.<sup>83</sup> Moreover,

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81 NeST, A Monitoring and Evaluation Framework for South-South Cooperation, 2017, <https://saiia.org.za/research/a-monitoring-and-evaluation-framework-for-south-south-cooperation/>

82 Trajiber Waisbich, L., ‘It Takes Two to Tango’: South–South Cooperation Measurement Politics in a Multiplex World, 14 April 2022, <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/full/10.1111/1758-5899.13086>

83 United Nations, Buenos Aires Report of the second High-level United Nations

this is often an issue of foreign policy, meaning that the sharing of SSC data is often treated with more discretion and secrecy due to its sensitive nature.<sup>84</sup>

The UN System-Wide Strategy for SSTC (2020 – 2025) separates SSC principles into normative and operational principles. It defines SSC normative principles as respect for national sovereignty and ownership; partnership among equals; non-conditionality; non-interference in domestic affairs; mutual benefit. SSC operational principles are defined as mutual accountability and transparency; development effectiveness; coordination of evidence- and results-based initiatives; multi-stakeholder approach; and demand-driven nature of South-South and triangular cooperation.<sup>85</sup> Nevertheless, it should be cautioned that, while all Southern countries have committed to the normative principles of SSC, not all Southern countries have committed to the operational ones. The operational principles are therefore used to guide UN support to SSC but remain a source of contention among some actors of the Global South. Moreover, there remain divergences of opinion on what these SSC principles mean in practice and according to different SSC actors.

#### **2.1.4.2. Operationalising SSC principles and others into an assessment framework**

The Network of Southern Think Tanks (NeST) has been one key actor that attempted to operationalise certain SSC principles and others into an assessment framework. NeST was established in 2014 on the outskirts of the first High-Level Meeting of

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Conference on South-South Cooperation, March 2019, <https://www.unsouthsouth.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/07/N1920949.pdf>

84 Besharati, N., Measuring Effectiveness of South-South Cooperation, 2019, [http://southernvoice.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/191010-Occasional-Paper-Series-No.-52\\_final-1.pdf](http://southernvoice.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/191010-Occasional-Paper-Series-No.-52_final-1.pdf)

85 United Nations, United Nations System-Wide Strategy on South-South and Triangular Cooperation for Sustainable Development 2020-2025, <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>

the GPEDC, with a focus on development of methodological frameworks for SSC. Following a series of technical working group discussions, the group produced a process-related framework with 20 indicators organised along five dimensions, seen in Table 2.<sup>86</sup>The indicators were drawn from SSC dimensions that had emerged at various SSC conferences, which were operationalised into indicators. The framework also argues that SSC be assessed by both the host country and sharing country because of the SSC principle of mutual benefit.

Table 2: NeST framework to measure the quality of SSC

Dimensions	Inclusive National Ownership	Horizontality	Self-reliance and sustainability	Accountability and Transparency	Development Efficiency
Indicators	Multi-stakeholder partnerships	Mutual benefit	Capacity building	Data management and reporting	Flexibility and adaptation
	People-centred inclusivity	Shared decisions and resources	Knowledge and technology transfer	M&E systems	Time and cost efficiency
	Demand-driven	Trust and solidarity	Use country systems and human resources	Transparency and access to information	Internal and external coordination
	Non-conditionality	Global political decisions	Domestic revenue generation	Mutual accountability and joint reviews	Policy coherence for development

In analysing the NeST study, this paper observes that there are some similarities and differences between Northern effectiveness frameworks and the NeST framework. Interestingly, the indicators of development efficiency relate to assessments of performance that lead to results (similar to the GPEDC principle of focus on results, but with an additional emphasis on flexibility and adaptation). Inclusive national ownership speaks to the GPEDC principles of country ownership and inclusive partnerships, and mutual accountability and transparency are key in both NeST and GPEDC. However, the GPEDC effectiveness principles do not fully capture horizontality or self-reliance and sustainability, which are key elements in the NeST framework.

Some of the proposed indicator proxies relate to an

<sup>86</sup> NeST Africa, A Monitoring and Evaluation Framework for South-South Cooperation, 2017, <https://saiia.org.za/research/a-monitoring-and-evaluation-framework-for-south-south-cooperation/>

assessment of the institutional architecture of SSC actors. For example, multistakeholder relationships speak to dialogue and joint action, while publishing data on a regular basis speaks to accountability and transparency. This demonstrates the connections between Southern partners' institutional foundations, administrative aspects, and aid quality.<sup>87</sup> The indicator relating to multi-stakeholder partnerships and the principle of inclusive national ownership again speaks to the importance of going beyond government-government initiatives.<sup>88</sup>

In testing the application of the framework to country case studies, NeST concluded that the tool was 'primarily academic', and intended to be seen as an evolving tool, that can be adapted to specific contexts.<sup>89</sup> As the next section shows, the interpretation of SSC principles as a means of assessing SSC remains a contentious source of debate.

### **2.1.4.3. Commonalities and differences for assessing SSC process**

Various Southern academics have argued that some SSC principles are more applicable to certain country priorities than others. In testing the applicability of the NeST framework to Southern engagements in Brazil, China, India, and South Africa<sup>90</sup>, one study found not all countries applied the SSC normative principles in practice, but that all conformed to principles of

87 UNDP, Designing a survey of the institutional architecture of South-South Cooperation A feasibility study, July 2021, <https://www.ssc-globalthinkers.org/system/files/2021-09/Designing%20a%20survey%20of%20the%20institutional%20architecture%20of%20South-South%20Cooperation%20A%20feasibility%20study.pdf>

88 Buenaventura Goldman, M; Luimes, W & Lucey, A., Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) in South – South Cooperation: The need for standardised principles, 2018, [https://www.ssc-globalthinkers.org/sites/default/files/2018-12/M%26E\\_Goldman.pdf](https://www.ssc-globalthinkers.org/sites/default/files/2018-12/M%26E_Goldman.pdf)

89 Besharati, N., Measuring the Effectiveness of South-South Cooperation, 2019, [http://southernvoice.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/191010-Occasional-Paper-Series-No.-52\\_final-1.pdf](http://southernvoice.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/191010-Occasional-Paper-Series-No.-52_final-1.pdf)

90 Network of Southern Thinktanks, Assessing Impact of South-South Cooperation: Variations in Perspectives: Select Country Case Studies, March 2019, [https://www.ssc-globalthinkers.org/sites/default/files/2019-05/UNOSSC\\_GT\\_Assessing%20Impact%20of%20South-South%20Cooperation\\_web.pdf](https://www.ssc-globalthinkers.org/sites/default/files/2019-05/UNOSSC_GT_Assessing%20Impact%20of%20South-South%20Cooperation_web.pdf)



equality and mutual benefit. The same study adds “demand driven” to the SSC principles, finding that all countries adhere to this.<sup>91</sup>It concludes that “it is desirable that all the cells under SSC principles are ticked in” while other dimensions such as modalities, process and results are context specific. In this regard, the study found that the SSC modalities used were varied, but all focussed on capacity development and technology, while there was also a huge variety in how results were analysed.<sup>92</sup>Table 3 shows the points of convergence and divergence across these country-case studies by principle.

