



CONCEPT NOTE

THE CONTEXT

The Second United Nations High Level Conference on South-South Cooperation (BAPA+40) in commemoration of the 40th anniversary of Buenos Aires Action Plan (BAPA) was held in March this year. The Outcome Document of the Conference, adopted by the General Assembly in April, underscores the need to mainstream South-South Cooperation (SSC) through suitable policy and programme interventions.

Since Bandung Conference in 1955, SSC has been evolving on multiple tracks with cooperation at the bilateral level among developing countries and through institutional structures characterized by the Southern-led initiatives like the Nonaligned Movement (NAM) and the Group of 77; and at the global institutional level through the United Nations. The First Conference of Heads of State/Government of developing countries, held in Belgrade in 1961, launched the NAM. The Summit focussed on both political and economic issues. This paved the way for the first UN Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD I) in 1964 in Geneva at which the Group of 77 (G77) was born. The Algiers Declaration, adopted at the first G-77 meeting, set the stage for South-South Cooperation beyond the idea of technical cooperation and brought in the primacy of economic cooperation, including financial cooperation. One of the key ideas was to create a facility like the Special Drawing Rights at IMF by infusing additional liquidity.

The Caracas Conference on Economic Cooperation among Developing Countries (ECDC) in 1981 was one of the major efforts in this direction. It was the South Commission Report that tried to fuse the distinction between the TCDC and ECDC. G-77 also organised several sectoral meets on SSC between 1994 and 1999 with focus on agriculture, food and energy and they

eventually culminated in the year 2000 with the First South Summit. This came out with the Havana Programme of Action (HPA).

The HPA was further advanced by the High-level Conference on South-South Cooperation held at Marrakesh in Morocco. It pronounced that the implementation of South-South Cooperation depends upon its adequate integration at national, sub-regional and regional as well as international cooperation policies and strategies.

The Second South Summit in 2005 adopted the Doha Plan of Action called for a good governance of globalisation that enhances full and effective participation of developing countries in international economic decision-making and norm-setting, besides increasing transparency in international financial, monetary and trading systems. The action plan recognized that market mechanisms of globalisation alone were insufficient to meet the challenges of development and the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

BAPA+40 and its outcome document has been an effort to link the workings of the multiple trajectories and identified an organic linkage between SSC, Triangular Cooperation (TrC) and the SDGs the current imperative. It also emphasised the potential contribution of different development cooperation approaches that are in operation. It also emphasized that SSC operates in economic, social, cultural, environmental and technical domains and even beyond – a concern that was also raised in Havana, Marrakech and Doha. A call for incremental institutionalisation of SSC was emphasized in the outcome document prepared and adopted through the BAPA+40 Process, even though a clear roadmap is yet to emerge.

Charting a Way Forward: BAPA+40 Outcome and the Emerging Global Context

The Outcome Document acknowledges and asserts a way forward for SSC recognising the challenges related to limited traction to enhance the role of developed countries towards meeting their commitments; on the face of rising disruptive technologies; unequal distribution in access to resources and advanced technologies and rather slow and ineffective diffusion of knowledge and capacities across the globe to adequately meet the objectives of sustainable development.

In meeting these challenges the outcome document attempts to create a fusion between SSC and TrC by coining a new term of South-South and Triangular Cooperation (SSC and TrC) and presented them as unique modes of cooperation which should be capitalize upon respectively rather than fused hastily. It is also considered that a step forward should be to discuss and analyse the potential of both the modes of cooperation and make an attempt to institutionalise the defining feature of TrC. Undoubtedly, the modalities of TrC need not be cast in iron and in tune with SSC and its non-negotiable principles, rather they should encourage plurality and heterogeneity in its approach towards development cooperation.

Further, the Outcome Document also calls for enhancing ‘development effectiveness’ of SSC through increased mutual accountability and transparency. As support under SSC is demand driven and carried out in a horizontal manner, it is imperative to work collectively to articulate methodologies for ‘need-based’ objective assessment that must capture the spirit of ‘plurality’ that fuels SSC to its commendable spread and importance during the last couple of decades.

