

1. Introduction

The ILO is committed to the promotion of South-South and triangular cooperation (SSTC), recognising it as a key development cooperation modality for the promotion of Decent Work for All and a strategic vehicle for promoting mutually beneficial learning and cooperation in support of the 2030 Agenda. The Resolution on “Effective development cooperation in support of the Sustainable Development Goals”¹ adopted during the 107th Session of the International Labour Conference (ILC 2018), underlines the importance of this form of cooperation, further elaborated in the ILO Governing Body (GB) documents “South–South and triangular cooperation and decent work: Recent developments and future steps” (2018)² and “South- South and triangular cooperation: The way forward” (2012)³. SSTC, based on principles of solidarity and mutual benefit, is seen to enhance peer learning and exchanges of good practices between developing countries, as well as the integration of new partners and strengthened cooperation between countries of the South.

This *How-to-guide* aims at helping ILO officials in the field and at HQ to design SSTC projects and/or to include SSTC elements in other development cooperation projects. Horizontal arrangements can generate development solutions through policies and processes that better fit partners’ needs. Promoting sustainable and decent work for all is central to the ILO’s mandate and South- South and triangular cooperation has a key role to play in this regard. The purpose of this guide is to support the inclusion of this modality among other strategies applied by ILO officials to contribute to the ILO’s strategic objectives and policy outcomes in a manner that benefits from the unique tripartite structure of the organisation.

This revised guide (original edition, ILO, 2014) is inspired by new SSTC initiatives at the ILO as well as other international frameworks on SSTC, most notably the Second High-level United Nations Conference on South-South cooperation (BAPA +40, Buenos Aires, Argentina, 20-22 March 2019)⁴.

¹ Available at: https://www.ilo.org/ilc/ILCSessions/previous-sessions/107/reports/texts-adopted/WCMS_633138/lang--en/index.htm

² Available at: https://www.ilo.org/gb/GBSessions/GB332/pol/WCMS_617990/lang--en/index.htm

³ Available at: https://www.ilo.org/gb/GBSessions/previous-sessions/GB313/pol/WCMS_172577/lang--ru/index.htm

⁴ BAPA +40 provided recommendations for the UN system to better mainstream SSTC and mobilise its benefits in future development projects. It also clarifies some concepts and terminologies regarding SSTC.

2. South-South and triangular cooperation: definitions, modalities and principles

a. Definitions and Modalities

There are two modalities of development cooperation identified as part of the “South-South and triangular cooperation” field, according to BAPA + 40 (2019), namely **South-South Cooperation** and **Triangular Cooperation**. **South-South Cooperation (SSC)** is a process whereby two or more developing countries pursue their individual and/or shared national capacity development objectives through exchanges of knowledge, skills, resources and technical know-how, and through regional and interregional collective actions, including partnerships involving governments, regional organizations, civil society, academia and the private sector, for their individual and/or mutual benefit within and across regions.⁵ South–South cooperation is not a substitute for, but rather a complement to, North–South cooperation.

Triangular cooperation refers to South–South cooperation supported by a “Northern” partner.⁶ Triangular cooperation can frequently consist of both a financial contribution from a Northern partner and technical skills provided by a Southern partner, in support of another developing country⁷.

Both **South-South Cooperation** and **Triangular cooperation** include the following sub-modalities: [City-to-City Cooperation \(C2C\)](#); [Fragile-to-Fragile Cooperation \(F2F\)](#); Cooperation between Small Islands and Developing States ([SIDS-to-SIDS](#)); regional; sub-regional; bilateral; inter-regional.

<p>City-to-City Cooperation (C2C)</p> <p>C2C recognized by the international community as a sub-modality of South-South Cooperation that enables Southern countries and Southern cities to benefit from experiences developed in similar contexts, and therefore better adapted to their realities⁸. Cities and Local authorities are essential actors in SSTC as they are those who are in direct contact with the needs of the people and those that implement the public policies affecting the people.</p>	<p>Good Practice : Maputo Road Map⁹</p> <p>In November 2012 city representatives from Maputo and other Mozambican municipalities, as well as other authorities from Durban, Belo Horizonte and Porto Alegre met through the support of ILO, the Norwegian Ministry of Cooperation, the Cities Alliance and the Brazilian, South African and Brazilian government. At the end of the workshop the ‘<i>Maputo Roadmap</i>’ was developed <i>highlighting</i> strategic support needed by cities and their partners to develop a project enabling South-South peer collaboration, and to build the required local capacity for its efficient implementation.</p>
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⁵ ILO South–South and triangular cooperation and decent work: Recent developments and future steps. Available at: https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_norm/---relconf/documents/meetingdocument/wcms_617990.pdf

⁶ This definition often varies from country to country, but in this guide, we have adopted the most frequently used in the UN system.