Table 3: Convergence and divergence of country case studies by SSC normative and operational principles<sup>93</sup>

	Assessment Criteria	Brazil Case Study	China Case Study	India Case Study	South Africa Case study
SSC Principles	Respect for national sovereignty		X	X	X
	National ownership and independence	X		X	X
	Equality	X	X	X	X
	Non-conditionality		X	X	X
	Non-interference in domestic affairs		X	X	X
	Mutual benefit	X	X	X	X
	Demand-driven	X	X	X	X
Modalities	Capacity building	X	X	X	X
	Trade and Investment		X	X	X
	Development Finance			X	X
	Grants	X	X		X
	Technology	X	X	X	X
Processes	Cost efficient delivery		X	X	X
Results	Output		X	X	
	Outcome		X	X	
	Impact		X	X	
	Sustainability		X		X

91 Mutual benefit is a normative SSC principle according to the UN System-Wide Strategy on SSTC, while demand-driven is an operational principle. However, in this study, ‘demand-driven’ is considered a non-negotiable SSC principle along with the other normative principles listed

92 The modalities as identified under ‘development compact’ pillars are capacity-building, trade and investment, development finance, grants & technology. Cited in Network of Southern Thinktanks, Assessing Impact of South-South Cooperation: Variations in Perspectives: Select Country Case Studies, March 2019, [https://www.ssc-globalthinkers.org/sites/default/files/2019-05/UNOSSC\\_GT\\_Assessing%20Impact%20of%20South-South%20Cooperation\\_web.pdf](https://www.ssc-globalthinkers.org/sites/default/files/2019-05/UNOSSC_GT_Assessing%20Impact%20of%20South-South%20Cooperation_web.pdf)

93 Network of Southern Thinktanks, Assessing Impact of South-South Cooperation: Variations in Perspectives: Select Country Case Studies, March 2019, [https://www.ssc-globalthinkers.org/sites/default/files/2019-05/UNOSSC\\_GT\\_Assessing%20Impact%20of%20South-South%20Cooperation\\_web.pdf](https://www.ssc-globalthinkers.org/sites/default/files/2019-05/UNOSSC_GT_Assessing%20Impact%20of%20South-South%20Cooperation_web.pdf)

On considering the differences between SSC and NSC, Bhattacharya and Khan argue that both SSC and NSC consider the 'principles' of ownership and alignment with host country priorities, at least in principle, while inclusiveness, multi-stakeholder participation and capacity development also are areas of agreement between NSC and SSC. The study further notes that "In line with the development effectiveness agenda, compliance with the principle of transparency and mutual accountability, and results orientation have been part of the SSC principles since the high-level conferences in Nairobi and BAPA+40."<sup>94</sup> It should be noted that this study considers the following principles as differential elements to SSC: solidarity, respect for national sovereignty, non-interference in domestic affairs, equality among partners, non-conditionality, mutual benefits, economic independence/self-reliance, voluntary partnerships. In analysing these principles, it is worth observing that solidarity, economic independence/self-reliance, voluntary partnerships are therefore considered important additional elements of SSC.

Some countries have also experimented with SSC normative and operational principles in their own frameworks of development effectiveness. As mentioned earlier, Mexico distinguishes between meta-level SSC data and operational principles but makes provision for horizontal cooperation and mutual benefit by looking at costs and benefits shared between sharing country and host. Meanwhile, Indonesia's selection criteria for SSC flagship programmes look at the host country's potential and initiative, replicability, and wide impact.<sup>95</sup> Colombia has tested out the GPEDC effectiveness principles but has also developed a set of tools and methodology to improve the quality of its cooperation efforts. This examines five dimensions, namely

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94 Bhattacharya, D. & Khan, S., Rethinking Development Effectiveness; Perspectives from the Global South, 2020, <http://southernvoice.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/Rethinking-Development-Effectiveness-Bhattacharya-and-Khan-2020.pdf>, p.21

95 Charting the Path to Development Effectiveness: Indonesia's SSC challenges. In The Asia Foundation, Contemporary Asian Perspectives on South-South Cooperation, 2015, [https://asiafoundation.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/07/Contemporary-Asian-Perspectives-on-South-South-Cooperation\\_wISBN.pdf](https://asiafoundation.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/07/Contemporary-Asian-Perspectives-on-South-South-Cooperation_wISBN.pdf)

project context (dimension of knowledge); network generation and relation building; visibility of learning outcomes; linkage of project with SDGs; and a differential approach to see how the project benefits the excluded especially women and minority groups.<sup>96</sup>

In 2021, China released its third White Paper on its development cooperation, interestingly labelling this as ‘foreign aid.’ However, it went well beyond the traditional scope of aid to outline the role of the wide variety of actors in its SSC and emphasised that ODA definitions were not the only means of examining effectiveness. There are five dimensions upon which China operates, namely policy, infrastructure, trade, financing, and people-to-people exchanges. The paper does not make explicit reference to development effectiveness, but it alludes to increasing the quality and effectiveness of SSC and in developing a modern statistical system.<sup>97</sup> However, this statistical system is only one part of assessing China’s SSC, which will also need to factor in SSC principles. China is also eager to include efforts by the private sector and academia/think tanks.<sup>98</sup> In all of China’s communications, it consistently refers to SSC principles, including national ownership (with an emphasis on being demand-driven) and mutual benefit. Relevance, efficiency, and sustainability are also said to be key aspects of its evaluation process.<sup>99</sup>

While operationalising SSC principles has been challenging, one methodology that has emerged for ensuring adherence to SSC process more broadly has been through the use of participatory methods. These are often useful since they allow for joint

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96 RIS, Delhi Process Fifth Conference on South-South and Triangular Cooperation, 2019, <https://www.ris.org.in/key-takeaways-delhi-process-fifth-conference-south-south-and-triangular-cooperation>

97 UNDP, Brief on White Paper on China’s International Development Cooperation in the New Era, 2021, <https://www.cn.undp.org/content/china/en/home/library/south-south-cooperation/issue-brief---brief-on-white-paper-on-china-s-international-deve.html>

98 Based on interviews with Chinese development experts in March 2022

99 Evaluating South-South Development Cooperation: China’s Approach and Trends. In The Asia Foundation, Contemporary Asian Perspectives on South-South Cooperation, 2015, [https://asiafoundation.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/07/Contemporary-Asian-Perspectives-on-South-South-Cooperation\\_wISBN.pdf](https://asiafoundation.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/07/Contemporary-Asian-Perspectives-on-South-South-Cooperation_wISBN.pdf)

assessments in line with their institutional processes<sup>100</sup> and allow both host and sharing countries involved to develop forms of accountability on their own terms.<sup>101</sup> Such efforts enable both parties to mutually determine the assessment process and they see as mutual benefits.<sup>102</sup> These methods allow for ongoing policy learning, provide ways to make SSC more effective throughout the process (by sharing countries proactively sharing information, host countries raising red flags, etc.) and legitimise evidence to back up the effectiveness of SSC.

In this regard, some Southern countries have developed joint committees with follow-up and evaluation mechanisms, which can be seen as a way of monitoring the ongoing impact of some SSC engagements. Examples include the India-Africa Forum Summit (IAFS) and the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation (FOCAC). Some countries also have bilateral joint commissions for monitoring the effectiveness of SSC, such as Mexico. Arguably, these efforts speak to the GPEDC principles of country ownership, a focus on results, and accountability and transparency. However, from an SSC perspective, the use of joint commissions illustrates the importance of mutual accountability, rather than seeing accountability as a requirement from a donor perspective. It also shows that ownership is assessed on a continuous basis, rather than measuring this at an initial stage, based on national priorities as specified in development frameworks. In SSC, results can be mutually determined. Mexico has also stated that assessments can, include periodic reports, follow-up missions, general monitoring indicators or intermediate evaluations.