In tune with the pathways found in Havana, Marrakesh and Doha, it is necessary to initiate efforts towards enhancing research, analysis and policy development. The Outcome Document recognises the value of institutional frameworks to foster more effective multi-stakeholder approaches that create an operational space for both State and non-State actors in the achievement of Agenda 2030. It also notes with concern the problem of the South in mobilising adequate financial resources necessary to be deployed for their development.

There is a need to bring into effect processes of convergence between the South and North in terms of their unique capabilities, access to resources and towards improving the quality of life and leaving no one behind, premised on an idea of common but differentiated responsibility (CBDR). With BAPA+40, new set of premises and a new basis for the dialogue with the developed countries has emerged with triangular cooperation. The collective commitment for the SDGs is very much part of the complementarities that have emerged. It is thus imperative to deliberate upon the possibilities of partnerships and cooperation models, where SSC and TrC complementing NSC can carry forward the aspiration of convergence.

The proposed Delhi Process V will be one of the first opportunities to take stock of the deliberations during BAPA+40 and to contribute, both analytically and operationally, to the future road map being envisaged for achievements of the goals enshrined in Agenda 2030. The scope of development cooperation extends to all possible sectors of human engagement. However, the proposed conference identifies specific sectors and areas for deliberation, to help evolve an operational guidance towards achieving the objectives of development cooperation and Agenda 2030.

THE STRUCTURE OF THE CONFERENCE

The rise of the South and its contributions to global issues has placed South-South Cooperation (SSC) at the forefront of development architecture. The present conference intends to contribute further to such a cause and complements the continuous effort by RIS, ever since its inception, to study the evolution of SSC.

The Delhi Process was launched to generate a balanced and well-informed debate on the contours and nature of SSC. The first effort in 2013, provided an international platform for such deliberation. Subsequent conferences highlighted the plurality and diversity of SSC, its linkages with Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and looked at SSC through a theoretical lens in the light of empirical realities and emerged with a narrative asserting the ‘uniqueness’ of SSC. The guiding principles as evidenced in sectoral realities and the complementarities among economic, social, cultural, environmental and technical domains and even beyond – a concern that was raised repeatedly in Havana, Marrakesh and Doha. One may recall that deliberations during the Delhi Process helped contribute significantly to the Second United Nations High Level Conference on South-South Cooperation (BAPA+40).

However, the idea of SSC, as initiated in parallel international processes at various global platforms that aimed at mainstreaming of SSC at times fail to recognise this uniqueness. The recently held conference of SSC at Buenos Aires (BAPA+40) again emphasised on this uniqueness of SSC. The Delhi Process thus assumes significance as it gathers academics, subject experts, policy makers and practitioners for exploring various facets and features of SSC.

The outcome document of BAPA+40 and many other Southern efforts have given new responsibilities to all related stakeholders, such as, i) Incremental institutionalisation of SSC; ii) Developing an impact assessment framework; iii) Relevant and appropriate technology for economic growth including environmentally sensitive technology in context of the SDGs and iv) Creating a road map for the Triangular Cooperation (TrC).

The conference intends to assess the future implications, identify the challenges and develop a roadmap in tune with the consensus recently arrived at Buenos Aires. The objectives are to find ways for scaling up SSC and evolving an impact assessment framework that captures the unique features of SSC. Further, it seeks to focus on the diversity of actors and role of institutions in actualising the aspirations of the South and would simultaneously engage in exploring the potential of TrC.

The conference would explore the role of global trade and financial governance for inclusive development, besides identifying new instruments that may be designed to take care of the emerging developmental challenges. The deliberations would focus on the role of manufacturing in strengthening health care sector in the developing countries. The scope of locating a bigger role for agricultural value chain in the South as well as that for cooperation around the issue of industrial revolution 4.0 and sharing of technology on mutually agreeable terms would also be explored.

SSC at the Sectoral Level

In view of the recognition that SSC involves a long term strategy of contribution to the development process of a partner country, it is imperative that such strategies are engaged to identify the growth and development drivers that can contribute optimally to the desired process, a la Hirschman's argument in favour of unbalanced growth. Such an approach to development cooperation is dubbed as 'mission approach' that involves cooperation at the sectoral level. Moreover, the SDGs given their cross-domain connect highlight the sectoral mutual interdependence, whereby development becomes the sum this interconnectivity. For instance, to address the emerging challenges of urbanisation, issues linked with water, food and energy security cannot be overemphasized. Water is further inextricably linked to the sectors of agriculture and health, becoming a precursor to address the sector specific challenges.