⁷ Certain cooperation agencies define triangular cooperation as cooperation between three or more developing countries, and/ or multilateral institution (using the concept inter-changeably with “trilateral cooperation”).⁷

⁸ Often C2C is also considered as a sub-set of “triangular” cooperation, and it even can be limited to cities of the “North”. For this guide, we will favour the definition present in the GB 2018, that refers to cooperation between cities of the Global South.

⁹Localizing the Decent Work Agenda through South-South and City-to-City Cooperation

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/0B9BX0GCP9Kv2bUNFV2VBOUp3dIE/view>

<p>Fragile-to-Fragile Cooperation (F2F) <i>The idea of “Fragile-to-Fragile” (F2F) cooperation consists of (i) sharing good practices and experiences between fragile states to promote peaceful societies; (ii) fragile states placing common issues and goals in international agendas and forums; (iii) mutually supporting one another through exchange programs and resource mobilization from a fragile to another fragile country (g7+) (ILO, 2015)</i></p>	<p>Good Practice: Mano River Union Cross border trade In 2019 The MRU received advice on how to develop an instrument conducive to cross-border trade, focusing on women entrepreneurs, and to identify good practices on how to effectively implement the instrument from both regional and country-level perspectives. The “Simplified Guide for Micro and Small-Scale Women Cross-Border Traders and Service Providers within the East African Community” was adapted to the MRU context and the pilot experience in Sierra Leone, building on the conclusions of the situational analysis and based on the lessons generated through the study tour.</p>
<p>Cooperation between Small Islands and Developing States (SIDS-to-SIDS) Small Island Developing States (SIDS) have been recognized as a distinct group of developing countries facing specific social, economic and environmental vulnerabilities. As stated in ILO GB 2018, SSTC support to cooperation between least developed countries and small island developing states is a stand-alone form of development cooperation.</p>	<p>Good Practice: Just transition and climate resilience in Samoa Samoa and neighboring island countries face such challenges as climate change; lack of employment opportunities for decent sustainable jobs in agriculture; food insecurity; lack of skills matching and labour market management, green jobs, and decent work policies; as well as lack of funding to achieve the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda. At the ILO Future of Work Forum (Suva, Fiji, 2017) a resolution to complement the new climate initiatives implemented by each country was initiated. This experience was show-cased in the Global South-South Expo in New York in 2018.</p>

b. Principles

The SSTC agenda is guided by an increasingly comprehensive set of principles, including respect for national sovereignty and ownership, equality, solidarity, non-conditionality, and mutual benefit,¹⁰ principles reflected in the Outcome Documents of BAPA (1978)¹¹, G77 Ministerial Meeting in Nairobi (2009)¹², ILO GB 2018, Global Partnerships for Effective Development Cooperation (2016) and BAPA+40 (2019)¹³. South-South and triangular cooperation has a multi-stakeholder approach that allow all involved parties to collectively learn. In addition, the core principles of SSTC are expected to promote a higher level of commitment and self-confidence among stakeholder countries.

The table below suggests steps to be taken by ILO officials when planning SSTC projects or components, to ensure that the core principles of SSTC are well considered and reflected in the project:

¹⁰ Nairobi Outcome Document of the High-Level United Nations Conference on South-South Cooperation (§8, §9, §10, and §16).