The next sub-section examines how countries have applied the GPEDC effectiveness principles to their own SSC assessment

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100 Besharati, N., *Measuring the Effectiveness of South-South Cooperation*, 2019, [http://southern-voice.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/191010-Occasional-Paper-Series-No.-52\\_final-1.pdf](http://southern-voice.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/191010-Occasional-Paper-Series-No.-52_final-1.pdf)

101 UNOSSC, *Impact Assessment on South-South Cooperation Initiatives: Video Message from Xiaojun Grace Wang for the Inter-Ministerial Conference on SSTRC*, 2018, <https://www.unsouthsouth.org/2018/09/20/impact-assessment-on-south-south-cooperation-initiatives-video-message-from-xiaojun-grace-wang-for-the-inter-ministerial-conference-on-sstrc/>

102 Network of Southern Thinktanks, *Methodological Pluralities in Impact Assessment of South-South Cooperation: A Synthesis from Efficiency Perspective*, 2021, [https://www.ssc-globalthinkers.org/system/files/2021-09/Methodological%20Pluralitiesin%20Impact%20Assessment%20of%20SSC\\_print.pdf](https://www.ssc-globalthinkers.org/system/files/2021-09/Methodological%20Pluralitiesin%20Impact%20Assessment%20of%20SSC_print.pdf)

frameworks, with lessons on the commonalities and differences between SSC and GPEDC assessments. It also analyses how host countries interpret the GPEDC effectiveness principles to their own SSC context, which is critical for ensuring that assessments of development effectiveness address the asymmetric relations between development cooperation actors, and for being more inclusive in these debates.

## **2.2. Lessons learned from SSC country pilots on the application of GPEDC principles**

### **2.2.1. Context**

GPEDC efforts to enhance measures of development effectiveness have increasingly sought to bring in Southern perspectives in addition to the Global North, while also considering viewpoints from both host and sharing countries. As mentioned earlier, Mexico was the predecessor of Colombia in piloting the four effectiveness principles under the SSC perspective. While Mexico found the framework useful in developing its own SSC assessment mechanisms, it concluded that the GPEDC principles should be adapted to the country context.<sup>103</sup> It has also included other aspects in its own assessment systems. Colombia has also looked to test the frameworks, with pilots also ongoing in El Salvador, Bangladesh, Indonesia, Kenya and Cape Verde. The GPEDC, prior to the reform of its Global Monitoring Framework, followed 10 monitoring indicators for assessing the effectiveness of development cooperation (see Annex 2) based on the monitoring methodology used in 2018.<sup>104</sup> However, starting in 2023, the GPEDC will launch a reformed monitoring framework with a different structure. In 2016, Mexico adapted the indicators of the GPEDC monitoring framework - as it was at that time - to its specific needs

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103 Based on an interview conducted with the Mexican Agency for International Development Cooperation (AMEXCID) on 12 May 2021.

104 These are currently under review in the next monitoring round, both in terms of process and indicators.

as provider of SSC cooperation.<sup>105</sup>

From the outset, APC-Colombia argues that the guiding principles of SSC share many commonalities with the four GPEDC effectiveness principles, and contends that, to show the compatibility of principles, there is a need to compare “apples to apples.” As such, it stresses the importance of exploiting complementarities, rather than looking for divergence.<sup>106</sup> In this regard, Colombia points out that the GPEDC principles are useful for countries that are institutionalising SSC, using the cases of Mexico, Colombia and Indonesia to illustrate the point. All these countries have a central country agency involving ministries and partners at the highest levels and promoting a multi-stakeholder approach. This speaks to the principle of ownership since it allows countries to be in the driving seat with determining their priorities and how these priorities are implemented. Mexico, Colombia and Indonesia also have a clear mandate with delegated roles and responsibilities, speaking to the principle of inclusive partnerships. These countries also have developed a clear monitoring and reporting system, which allows them to look at the principle of results. The final principle of mutual accountability and transparency is reflected in terms of a separate budget and fund for the timely and transparent delivery of SSC activities.<sup>107</sup>

In May 2022, interviews were held with three of countries piloting the GPEDC effectiveness principles under an SSC perspective and with Mexico as a predecessor of this work. The following

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<sup>105</sup> In 2016, the GPEDC monitoring framework was organised around 10 indicators (see Annex 2 for more details). Since then, the monitoring framework has undergone a review in 2017 which led to some changes compared to the version adapted by Mexico in 2016. An ambitious reform of the monitoring exercise is taking place during 2020-2022. It will culminate with the endorsement of a new monitoring proposal at the Effective Development Co-operation Summit in December 2022. The scope of the reform includes changes to both the monitoring framework and the monitoring process.

<sup>106</sup> Roa, L., Synergies to increase impact: South-South Co-operation and the Effectiveness Agenda, 24 November 2020, <https://www.effectivecooperation.org/group/gpedc-programme-work-action-area-23-supporting-country-led-development-effectiveness-south-0>

<sup>107</sup> GPEDC, How do countries manage their South-South Cooperation Activities? The Cases of Mexico, Colombia and Indonesia, 24 March 2022, <https://www.effectivecooperation.org/content/how-do-countries-manage-their-south-south-co-operation-activities-cases-mexico-colombia-and>

analysis reflects the views of these countries. In the interviews, all countries testing the GPEDC effectiveness principles mentioned that the process had been helpful for their own thinking on developing their own SSC assessment systems and enhancing their SSC effectiveness, although could be adapted to reflect their own realities.

## **2.2.2. Country Ownership**

National ownership is a key SSC normative principle for Southern partners, as seen by past efforts to develop SSC assessment frameworks, such as that of NeST. It is also worth noting that this principle has also become an operational for some actors and is also used in testing out the GPEDC effectiveness principle “country ownership”. However, ‘ownership’ as a broad term is understood in different ways. For Mexico and Indonesia, ownership (in both the SSC and GPEDC sense) is also understood as long-term sustainability and self-reliance. In terms of the GPEDC effectiveness principle of ownership, Mexico found that priority development areas in development plans did not always have adequate operational or budgetary mechanisms, which could be improved with monitoring indicators. There was also a need to strengthen linkages to the SDGs.<sup>108</sup> Another study on host perspectives, using the cases of Bolivia and Uganda emphasised that country ownership based on the GPEDC effectiveness principles should occur throughout the planning and implementation phase, including the capacity of the host country to contribute to the cooperation programme, technically or financially. It cautions that there may be no true ownership if plans are too far-reaching, as they are likely to be unsustainable.<sup>109</sup>

To ensure national ownership throughout the project cycle,

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108 AMEXCID, Monitoring Exercise in South-South Cooperation Effectiveness: Final Report, <https://www.effectivecooperation.org/system/files/2020-06/Mexico%20SSC%20Monitoring%20Exercise%20-%20Final%20Report.pdf>

109 Southern Voice, Development Effectiveness from Within: Emerging Issues from Recipient Countries, 2019, <http://southernvoice.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/200330-Occasional-Paper-Series-No.58.pdf>

Mexico uses joint commissions as a means of ensuring an ongoing and mutually determined set of principles for assessment, that allows for flexible adaptation. The establishment of a specific fund, such as in Indonesia, is another method that accommodates such efforts seeking to ensure the predictability of funding, which has been seen as important from a host perspective in cases where NSC has been unpredictable, Southern actors have been found to welcome SSC as a complementary mechanism to NSC, particularly when it includes economic measures, which countries see as less risky.<sup>110</sup> This has been found to be important in case studies of Bolivia, Nigeria, and Uganda.<sup>111</sup>

### **2.2.3. Focus on results**

For the GPEDC, a focus on results is key. However, this is a challenge for countries that do not have strong monitoring and evaluation systems, or ways to strengthen knowledge management. Although reforms take time, a results-based approach often prioritises the speed of implementation. This is problematic, as host countries sometimes lack the institutional architecture to keep to commitments, which can in turn lead to a lack of trust.<sup>112</sup>

