

CONCEPT NOTE

South-South Galaxy Regional Rollout Webinar for UN Entities in the Arab, Europe and the CIS Regions

Thursday, 02 September 2021, 16:00-17:20 Istanbul and Amman Time

|09:00-10:20 New York Time|

Organized by UNOSSC Division for Arab States, Europe and the CIS, Istanbul

Registration link: https://undp.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_iiYqu3fRKGt55yYnQal2Q

1. Background

South-South knowledge exchange has become the most important tenet and the most dynamic pillar of South-South and triangular cooperation. It has gained prominence among developing countries who are increasingly recognizing good practices on South-South and triangular cooperation as viable pathways to address common transnational challenges and to accelerate progress in the achievement of the SDGs. Such exchanges have been cost-effective and easily adaptable.

The United Nations development system (UNDS) plays an important brokering role in knowledge sharing. Among others, it leverages its coordination expertise by ensuring that best practices and lessons learned are widely shared and disseminated with Southern partners to facilitate partnerships. To ensure the sharing of best practices lead to collaborative efforts between Southern partners, digital platforms were developed for the purpose of disseminating of information to facilitate exchanges of knowledge and experiences. These digital platforms are offering transformational opportunities for development cooperation. They are enhancing knowledge sharing, collaboration, opening new opportunities for business and entrepreneurial activity, and offering new tools for addressing persistent development challenges. Digital portals provide an accessible platform for engagement, which simultaneously ensure that all relevant information is securely digitized and archived for future use. As such, digital technology is becoming a key driver of growth and development in the Global South and can further bolster South-South cooperation.

2. South-South Galaxy

The United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation (UNOSSC), within its mandate as the focal point for coordinating, promoting, and facilitating South-South and triangular cooperation for development on a global and UN system-wide basis, has, through a consultative process with its development partners and UN entities, developed a global digital knowledge sharing and partnership brokering platform “[South-South Galaxy](#)”. It was developed to respond more systematically and effectively in supporting developing countries’ demand to connect, learn and collaborate with potential partners to support in implementing SDGs through South-South cooperation. This initiative responds fully to Member States’ expectations articulated through resolutions, decisions, and outcome documents.

This is a ‘next generation’ platform that makes South-South and triangular cooperation more of a reality by eliminating a significant barrier to entry - the lack of reliable access to a diverse range of knowledge, information, and partners. It represents UNOSSC’s recognition of the exceptional potential presented by new digital technologies and offers transformational cooperation opportunities for enhanced knowledge sharing and collaboration across borders and regions, as well as a chance for businesses and social entrepreneurs to access overseas markets and engage in global e-value chains.

Powered by artificial intelligence, South-South Galaxy offers enhanced learning and smarter matchmaking for partners to share and collaborate across borders and regions. It serves as a consolidated South-South solutions platform for Southern partners in the UN system and acts as a one-

stop-shop for all partners to use. It complements, rather than substitutes or duplicates, existing national and regional institutional arrangements, including those developed by UNDS entities.

Since its launch on the UN Day for South-South Cooperation in September 2019, marked by the presence of the UN Secretary-General, UNDP Administrator, and Member State representatives, the platform has hosted over 340 institutionally registered organizations, of which 72 are Member States' governments, and 45 are UN entities. Over 650 solutions across all SDGs have been shared, in addition to numerous South-South and triangular partnerships facilitated. It is assisting countries of the Global South in addressing transnational challenges.

Most recently, South-South Galaxy has been embedded in the first ever the UN System-wide Strategy on South-South and triangular cooperation, which seeks to galvanize and operationalize South-South and triangular cooperation in a more coordinated and coherent manner throughout the UNDS. Action plans on South-South Galaxy have been embedded to reflect its roll out within the UN system at all levels.

3. South-South Galaxy Regional Rollout

Within the above context and aiming to increase ownership of the platform among UN entities and encourage a proactive engagement to knowledge sharing and partnership brokering, the **UNOSSC Division for Arab States, Europe and the CIS** is organizing this regional launch to introduce and demonstrate the platform to UN system entities in the two regions. The event will be an immense opportunity for UN entities to engage with UNOSSC on the digital platform and create synergies and opportunities for national and inter and intra-regional collaboration on South-South, East-East and triangular cooperation towards sustainable development.

It is also hoped that greater participation of UN entities will, in turn, contribute to the work of Regional Collaborative Platforms (RCPs), relevant Issue-Based Coalitions (IBCs) and Knowledge Management Hubs as these mechanisms and processes continue to advance UNDS reform. In his report to the UN General Assembly and ECOSOC on the “**Implementation of General Assembly resolution 71/243 on the quadrennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities for development of the United Nations system**”, the Secretary-General has noted that, to foster South-South and triangular cooperation and cross-regional learning in line with the BAPA+40 Conference, the UNDS will map and share good practices, facilitate knowledge exchanges, provide cross-peer learning, connect countries and territories, and that the establishment of knowledge management hubs is a pragmatic way to address duplication in existing activities and capacities and to transform those into opportunities for establishing synergies and allow countries to better identify and gain access to available regional assets in order to respond in real time to national needs and priorities.¹

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¹ <https://unsdg.un.org/sites/default/files/2020-06/SG-report-on-QCPR-implementation-30-April-2020.pdf> (30 April 2020; paras 161 and 184)