The proposed conference aims to focus the spotlight on some of the key sectors that deserve disproportionately higher attention such as agriculture, health, financial governance and inclusion, and skilling.

Within these sectors, Delhi Process V would focus on certain specific issues identified below.

DAY 1: THURSDAY, 22 AUGUST 2019

Plenary Session I: Global Trade and Financial Governance for Inclusive Development

The global financial architecture is on an upward trajectory, facing the continued challenges of retaining growth and managing inflation. Coupled with changing approaches to global trade, South faces new challenges and opportunities towards norm setting for new world order that would promote inclusive multilateralism with strong network of institutions. Simultaneously, technological advances in banking operations and payment systems have made the flow of capital easier and cost effective, giving a boost to global business and trade. The moot questions for discussion maybe:

- How can SSC contribute to the emergence of a financial governance mechanism to ensure growth and inclusion, within and among countries? What are the challenges?
- How can SSC help endogenisation of financial technology to create a globally inclusive financial architecture?
- How can the inclusion process in global trade be facilitated at the levels of countries as well as at the level of individual citizen?
- What are the transactions cost advantages that such cooperation in finance and trade can realise for the developing countries? What are the global gains resulting from such efforts?

Plenary Session II: Post-BAPA+40: Role of Diverse Actors

According to a recent report by the UN Secretary General, structured and vibrant forms of development cooperation are emerging through interregional development cooperation mechanisms and frameworks. These arrangements provide platforms for knowledge-sharing and mutual learning among Southern partners, involving both State and non-State actors.

To elaborate, it is imperative to involve a wide range of actors and stakeholders in SSC and triangular cooperation. They include the UN system, sectoral agencies of the UN, national, governments, multilateral organisations and development banks, the private sector, parliaments, audit institutions, think tanks and civil society organisations. This session would provide space to these multiple actors to share their experiences and develop a substantive roadmap for the future.

Some of the probing questions for this session may be as follows:

- How can various stakeholders be meaningfully engaged in inclusive multi-stakeholder approaches in finding innovative, cost-effective, flexible and context-specific solutions to challenges faced in pursuit of shared development goals?

- What should be the specific roles of United Nations and associated bodies; CSOs; Academia; Multilateral Organisations; and Think Tanks?

Plenary Session III: New Instruments for Emerging Development Challenges

The multiplicity of actors, coupled with the extant multiplicities in modalities of cooperation, has the potential to generate multiple models of governance of resources. This can allow development actors to learn more swiftly, about how to operate and achieve results in an increasingly complex and diverse development cooperation system. Needless to add, the resulting institutional diversities are necessary to be facilitated to create an ecosystem that would pave the way for development cooperation to embrace multilateralism.

40 years down the lane since the First BAPA Conference in 1978, the clamour for import substitution-based strategies of development that would help the Southern nations to be self-reliant and break the wall of peripheral capitalism, is on the wane. Globalisation, in spite of many of its negative implications on the state of equity across the globe, has raised the level of aspiration of the citizens of the developing world to catch up with their developed peers. SSC can play a constructive role in facilitating this collective process of achievement of self-reliance. Such efforts call for designing an inclusive process that facilitates endogenisation of knowledge, experiences and technology from all available sources. This will ensure a larger share for South in the global value chain. What institutional instruments are necessary to be designed to take this aspiration forward beyond BAPA+40? How to operationalise the idea of “common but differentiated responsibilities” to ensure an inclusive path of development that includes the Southern nations?

There are also some global development challenges that may threaten the future of humanity. Prominent among them are the challenges of climate change. A roadmap beyond BAPA+40 cannot ignore the centrality of climate change in devising the right path to move along. Some questions to be pondered upon are as follows:

- How to address institutionally the multi-modal, multi-partner and multi-sectoral characteristics of SSC?
- What are the possible innovative instruments to address the emerging challenges of endogeneity of knowledge and capture the aspirations of the South in an era of globalisation?