For Kenya, the absence of a legal framework and clear terminology for SSC has posed difficulties for monitoring results. Nevertheless, Kenya considers this principle to relate to the

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110 Southern Voice, Development Effectiveness from Within: Emerging Issues from Recipient Countries, 2019, <http://southernvoice.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/200330-Ocassional-Paper-Series-No.58.pdf>

111 Southern Voice, Development Effectiveness from Within: Emerging Issues from Recipient Countries; UNOSSC, UNDP, The Centre for the Study of Economies in Africa, South-South Cooperation Coherence in a Complex Assistance Framework for Development: The Case of Nigeria, 2019, <https://unsouthsouth.org/2019/03/18/south-south-ideas-south-south-cooperation-coherence-an-a-complex-assistance-framework-for-development-the-case-of-nigeria-2019/>

112 Southern Voice, Development Effectiveness from Within: Emerging Issues from Recipient Countries, 2019, <http://southernvoice.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/200330-Ocassional-Paper-Series-No.58.pdf>



problem most affecting the host country (project context) and value for money (efficiency). For Indonesia, the emphasis is also on directing assistance to where it is most needed, although there was a need to move from a focus on outputs to assessing the end result. Mexico has a well-developed log framework but has observed that it could do more to disaggregate and communicate about project-level data, and to strengthen planning and data collection at sub-national levels. Colombia has put in place efforts to coordinate projects at the sub-national level. Since these partners don't report to the Presidency, which leads APC-Colombia's actions, this allows data collection to be centralised and better recorded.

#### **2.2.4. Inclusive partnerships**

According to the GPEDC, the principle of inclusive partnerships relates to the act of acknowledging the differences and complementarities of all development actors, recognizing their voices, contributions, needs and contextualized priorities, while inviting them as active partners (civil society organizations, the private sector, academia, parliamentarians, unions, and others) to operate in an environment that maximises their contribution to development, and the quality of multi-stakeholder dialogue. For Southern partners, the GPEDC principle of inclusive partnerships is strategic to make sure SSC is not undervalued in terms of quality and/or quantity<sup>113</sup>, but due to a lack of capacity, SSC assessment methodologies often only consider government initiatives. Even so, in SSC, the focus is also on equal, rather than inclusive partnerships. For Mexico, the GPEDC focus on civil society and the private sector are applicable in a limited manner and the mechanism for bringing in these actors is different from the use of joint commissions. For Kenya, the inclusion of non-state actors is critical since assessments of SSC would otherwise not reflect the true extent of cooperation. Indonesia has developed guidelines for non-state actors

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113 Based on interviews with countries, policymakers, academics and UN organisations between March and June 2022

and has been identifying ways to strengthen engagement but faces challenges in that these actors do not always see the relevance of couching their activities in SSC terms. In comparing NSC and SSC in Nigeria it was found that there was much less inclusion of non-state actors in SSC.<sup>114</sup>

### **2.2.5. Transparency and accountability**

Transparency and accountability for the GPEDC includes indicators such as making information publicly available, strengthening mutual accountability through inclusive reviews, including development cooperation in budgets for parliamentary oversight and making allocations to gender equality and women's empowerment. On this principle, Mexico's integrated management system allows for good transparency and accountability, although it has explored how to include other development partners and actors. This is similar to Kenya who wishes to assess the full extent of its cooperation. For Indonesia, transparency and accountability is strengthened through the publishing of annual reports, and through reporting in its budget system. For Mexico, it is important to consider SSC exchanges such as technical cooperation, rather than a focus on financial flows. It has made efforts to measure mutual accountability, although this could be adjusted to enhance relevance. From a host country perspective, the notion of mutual accountability becomes cloudier in the context of asymmetric relations, with growing pressure for accountability to be determined by both host and sharing countries. Transparency is also said to be key since it allows host governments to plan better, coordinate. Beyond this, transparency also speaks to creating trust and this requires moving away from conditionalities and strict monitoring of host behaviour.<sup>115</sup>

Thus, SSC features that go beyond the GPEDC effectiveness

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114 UNOSSC and UNDP, South-South Cooperation Coherence in a Complex Assistance Framework for Development: The Case of Nigeria, March 2019, [https://www.ssc-globalthinkers.org/sites/default/files/2019-05/UNOSSC\\_GT\\_SSC\\_coherence\\_web.pdf](https://www.ssc-globalthinkers.org/sites/default/files/2019-05/UNOSSC_GT_SSC_coherence_web.pdf)

115 Southern Voice, Development Effectiveness from Within: Emerging Issues from Recipient Countries, 2019, <http://southernvoice.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/200330-Ocassional-Paper-Series-No.58.pdf>

principles include a greater focus on self-reliance and sustainability (empowerment), mutual benefit and the demand-driven nature of SSC development cooperation, a focus on two-way accountability and transparency and a clear shift away from conditionality. These are also relevant to host perspectives, although predictability of funding is also important. It is also worth reiterating that Southern actors focus more on qualitative rather than quantitative information when looking at results.

## **Section 3: Findings and Conclusion**

### **3.1. Overview of findings**

Development effectiveness is important to both NSC and SSC actors, as seen by various efforts to develop assessment frameworks by both Southern and Northern countries. However, some Southern thinktanks, such as Research and Information System for Developing Countries (RIS) in India believe in the plurality of SSC frameworks and the importance of interlinkages between SSC principles, while others maintain that there are some commonalities between effectiveness principles and the principles of SSC that can serve as the “lowest common denominator” to enhance the effectiveness of SSC (such as APC-Colombia). Arguably, all development actors support notions such as firm commitments to development, seeking greater alignment with their own development priorities and ensuring greater forward-looking visibility. Achieving this allows Southern actors to prioritise their own resources accordingly, while using development cooperation to support these efforts. Assessing complementary types of development cooperation, including NSC and SSTC can also be used for assessing the achievement of global goals such as the SDGs.

Looking at SSC assessment methodologies, there are challenges over the types of tools used to assess effectiveness (qualitative/quantitative) and on what exactly is being assessed, which is a result of the definition of SSC that is used. The way an SSC institution has been established impacts on the way that SSC is reported on, measured, and assessed. Most Southern actors gather qualitative information on SSC to build capacity. For Southern partners, quantification can under-value SSC because it doesn't capture the political dimensions of SSC and some types of SSC technical exchanges. It also demands extra capacity from officials. As such, Southern partners tend to focus on qualitative facts and figures (the who, what, when and where). Moreover, traditional North-South approaches have quite narrow conceptions of what is included in an evaluation and sometimes use a project-specific theory of change that would not encompass the political, social, and economic aspects of SSC. Some Southern actors are hesitant to assume that their SSC intervention has been the sole reason for the change and therefore choose not to focus on impact in the traditional sense.

In terms of the four GPEDC principles, there is general agreement that the four principles, namely country ownership, focus on results, inclusive partnerships and transparency and mutual accountability are useful for assessing development cooperation, but there are also aspects of SSC that these principles do not capture. The principle of ownership, in theory, is a key element of SSC (understood as national ownership), as alluded to in BAPA+40 (and other conferences on SSC). It has also been a key aspect of assessing the SSC process, such as in the NeST framework. The NeST framework sees this as encompassing multi-stakeholder partnerships, people-centred engagements, inclusivity, demand-driven activities and non-conditionality.<sup>116</sup>

Ownership should also be ongoing throughout the entire process, which some Southern actors have managed through joint commissions. Ownership can also be more closely linked to the SDGs.