Available at: <https://drive.google.com/file/d/0B-buqyoV0jpSbExUYVdoT0dMZGc/view>

¹¹ Buenos Aires Plan of Action, 1978. Available at: <https://www.unsouthsouth.org/bapa40/documents/buenos-aires-plan-of-action/>

¹² United Nations Conference on South-South Cooperation (§11 and §18). Available at: <https://drive.google.com/file/d/0B-buqyoV0jpSbExUYVdoT0dMZGc/view>

¹³ Outcome Document of the Second High-level United Nations Conference on South-South Cooperation (BAPA +40). Available at: https://drive.google.com/file/d/1sqrZWIn6ZU0a-4o-AtEcyKEOJ4gPqZHS/view?usp=drive_open

Principles	ILO Context and Application
Ownership, independence and voluntary nature	These principles refer to the need for demand driven development cooperation, which are country and/or regionally owned. In the context of ILO projects, it is important to keep the Global South partners in the driver's seat during the entire project cycle.
Equality	Equality and horizontality are essential in SSTC initiatives in the ILO. In the SSTC context, countries should work as equal partners, learning from each other. According to the ILO (GB 2018), SSTC should not be seen as official development assistance, but as a partnership among equals based on solidarity, and it is not a substitute for, but rather a complement to, North-South cooperation.
Multi-stakeholder approach	SSTC embraces a multi-stakeholder approach. The ILO has a comparative advantage in this regard, due to its tripartite nature, and social partners can play a key role in promoting SSTC. ¹⁴
Mutual accountability and transparency¹⁵	BAPA + 40 , AAAA and GPEDC recognized the need to enhance the effectiveness of South-South and triangular cooperation by continuing to increase mutual accountability and transparency, in accordance with national development plans and priorities. The ILO has embraced this concept, and it is increasingly relevant in framework of SSTC reporting.
Mutual benefit	SSTC is based on the principle that all parties to this form of cooperation learn from each other. Often SSTC projects replicate traditional and vertical models of cooperation, whereas there should be indicators that all parties take full benefit of the project results.
Participative nature	Participation and consultation are essential to strengthen collaboration among ILO's tripartite Constituents.
Solidarity	In the ILO, the Principle of Solidarity of SSTC, is present in the above mentioned GB 2018 paper focusing on future South-South steps. It is a key principle, and it relates to key areas of work, such as Social and Solidarity economy and Local Economic Development (LED).

c. Forms and Mechanisms

According to BAPA +40, SSTC can take the following forms and mechanisms :

Forms	Mechanisms
Development / Technical cooperation between developing countries	Direct support or cost-sharing arrangements
Sharing of knowledge and experience between developing countries	Peer-learning Sharing good practices
Capacity development	Personnel exchange Third-country training programs (country-to-country peer-learning) Support for relevant centres of excellence
Technology transfer and match-making between needs and solutions in the Global South	Joint research and development programmes and projects

¹⁴ Paragraph (e) of GB 2012 paper on SSTC

¹⁵ In BAPA+ 40 "mutual accountability and transparency" were identified as a "need", rather than a principle

The Role of the ILO in SSTC

- ❖ Identifies and brings parties together, acting as an advocate for dialogue to help them reach consensus on SSTC activities.
- ❖ Facilitation of activities to enhance policy dialogue research, identification and dissemination of good practices.
- ❖ Act as knowledge broker and identifies strategic initiatives in the world of work where SSTC activities would be to have major impact.
- ❖ The ILO also has an important role to in building partnerships with governments and institutions from the south and prepares individual strategies to implement SSTC activities.

3. SSTC in practice

a. Actors involved

South - South and triangular cooperation embraces a multi stakeholder approach, working with ILO Tripartite Partners. According to BAPA +40 and GB documents, some of the key actors include the following:

- Governments from the Global South and Emerging Partners
- Social partners (not explicit in BAPA)
- Subnational entities and parliamentarians
- Funds Philanthropic organizations
- Scientific and technological communities
- Faith-based organizations
- International and regional banks and
- Foundations and think-tanks
- Local and regional authorities
- Civil society and NGOs
- Private sector
- Volunteer groups

b. SSTC Project formulation steps

SSTC projects follow similar steps to any other cooperation project; however, peer learning and participatory approaches should be systematic throughout the process

STEP

1

Needs Matching & Identification

- Articulate the development or outcome result to which the potential SSTC component would contribute.
- Identify potential partner, actively involve the relevant stakeholders and encourage the participation of workers and employers or their representatives in SSTC project.
- Explore the possibilities of engaging with and their ability and interest in providing mutual support in relevant areas of the decent work agenda.
- Identify SSTC and other sources of funding (this can be bilateral, regional or subregional).