Plenary Session IV: Emerging Global Experiences with Triangular Cooperation

Triangular Cooperation (TrC) has been emerging as an alternate mode of development cooperation, especially in tune with fulfilling the SDGs identified under Agenda 2030. The Outcome Document of BAPA+40 considered that a step forward should be to discuss and analyse the potential of both the modes of cooperation and make an attempt to institutionalise the

defining feature of TrC. Plenary Session IV will aim to throw light on the emerging global experiences with TrC. Besides sharing of experiences, the session would also raise some pertinent questions like:

- What would be the guiding principles for TrC in facilitating sharing of resources, experiences, institutions and technology?
- How can TrC be leveraged for achieving the common challenges both in terms of collective development goals like SDGs, global warming, consolidation of resources and local strengths?
- What are the challenges in terms of transaction costs, deflagging of cooperation and multiple accounting processes perceived in operationalising TrC?

DAY II: FRIDAY, 23 AUGUST 2019

Parallel Session IA: Assessment Template, Norms and Plurality in SSC

The outcome document released after BAPA+40 suggests “incremental institutionalisation in South-South cooperation into policy making by some countries and regions” (Para 16). One such proposal for institutionalisation refers to development of “country-led systems to evaluate and assess the quality and impact of South-South and Triangular Cooperation programmes and improve data collection at the national level to promote cooperation in the development of methodologies and statistics to that end...” (Para 25). Para 26, however, asserts that they may be “non-binding voluntary methodologies, building upon existing experiences, taking into account the specificities and different modalities of South-South cooperation and within national approaches”.

Such a call needs intense deliberations among the stakeholders on the way forward. The issues that arise may include:

- Identification of the criteria for impact assessment of SSC, keeping in mind that they need not be identical across all the partners engaged in development cooperation in the spirit of SSC
- Incorporating the aspirations of the partners in identifying the assessment criteria, with the acknowledgement of the possibility that the methodology may vary depending on the modalities and the partners engaged.

Parallel Session IB: Contribution of Manufacturing in Strengthening Health Sector

Improvement in health status of a population depends on efforts at two levels – preventive and curative. While immunization is intended to take care of the preventive part, diagnostic kits and medical devices play an important role in facilitating curative health care services. Diagnostic kits do have a preventive role as well. SDG 3 framed to attain a good health and well-being for all by 2030 cannot be achieved if manufacturing of vaccines, diagnostic kits and medical devices

does not come under active considerations of SSC and TrC. The proposed session would engage in discussions to consider the following issues:

- What are the potentials in development cooperation involving the Southern economies in manufacturing of vaccines, diagnostic kits and medical devices? What are the existing challenges?
- Can an enhanced capacity in manufacturing of the items contribute to achievements in SDG 3 at the regional, national and sub-national levels?
- What should be the institutional mechanisms to take care of the quality concerns?

Parallel Session IC: Strengthening Agriculture Value Chains in the South

Agriculture is still the mainstay of most Southern economies, given their high dependency on the primary sector. The sector not only provides livelihood opportunities to a large proportion of the southern population, but also contributes considerably in ensuring food security that has a larger political ramification than just the economic imperatives. Net value added in agriculture per unit of employment, however, is consistently lower in the Southern nations compared to that observed in the developed ones. SSC and TrC can play an increasingly important role in enhancing the agricultural value chain through cooperation in strengthening the backward and forward linkages to facilitate higher value addition in the agricultural sector.

Given this background, some of the following issues that may attract interest of the participants of Delhi Process V include:

- What are the potential areas of cooperation under SSC and TrC to facilitate higher value addition in agriculture through strengthening backward linkages (supply of quality inputs in right quantities at affordable prices) and forward linkages (both local and global – ensuring larger share of consumer price to farmers)? What are the technical, institutional and capacity challenges?
- Whether and how can South-South trade contribute to evolution of stronger value chain in Southern agriculture? Would the direction of causality be in the reverse – a stronger value chain expanding the scope of South-South trade?
- What are the pathways through SSC and TrC to facilitate adoption and propagation of climate smart technology in agriculture?