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116 NeST, A Monitoring and Evaluation Framework for South-South Cooperation, 2017, <https://saiia.org.za/research/a-monitoring-and-evaluation-framework-for-south-south-cooperation/>

Many stakeholders interviewed noted that ownership in the GPEDC sense does not adequately consider the demand-driven nature of the request, which should be led by the host country and more flexible and adaptable to change than the GPEDC's frameworks allows. SSC funds have been used to accommodate demands on a changing basis, but ownership could be considered in terms of requests accepted. For many Southern actors, ownership is seen in terms of self-reliance and sustainability. At the same time, ownership in SSC should not be related to conditionality, since some stakeholders stated that conditionality in NSC (also related to transparency and accountability) prevents trust-building when project managers fear that they will not be given renewed funding if they do not 'comply', which therefore results in projects being seen as 'external.'

A focus on results is also important for Southern countries, as by the development of monitoring and evaluation systems in countries such as Brazil, Mexico and now even China. Southern countries have also used RMB frameworks under UN guidance on SSTC projects, such as through ILO. However, the ability to assess results also depends on capacity and many Southern actors prefer qualitative information as a means of scaling up SSC (facts and figures), though quantitative information can also be included. Quantifying results could also look at value for money (efficiency). Results can also be seen in terms of mutual learning and benefit and Southern actors also consider the project context to be important. Moreover, there have been suggestions that it is more important to look at 'efficiency' than 'effectiveness' since this speaks to making resources go further rather than relying on aspects of financial quantification that don't necessarily translate to utility. At the same time, others have argued that economic cooperation modalities are too broad as a modality, and therefore it is possible to only focus on the effectiveness of SSC development cooperation at a technical level or at a project-specific level.

A multistakeholder approach is an operational principle

of SSC, and multistakeholder partnerships are often considered important and encouraged. In reality, SSC is predominantly measured in terms of government-government initiatives due to a lack of institutional capacity in gathering data from these other stakeholders. However, Southern actors see the value in measuring this engagement since assessments of SSC would otherwise not assess the full extent of cooperation. SSC also applies the principle of partnerships among equals, which has a different connotation.

Transparency and accountability are also an element that has emerged across different SSC effectiveness frameworks, although again can be interpreted differently by different actors. For example, some see accountability as between the government and its people (demonstrated by Southern partners issuing annual reports on SSC), while others see accountability more in terms of the relationship between the host and sharing country. Some other Southern actors also state that there is a limit to transparency as SSC is a wider foreign policy instrument. Table 5 shows the points of convergence and divergence on SSC assessment methodologies per the GPEDC principles as revealed in the interviews

Table 5 Points on convergence and divergence on SSC assessment methodologies per GPEDC principles<sup>117</sup>

Topic	Points of convergence	Points of divergence	Comments
General	Southern partners gather mainly qualitative information on effectiveness (and some also look at quantitative data), showing the importance of assessment. The four GPEDC principles are useful for some Southern countries for examining effectiveness and each one in theory relates to previous efforts to develop SSC assessment frameworks.	Quantification undervalues SSC effectiveness because it doesn't capture the political dimensions of SSC and some types of SSC technical exchanges.	The four principles of the GPEDC are interlinked and should not be seen as mutually exclusive. They do not cover all aspects of SSC.

117 Based on interviews with countries, policymakers, academics and UN organisations between March and June 2022

Country Ownership	National ownership is a key principle of SSC as detailed in BAPA+40 and numerous other SSC frameworks. The measurement of ownership in terms of aligning to national priorities is useful.	The demand-driven nature of SSC is not explicitly captured by GPEDC measurement of ownership that relies only on country frameworks that does not speak to the quality of implementation. SSC ownership operates across the implementation and planning stage (consultation). The use of joint commissions is one way of achieving this. Ownership can mean self-reliance for Southern actors or the building of capacity.	Development effectiveness should allow for change and innovation that countries may only hear of or want to adopt after the development of national and sectoral development plans. NSC actors often want to apply their own systems, with a focus on resources, which again limits country ownership.
Focus on results	Some Southern actors have developed monitoring and evaluation systems for SSC, illustrating the importance of a focus on results (although this is not an SSC principle). Time and cost have been factored into some Southern frameworks. Some Southern countries have been happy to use RBM frameworks and a TOC under UN (TrC) guidance.	Time and cost should look more at value for money and technical exchanges than resources or speed of implementation. Results can be qualitative with a view to scaling up (focus on facts and figures). Results in SSC must be seen through a lens of mutual benefit and learning, and of relevance to the project context.	In SSC, impact is often more focused on the process than results. Disaggregation of data allows for an examination of SSC against different modalities.
Inclusive partnerships	Assessing these partnerships allows Southern actors to measure the full extent of SSC.	SSC is often government-government and inclusive partnerships should not be an either/or for effectiveness. A key SSC principle is equal partnerships that implies a horizontal process..	This is very hard to measure due to the limited capacity to go beyond government initiatives in SSC institutional set-up
Transparency and accountability	Most efforts to measure the effectiveness of SSC have considered this principle, although it is not agreed by all. Often, countries that have formalised their cooperation have some form of annual report for accountability purposes	M&E systems are also considered under this principle (but this could also be seen as a focus on results). In SSC there is a greater emphasis on mutual accountability. Accountability can be between the government and the people, or the sharing country government and host country. SSC is also a wider foreign policy instrument, and therefore this transparency can be a challenge.	Conditionality accompanied North-South efforts to enhance transparency has impacted on trust since Southern actors feel they are being judged and are therefore not so receptive to open conversation

## 3.2. Towards flexible and country-based SSC assessment considerations

Given the plurality of SSC assessment frameworks and methodologies, this study proposes flexible and country-focussed SSC assessment considerations that can be adapted according to country priorities and needs. The below is proposed on the basis of key issues that emerged from the findings of this research. The first consideration outlines the need to gather institutional data since this determines how SSC is defined and implemented, including for example the types of SSC modalities used. The second consideration recognises the documentation of good practices for replicability, which can include using case studies to share information on SSC institutionalisation and assessment systems in terms of facts and figures, process as well as impact. The third consideration then considers how Southern actors have developed their assessment methods based on SSC facts and figures. The fourth consideration, SSC process, detail how countries view SSC and GPEDC principles in their own context and add some additional “process” considerations that have emerged from the literature on establishing SSC assessment frameworks and methodologies to enhance SSC effectiveness and from countries piloting the GPEDC principles or building their SSC own assessment frameworks. This is described below

- **Institutionalisation.** This can cover governance, regulatory and administrative data. Institutionalisation is key to developing a strong SSC assessment framework and systems such as a central country agency involving ministries and partners at the highest levels with coordination mechanisms, joint commissions and SSC funds can enhance SSC effectiveness.
- **Documentation of good practices for replicability.** To facilitate learning and knowledge-sharing, Southern actors often illustrate their good practices by case studies. SSC actors can also consider how to replicate these good practices to scale up SSC in an effective manner by considering levels of demand, applicability to country context, the type of partnership needed, and the best modalities for doing so. This also speaks to enhancing visibility.



- **SSC Facts and Figures.** **SSC** facts and figures can assess both qualitative and quantitative information. Countries can develop qualitative systems that detail the who, what, when and where. As these systems become more institutionalised, they can develop their own reporting or monitoring systems that disaggregate data according to technical or financial cooperation modalities. The modalities can be linked to the SDGs. Should countries wish to develop their own quantitative systems, they may wish to develop a methodology that considers the added value of technical exchange or purchasing power parity. A focus on results may also include assessments of efficiency. Assessments of SSC facts and figures identify trends and allow actors to scale up, deepen or explore new partnerships.