STEP

2

Formulation

- Define, with the tripartite partners and other relevant stakeholders, strategies to achieve mutually beneficial results for all actors.
- Formulate your theory of change to clarify how the SSTC initiative is expected to contribute to outcome results (in e.g., a DC project, DWCP as relevant), taking into account assumptions and risks associated with the intended SSTC project, based on lessons learned from previous SSTC projects / programmes.

STEP

3

Planning Implementation

- Prepare a logical framework defining expected outcome result (the outcome result to which the SSTC component will contribute); the outputs of the SSTC initiative, as well as activities. Include important assumptions as well as indicators to monitor progress.
- Develop a result-based budget and detailed workplan for the SSTC project/program.
- Highlight the expected SSTC benefits for each of the partners during implementation.

TIP: Refer to the DC Manual (Project design –Section 4) and How to Guide No 6 (Indicators)

https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---dgreports/---exrel/documents/publication/wcms_452076.pdf

b. SSTC design for results

SSTC projects should use result-oriented methodologies and tools such as: **Logical Framework** (Log Frame) that helps you to clarify the underlying causality intended for in the SSTC project and links the SSTC design phase and the implementation phase by connecting the project results chain and the Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) system through indicators. **Theory of Change (TOC)** is essential for clarifying and communicating how change is expected to happen and where monitoring must occur to ensure that it happen as expected within a given SSTC project. Additionally **TOC** will also help you to clarify the causal links between outputs and outcomes, and between outcomes and impact in a convincing manner as shown in below ¹⁶

4. Do's and Don'ts of South-South and triangular cooperation design

	👉 Do's	👉 Don'ts
Need-matching	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collecting adequate information that would help to understand thoroughly the issues of each partners, and the resources they are bringing to the cooperation. If the needs match, compatibility between partners should be examined from different perspectives, including culture, language, religion, gender and race. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Avoid over-looking culturally sensitive contexts.
Stakeholder consultations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All partners, including tripartite partners should be involved since the beginning of the design process. Consultations should be aligned with development partners' priorities and needs (demand-driven) i.e. South-South and triangular cooperation and its agenda must be driven by the needs of the countries of the Global South. Ensuring a gender balance in stakeholder consultations is key to the SSTC project' efforts of achieving gender equality 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Avoid calling development partners as "donors": For South-South and triangular cooperation, stakeholders are development partners, neither "donors" nor "recipients".
Project design	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All partners have a voice, ensuring participatory processes, while following ILO rules. If it is a Triangular Cooperation, partners from the North and South need to be equally included. Structure Knowledge management based on peer learning. Allow for revisions in the design process and adjustments based on evaluations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Avoid designing projects without consultations with the constituents and other stakeholders of the South-South and triangular cooperation.

¹⁶ More details on those tools can be found in the Development Cooperation Internal Governance Manual (ILO, 2015). Available at: https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---dgreports/---exrel/documents/publication/wcms_452076.pdf

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Indicators for evaluation of the quality of SSTC results must reflect SSTC principles as defined in internationally agreed frameworks. • The design process should be flexible and adaptive to the local contexts and changes that might occur. • Project design must include a structured Knowledge management system that would allow the revision and replication of SSTC results in the future. 	
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ANNEX I- BAPA + 40 Recommendations for the ILO (as part of the UN System)