Plenary Session V: New Industrial Revolution, Future of Work and Scope for Cooperation

The demand for skilling has become universal, irrespective of the skill gap existing between the developing and developed world. While the developed world is looking for skills in creating disruptive technologies given their existing advantage in parameters related to skilling, the developing world faces a double challenge of not only bridging an existing gap but also of acquiring skills in contributing to IOT, Artificial Intelligence, robotics and biotechnology. Given

the relatively larger gap accruing to some of the developing countries through the process of globalisation, a skilling process that enhances the competitive advantage of the Southern nations, in some select sectors, can play the role of a game-changer. Some questions that may be reflected upon are:

- Are the existing skilling mechanisms relevant and effective? What are some lessons learnt?
- What sort of technological cooperation, co-development and transfers can take place to help overcome the double challenges? What are the institutional imperatives? What are the challenges?
- How to work towards evolving international institutions of higher learning to deal with advance technologies for South?

Given these structural characteristics and recent trends in development cooperation activities, accompanied by the challenges being faced by SSC, it will be worthwhile to have a look at them both through a conceptual and an operational lens.

Plenary Session VI: Knowledge Sharing among Southern Partners

The journey from conceptualisation phase of an idea to its actual successful delivery on ground has to be further forwardly linked to its sharing (policy transfer) with other Southern countries. The mutual-learning component of SSC becomes important for other countries to learn, acquire and localise the successful cases to their country perspective. Poignantly, Delhi V has placed this plenary session at the end of the proceedings which will allow participants to accumulate ideas and think about their possible dissemination. Representatives from various Southern development cooperation agencies would share their knowledge and experiences and initiate a dialogue among themselves around:

- Diversity in institutional framework
- Coordination with other domestic agencies
- Mechanisms for strengthening external partnerships

Delhi Process V will provide the right platform for the necessary debates and discussions. A short historical insight into the Delhi Process is given as an Annexure.

THE DELHI PROCESS

In 2013, the first of its kind of international platform for knowledge creation and sharing calling for a *Conference of Southern Providers* was organised at New Delhi, initiating the first Delhi Process. This conference, hosted by the Research and Information System for Developing Countries (RIS), in collaboration with United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA) and supported by the Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India, began a dialogue on the nature and contours of SSC and with an aim to enhance knowledge sharing led to the conceptualisation of a Forum for Indian Development Corporation (FIDC) and the Network of Southern Think-Tanks (NeST).

In 2016, the second Delhi Process continued to highlight the plurality and diversity in perspectives on SSC, focusing on sectoral issues engaging academicians and researchers, policy-makers and practitioners, as well as civil society and businesses from across the globe. The second Delhi Process also formally launched NeST, which is a think tank and academic forum that evolved through multiple deliberations to become a collaborative initiative for the South and by the South. Subsequently, the third Delhi Process (2017) with a focus on Triangular Development Cooperation delved into the notion of triangularity to create linkages between the Sustainable Development Goals, South-South cooperation and the traditional North-South cooperation.

Some of the challenges concerning the conceptualisation of SSC are three fold. First, it is imperative to develop a southern narrative in international development cooperation. Second, this narrative needs to have a southern voice coming from developing countries themselves, and thus the need to engage southern actors. Third, given the converging nature of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), there is a need to deliberate upon institutional mechanisms for South-South and Triangular cooperation. The first three Delhi Processes, in a step-wise manner, aimed to address these challenges. The cumulative contribution of these Processes then facilitated the fourth Delhi Process to move seamlessly towards reflecting upon South-South cooperation through a theoretical lens in light of empirical realities.

The fourth Delhi Process initiated a journey to deliberate on the theoretical premise of SSC and how to carry the process forward. RIS, jointly with the Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India, United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation (UNOSSC), NeST and FIDC, organised an International Conference on “South-South Cooperation and BAPA+40 – Theoretical Perspectives and Empirical Realities,” during 13-14 August, 2018 at New Delhi. The focus of this conference was to strengthen theoretical nuances of SSC and expansion of the global understanding of development cooperation – its conceptual frameworks and relevant empirical validation. The theoretical construct that was taken up for deliberation in the fourth Delhi Process focused on creating a structure and an agreement on some of the non-negotiable principles of the SSC and emergence of the development compact as a theoretical modelling of modalities involved in the SSC.