- **Process**

- SSC principles

1. National ownership. National ownership is the central tenet of any SSC process. Alignment with national priorities is a part of the SSC principle of ownership, showing that it can also be operationalised. However, for Southern actors, national ownership could focus more on commonalities between the sharing and host countries' priorities and be demand driven by being based on ongoing country requests. Predictability of funding is important, although this also needs to allow for flexibility and innovation. National ownership should be gauged at all stages of the project cycle and should also examine quality of SSC.
2. Equality This considers the to the horizontal aspects of SSC engagement, including communication (such as the way feedback is jointly discussed), working by consensus, trust and flexibility. It also speaks to shared decisions and resources.
3. Mutual benefit. This signifies benefits to both the host and sharing country. Mutual benefit refers to the result, but also to the process.
4. Non-conditionality. Non-conditionality is a key principle of SSC that also promotes national ownership and trust-building.

5. Non-interference in domestic affairs. This is a key principle of SSC, relating to the fact that SSC engagements should not influence political processes or undermine the official positions of the partnering government. SSC is a key component of the foreign policy of some countries.

#### Additional elements of SSC process

1. Project context and relevance. For Southern actors, it is important to identify what is most important to a host country. SSC assessment frameworks would need to examine the relevance of the project to the host country's needs. This could also include an examination of how the project contributes to the progress of SDGs contextualized to the development priorities of the country.
2. Self-reliance and sustainability. Empowerment is a key element of SSC and speaks to knowledge and technology transferred, capacities built, and other elements presented in the paper. By building their own national capacity, countries can become less dependent on others in the long-term.
3. Inclusive and multi-stakeholder partnerships. While many Southern actors aspire to assess the involvement of non-state actors in their development cooperation, this is not always easily achieved due to the lack of capacity to assess these efforts. At the same time, SSC can speak to networking and relation building at different levels.
4. Accountability. Annual reports and monitoring are key for countries providing SSC and speak to strengthening SSC visibility. However Southern actors may wish to consider SSC indicators that reflect mutual accountability. This is also particularly important for host countries. Transparency could be further explored as it mutually reinforces accountability.

### **3.3. Conclusion**

This paper takes forward the efforts of APC-Colombia (as the lead of AA2.3) to analyse how different aspects of effectiveness are being applied in the context of SSC.

It finds that the GPEDC effectiveness principles are useful and relevant for assessing SSC, but that the GPEDC principles should be adapted to country contexts and expanded to include key aspects that are important to the Global South. As such, the paper proposes flexible and multi-dimensional considerations for SSC assessment frameworks that focus on institutionalisation, good practices and replicability, facts and figures and process (SSC principles as well as other process considerations).

Institutionalisation determines how SSC is defined and conceptualised in a given country and determines the national monitoring and information system that collects the data used to assess SSC. Case studies bring visibility to SSC and enhance knowledge sharing and learning, including on SSC assessment systems. Facts and figures relate to efforts to develop qualitative systems, which can also include quantitative efforts, should a country desire this. A disaggregation of data allows for greater comparisons and can contribute to global debates on the virtue or difficulties of including economic cooperation data (such as LOCs or concessional loans) in addition to technical cooperation data. Process builds on the key principles of SSC but also on emerging issues such as linkages to the SDGs, and project context. In SSC, mutual benefit and non-conditionality are key SSC principles, while self-reliance and sustainability are key elements that emerge from research and interviews in addition to the SSC principles. In testing the application of the GPEDC effectiveness principles to SSC, ownership is a central component to SSC actors (although SSC actors see this as useful both in terms of the SSC principle of national ownership and in terms of the GPEDC principle of country ownership), while accountability, and inclusive partnerships are relevant for most Southern actors, albeit in different contexts. However, it will be critical that Southern actors that wish to enhance their SSC assessment frameworks and to enhance the effectiveness of

SSC continue to test and refine the paper's proposed considerations, thereby increasing their relevance and contribution to global debates. SSC is undoubtedly an important and complementary means to NSC and should be given the attention and support that it

deserves.

## **Annex 1: Country-led efforts to assess SSC**

### **Argentina**

Argentina's SSTC is coordinated by the Directorate General for International Cooperation under the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Its responsibilities include defining national policies and strategies for development cooperation, including the "programming, allocation of resources, establishment and execution of all management control methodologies and the evaluation of all inherent activities." The Directorate is required to develop methodologies and instruments to make technical assistance processes more dynamic to maximise the impact of human, financial and technical resources. The Argentine Fund for International Cooperation (FO.AR)'s regulatory framework is based on an agreement with the International Organisation for Migration (IOM) to support implementation. A request is made by partner countries, who fill out a form that is first evaluated by their heads of cooperation. The Embassies of Argentina then carry out a second evaluation before sending it for feasibility analysis. Monitoring of the project is carried out through mission reports, either drawn up individually or with partners. Argentina was in the process of putting in place a new methodology to monitor and evaluate SSC before the onset of the coronavirus pandemic.<sup>118</sup>

### **Brazil**

In 2016, a UNDP study was undertaken on Brazil's assessment practices in SSTC. It found that there was no unified system for measuring Brazilian cooperation, although the country adopted heterogenous practices. Primarily, SSC is

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118 NeST Latam, Institutional frameworks for South-South Cooperation in Latin America: Lessons from Argentina, Brazil and Mexico, 2021, [https://www.effectivecooperation.org/system/files/2021-08/NeST%20LATAM\\_Web.pdf](https://www.effectivecooperation.org/system/files/2021-08/NeST%20LATAM_Web.pdf)

carried out through the Brazilian Cooperation Agency (ABC). Like other SSC partners, the official Brazilian discourse has focussed on SSC principles such as the demand-driven nature of SSTC, horizontality and non-conditionality. However, there was some fragmentation due to the different actors involved across government departments. Mutual benefit was also a key element raised in the narrative, while economic and commercial benefits were seen as consequences of closer ties.

ABC developed a South-South Technical Cooperation Management Manual in 2013, which outlines how monitoring should be conducted. It proposes an analytical framework for evaluating cooperation projects, composed of questions that should guide information gathering and suggests five dimensions to consider: evaluation: design and planning; performance; effectiveness; efficiency; and sustainability. Three instruments are used for monitoring: Progress and management reports, technical missions to analyse the achievement of expected results and a monitoring committee to review the progress of the project and to identify problems. In the field research, that extended beyond the work of ABC, generally, evaluations were impact/results based.<sup>119</sup> Initially, Brazil's official report on Brazilian cooperation (COBRADI) detailed four modalities: humanitarian assistance, technical cooperation, scholarships for foreigners and contributions to international organizations. Later, in-country expenses relating to support for refugees in Brazil and the expenses incurred by the country's peacekeeping operations were also included in COBRADI, although the latter was not considered a net national expense since it is eventually reimbursed by the United Nations Department of Peacekeeping Operations.<sup>120</sup>

However, Brazil has had some challenges in measurement.