- Strengthen South-South platforms and the exchange of experience among sub-regional and regional groupings: *The ILO does this through the [RBTC-SSTC facility](#) (support to regions)*
- Engage think tanks, communities of practice, networks and expert groups to successfully implement the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development
- Support initiatives for information and data collection, coordination, dissemination and evaluation of South-South cooperation, upon the request of developing countries
- Continue incorporating South-South cooperation and triangular cooperation into policies, programmes, strategic frameworks and other planning instruments, including appropriate indicators and methodologies
- Provide support for the exchange of good practices on innovative policies and approaches between developing countries
- Continue its support to the strengthening of relevant public research institutions, academic institutions, think tanks, knowledge networks and relevant regional or thematic centers of excellence, as institutional spaces for knowledge development and sharing on South-South and triangular cooperation initiatives
- Assist developing countries, upon request, in building the human and institutional capacity needed to formulate and implement national development policies, strategies and programmes for South-South and triangular cooperation
- Enhance its assistance to developing countries in seeking for potential cooperation partners in strategic areas identified by developing countries and to act as enabler of the building of these partnerships
- Enhance its support to South-South and triangular cooperation inter alia in the areas of promoting capacity-building, regional integration, interregional linkages, infrastructure interconnectivity and the development of national productive capacities and in several areas of sustainable development
- Improve the effectiveness, the coherence and coordination and complementarity of their operational activities in support of South-South and triangular cooperation
- Continue its support to regional and sub regional organizations for the continued promotion of transparent, sustainable and accountable development practices, and to enable more partnerships
- To further incorporate South-South cooperation and triangular cooperation in technology facilitation mechanisms
- To conduct relevant studies and convene dialogues to explore policy options for developing countries to individually and collectively manage challenges and enhance the benefits from the evolution of technologies
- Encourage Member States (and social partners) to share relevant knowledge, experience and best practices on public-private partnerships
- Commend developing countries that have partnered with United Nations entities and established financing facilities and trust funds to advance South-South cooperation for addressing development challenges
- Upon request, to facilitate developing countries to access South-South cooperation funds

ANNEX II- Sample of SSTC Activities for the 2020 – 2021 biennium

Outcome	Sample activities
Outcome 1: Strong tripartite constituents and influential and inclusive social dialogue.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Peer learning and knowledge sharing among South countries in the field of social dialogue and labour relations. - Participatory study visits through SSTC addressing relevant issues on social dialogue at regional levels. - Collaborate with Global Labour University to improve social dialogue through triangular cooperation.
Outcome 2: International labour standards and authoritative and effective supervision	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Support existing networks of specific vulnerable groups through SSTC partnerships in the regions (disability, indigenous, gender, etc.) with a focus on C169, C182, C189 and C190 - Organise tailor-made capacity-building sessions for ILO Constituents on SSTC with a focus on application of international labour standards.
Outcome 3: Economic, social and environmental transitions for full, productive and freely chosen employment and decent work for all	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Strengthen F2F, C2C, SIDs - SIDs partnerships (SSTC sub-modalities) through capacity building and knowledge sharing - Through F2F cooperation provide a platform for SSTC learning and sharing experiences on jobs for peace and resilience in conflict. - Engage emerging partners and regional groups in joint platforms for rural transformation and green economy.
Outcome 4: Sustainable enterprises as generators of employment and promoters of innovation and decent work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Design and make available free online webinars on youth entrepreneurship for MICS and LDC - Engage with emerging development partners and financial institutions to assist countries to provide financing for sustainable enterprises.
Outcome 5: Skills and lifelong learning to facilitate access to and transitions in the labour market;	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Organise field visits between countries and assist in securing funding to revive or revamp the vocational training sector within respective countries. - Through ITC Turin support trainings on SSTC modalities in line with BAPA +40.
Outcome 6 : Gender equality and equal opportunities and treatment for all in the world of work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Organise P2P knowledge sharing on human rights and gender equality at work place with a focus on C190. - Share resource materials on equality through www.southsouthpoint.net to encourage P2P learning.
Outcome 7: Adequate and effective protection at work for all	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Through ITC Turing, other UN agencies and partners support implementation and capacity building on protection of workers in the Global South - Organise study visits among SSTC partner countries to learn good practices on protection of workers.
Outcome 8: Comprehensive and sustainable social protection for all.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Through partnership and collaboration with ITC Turin, provide platform and opportunities for learning as well as knowledge sharing among SSTC partner countries through SSTC training - Support training of ministry of labour on Social Protection Floors through SSTC exchanges
Outcome A: Authoritative knowledge and high-impact partnerships for promoting decent work (through SSTC)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Support New SSTC knowledge sharing approaches through learning platforms (such as www.southsouthpoint.net and DC learning journeys) with regular webinars and training activities (in coordination with ITC Turin), including on PPP-SSTC, SSE, LED and C2C - Support new partnerships with emerging partners/ private sector, including through innovative funding mechanisms and triangular cooperation

ANNEX III- Bibliography, References, Hyperlinks

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ILO's virtual platform on South-South Cooperation: <http://southsouthpoint.net/>

<https://globalgoals.goldstandard.org/100-gs4gq-stakeholder-consultation-requirements-guidelines/>