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119 UNDP, *Monitoring and Evaluation Mechanisms for South-South Cooperation, Lessons from Brazil for the 2030 Agenda*, 2016, <https://www.undp.org/publications/monitoring-and-evaluation-mechanisms-south-south-cooperation>

120 NeST Latam, *Institutional frameworks for South-South Cooperation in Latin America: Lessons from Argentina, Brazil and Mexico*, 2021, [https://www.effectivecooperation.org/system/files/2021-08/NeST%20LATAM\\_Web.pdf](https://www.effectivecooperation.org/system/files/2021-08/NeST%20LATAM_Web.pdf)

For example, monitoring was not found to improve how strategic decisions are made throughout the project, since the allocation of resources were pre-approved. It also had difficulties in incorporating feedback and could do more to systematise its efforts. Cost-effectiveness was hard to assess and capacity-building/technical cooperation was hard to quantify. There were also challenges in including civil society/private sector engagements. With TrC, challenges included a lack of standardisation among partners and the lack of an evaluation framework.<sup>121</sup> Brazil's evaluations are predominantly measured in terms of outputs rather than impact and are not always public or independent. They tend to focus on deadlines, costs, phases and expected outputs.<sup>122</sup>

## China

In 2021, China released its third White Paper on its development cooperation, interestingly labelling this as 'foreign aid.' However, it went well beyond the traditional scope of aid to outline the role of the wide variety of actors and acknowledged that ODA definitions were not the only means of examining this. It outlines a cultural and philosophical background to the Chinese approach, such as promoting a global community of a shared future, and gives five dimensions upon which it operates, namely policy, infrastructure, trade, financing and people-to-people exchanges. The framework emphasises the importance of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, stresses themes such as people-centred engagement, gender equality, a focus on the most vulnerable and the enhancement of local capacity. It also details the notion of a "Global Partnership." As such, China's foreign aid has evolved. It now also includes the South-South Cooperation Assistance Fund (SSCAF) and a modality

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121 UNDP, Monitoring and Evaluation Mechanisms for South-South Cooperation, Lessons from Brazil for the 2030 Agenda, 2016, <https://www.undp.org/publications/monitoring-and-evaluation-mechanisms-south-south-cooperation>

122 NeST Latam, Institutional frameworks for South-South Cooperation in Latin America: Lessons from Argentina, Brazil and Mexico, 2021, [https://www.effectivecooperation.org/system/files/2021-08/NeST%20LATAM\\_Web.pdf](https://www.effectivecooperation.org/system/files/2021-08/NeST%20LATAM_Web.pdf)

called “locally constructed projects.” The paper does not make explicit reference to development effectiveness, but it alludes to increasing the quality and effectiveness of SSC and in developing a modern statistical system.<sup>123</sup> This suggests that the system would focus on facts and figures rather than process or impact, although the details are not yet known.

Also in 2021, China produced an “Order of the Ministry of Commerce of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the State Administration for International Development Cooperation (No. 1 of 2012) “Measures for the Administration of Foreign Aid.” Activities comprise economic, technical, material, talent, and management support.<sup>124</sup> It emphasised SSC principles, such as mutual respect, equal treatment, win-win, sovereignty, non-interference in internal affairs and non-conditionality. China’s Development Cooperation Agency is tasked with formulating guidelines and methods and overseeing their implementation. Foreign aid funds included gratuitous aid, interest-free loans and preferential loans. It again speaks to developing a statistical system.<sup>125</sup> While China does not have a clear evaluation process, it has been observed that it focusses most of relevance, efficiency and sustainability in terms of DAC principles. Projects must be in line with identified national priorities and it emphasises mutual benefits.<sup>126</sup>

## Colombia

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123 UNDP, Brief on White Paper on China’s International Development Cooperation in the New Era, 2021, <https://www.cn.undp.org/content/china/en/home/library/south-south-cooperation/issue-brief---brief-on-white-paper-on-china-s-international-deve.html>

124 Government of China, Order of the Ministry of Commerce of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the State Administration for International Development Cooperation (No. 1 of 2012), “Measures for the Administration of Foreign Aid“, 2021, [http://www.cidca.gov.cn/2021-08/31/c\\_1211351312.htm](http://www.cidca.gov.cn/2021-08/31/c_1211351312.htm)

125 Government of China, Order of the Ministry of Commerce of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the State Administration for International Development Cooperation (No. 1 of 2012), “Measures for the Administration of Foreign Aid“, 2021, [http://www.cidca.gov.cn/2021-08/31/c\\_1211351312.htm](http://www.cidca.gov.cn/2021-08/31/c_1211351312.htm)

126 Evaluating South-South Development Cooperation: China’s Approach and Trends. In The Asia Foundation, Contemporary Asian Perspectives on South-South Cooperation, 2015, [https://asiafoundation.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/07/Contemporary-Asian-Perspectives-on-South-South-Cooperation\\_wISBN.pdf](https://asiafoundation.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/07/Contemporary-Asian-Perspectives-on-South-South-Cooperation_wISBN.pdf)

APC-Colombia is the coordinating institution for SSC in Colombia, focussing on technical and financial assistance. The country believes in the importance of measuring development effectiveness and engages in various discussions in this regard, including contributing data towards SEGIB, engaging in TOSSD discussions and as mentioned earlier, leading Action area 2.3 at the GPEDC. It uses the SEGIB definition of SSC, namely “a form of cooperation in which two developing countries exchange resources or experiences. No conditions are placed on those exchanges, and the dialogue takes place on equal terms. Costs are borne on a shared basis, although not necessarily in equal shares. Countries take the roles of provider (the one providing the main financial, technical and human resources) and recipient.<sup>127</sup>” Colombia also recognises the DAC definition. Colombia believes that the GPEDC principles are very similar to SSC principles. It administers its development cooperation through the International Assistance and Cooperation Fund (FOCAI).

In terms of measurement, Colombia has created the Official Development Assistance Platform (SIAOD). Specifically for SSC, it conducts monitoring through a monitoring matrix, initiative programming and implementation table. Colombia has been using a “Quantification and Value Addition Model” (MCAV) that goes beyond financial costs to also consider indirect costs. Currently, Colombia has been identifying a set of tools and methodology to improve the quality of its cooperation efforts. This is called the “Toolbox.” APC-Colombia examines five dimensions, namely Project Context (Dimension of Knowledge); Network Generation and Relation Building; Visibility of Learning Outcomes; Linkage of project with SDGs and a differential approach to see how the project benefits the excluded especially women and minority groups.<sup>128</sup>

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127 ECLAC, Evaluating South-South cooperation in six Latin American and Caribbean countries, 2021, [https://repositorio.cepal.org/bitstream/handle/11362/47446/3/S2100360\\_en.pdf](https://repositorio.cepal.org/bitstream/handle/11362/47446/3/S2100360_en.pdf)

128 RIS, Delhi Process Fifth Conference on South-South and Triangular Cooperation, 2019, <https://www.ris.org.in/key-takeaways-delhi-process-fifth-conference-south-south-and-triangular-cooperation>



The knowledge sharing element has nine stages: i) Demand for South-South cooperation. (ii) Formalization through diplomatic channels and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. (iii) Feasibility analysis with technical partners from the public and private sectors. (iv) Technical and financial validation to determine the expectations and scope of the exchange. (v) Joint formulation of the South-South cooperation project. (vi) Structuring of South-South cooperation exchange activities, including technical and operational preparations. (vii) Implementation of activities, which may include the transfer of technical and financial resources. (viii) Quarterly follow-up and monitoring of activities. (ix) Conclusion and socialization of results through the Final Project Report tool, which seeks to encourage feedback and the possibility of replicating successful initiatives. Colombia uses a formula to measure the costs associated with SSTC, taking into account direct and indirect costs. The value add is then assessed by category in economic and qualitative terms. Colombia has also developed a knowledge hub for the sharing of good practices. It refers to “providing partners” and “recipient partners” to distinguish between traditional distinctions of “donors” and “recipients.”<sup>129</sup> Finally, it is important to note that Colombia makes its results visible through a Management Report.

## India

India’s development assistance has generally consisted of LOCs, concessional loans and Technical and Economic Cooperation. The Development Partnership Administration, housed within the Ministry of External Affairs generally oversees its cooperation. Information on its development assistance is widely dispersed and highly disaggregated, making it hard to measure, and it lacks an effective evaluation framework.<sup>130</sup> Chaturvedi argues for the notion of a “Development compact” that works at five

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129 ECLAC, Evaluating South-South cooperation in six Latin American and Caribbean countries, 2021, [https://repositorio.cepal.org/bitstream/handle/11362/47446/3/S2100360\\_en.pdf](https://repositorio.cepal.org/bitstream/handle/11362/47446/3/S2100360_en.pdf)

130 Observer Research Foundation, Institutional architecture for India’s development cooperation: A 2030 vision, May 2021, <https://www.orfonline.org/expert-speak/institutional-architecture-india-development-cooperation-2030-vision/>

different levels, namely, trade and investment; technology; skills upgrade; LOCs and finally, grants. The idea of a development compact works along the lines of SSC principles, rather than the imposition of conditionalities and is intended to be a reciprocal obligation.<sup>131</sup>

## Indonesia

Indonesia has moved from receiving external support to assisting other countries and it continues to play a dual role. SSTC became part of Indonesia's foreign policy in 2010 under its Medium-Term Development Plan, and the Ministry of National Development Planning (Bappenas) established a National Coordination Team on SSTC. This team has developed a "Grand Design" and "Blueprint," which describe the SSTC policy and direction. The general criteria for flagship programmes include programmes and activities 1) In line with the country's potential and initiative, with a history of successful implementation 2) Those successfully conducted in other Southern countries, whose approach makes wide adoption possible 3) Those with replication mechanisms and knowledge- and technology-sharing mechanisms and 4) Those with wide impact and potential contributions to the future of SSTC. It should be noted that, due to a lack of record or evaluation of past projects, there are no clear measures of success that are defined, and assessments are done informally by the National Coordination Team and line ministries.<sup>132</sup>

## Mexico

Mexico arguably has one of the most advanced systems for monitoring and evaluating SSC. It has a law on International

131 Research and Information Systems for Developing Countries, *The Development Compact: A Theoretical Construct for South-South Cooperation*, 2016, <https://ris.org.in/newasiaforum/sites/default/files/Publication%20File/DP203%20Dr%20Sachin%20Chaturvedi.pdf>

132 Charting the Path to Development Effectiveness: Indonesia's SSC challenges. In The Asia Foundation, *Contemporary Asian Perspectives on South-South Cooperation*, 2015, [https://asiafoundation.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/07/Contemporary-Asian-Perspectives-on-South-South-Cooperation\\_wISBN.pdf](https://asiafoundation.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/07/Contemporary-Asian-Perspectives-on-South-South-Cooperation_wISBN.pdf)  
Mexico's terminology

Development Cooperation and has developed the Mexican Agency for International Development Cooperation (AMEXCID). It defines International Development Cooperation as the “transfer, reception and exchange of resources, goods, knowledge and educational, cultural, technical, scientific, economic and financial experiences between governments as well as with international organizations, for the purpose of promoting sustainable human development.” Horizontal cooperation is defined as “a type of cooperation for economic and social development in which the provider’s<sup>133</sup> resources are complemented by counterpart resources provided by the recipient.” Furthermore, both costs and benefits are shared, regardless of the percentage of the provider’s participation in terms of financial, human and technical resources. Mutual benefit and responsibilities are therefore a key element of its SSC practice.<sup>134</sup>

As noted at the Fifth Delhi conference, AMEXCID acknowledges the principles of SSC but also believes in developing more operational principles. With UNDP, Mexico has looked at measuring the effectiveness of its cooperation by looking at transparency and mutual assessment, results-oriented, ownership by beneficiaries and inclusive partnerships.<sup>135</sup> Mexico also piloted the first exercise adapting the GPEDC effectiveness principles to a contextualized SSC assessment in 2017, which are further discussed later.

## Rwanda

The Rwanda Cooperation Initiative (RCI) is a public company that coordinates various SSC exchanges and that will manage the marketing and commercialisation of its SSC solutions. The RCI is attached to Ministry of Foreign Affairs, but the shareholder

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133 Mexico’s terminology

134 NeST Latam, Institutional frameworks for South-South Cooperation in Latin America: Lessons from Argentina, Brazil and Mexico, 2021, [https://www.effectivecooperation.org/system/files/2021-08/NeST%20LATAM\\_Web.pdf](https://www.effectivecooperation.org/system/files/2021-08/NeST%20LATAM_Web.pdf)

135 RIS, Delhi Process Fifth Conference on South-South and Triangular Cooperation, 2019, <https://www.ris.org.in/key-takeaways-delhi-process-fifth-conference-south-south-and-triangular-cooperation>

is the Ministry of Finance. Other key stakeholders include the Rwanda Governance Board (RGB), the Ministry of Defence, and the Office of the President for example. Rwanda is in the process of developing its SSC strategy.<sup>136</sup> It remains to be seen what kind of assessment system will be integrated into this strategy, particularly given its commercial focus, which suggests an efficient use of resources and making money go further.

## Annex 2: GPEDC effectiveness principles and monitoring framework indicators (based on the 2018 version of the GPEDC Monitoring Framework)<sup>137</sup>

### *Principles*

1. Country ownership
2. Focus on results
3. Inclusive partnerships
4. Transparency and mutual accountability

### *Monitoring framework indicators*<sup>138</sup>

1. Country ownership indicators: Development co-operation is predictable: annual predictability; Development co-operation is predictable: medium-term predictability; Quality of Countries' Public Financial Management Systems; Development partners use country systems; Aid is untied.

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136 <https://www.africa.undp.org/content/rba/en/home/library/reports/first-african-south-south-cooperation-report.html>

137 GPEDC, What does the exercise monitor? [https://www.effectivecooperation.org/system/files/2021-02/Global%20Partnership%20Monitoring\\_Indicator%20Framework.pdf](https://www.effectivecooperation.org/system/files/2021-02/Global%20Partnership%20Monitoring_Indicator%20Framework.pdf)

138 Please note that this paper was drafted based on the 2018 GPEDC indicator framework, which has since changed, and from 2023 onwards, a new monitoring framework is in place which no longer rigidly links particular measurements to one of the four effectiveness principles. For more information on the updated and reformed monitoring framework, please visit: <https://effectivecooperation.org/landing-page/monitoring-data>

2. Focus on results indicators: Countries strengthen their national results frameworks; Development partners use country-led results frameworks.
3. Inclusive partnerships indicators: Quality of public-private dialogue; Civil society organisations operate within an environment that maximises their engagement in and contribution to development.
4. Transparent information on development co-operation is publicly available; Mutual accountability among development actors is strengthened through inclusive reviews; Development co-operation is included in budgets subject to parliamentary oversight; Countries have systems to track and make public allocations for gender equality and women's empowerment.

## Annex 3: “Mexico Indicators” examining the applicability of the effectiveness principles to their SSC context

Effectiveness principles	Mexico Indicators <sup>139</sup>
Country ownership	The offer of SSC is aligned with the results frameworks and priorities of the partner country
Focus on results	The SSC provider uses strategic SSC frameworks (at national and sub national level)
Transparency and mutual accountability	Information on SSC (at national and sub national level) is publicly available
	SSC is subject to parliamentary oversight
Inclusive partnerships	SSC incorporates gender equality
	The quality of public-private dialogues in SSC
	Civil society organizations participate in SSC and contribute to effective development cooperation

139 AMEXCID, Ejercicio de Monitoreo de la Eficacia De La Cooperación Sur-Sur, 2019, [https://www.gob.mx/cms/uploads/attachment/file/447836/EJERCICIO\\_DE\\_MONITOREO\\_2019-esp.pdf](https://www.gob.mx/cms/uploads/attachment/file/447836/EJERCICIO_DE_MONITOREO_2019-esp.pdf)