



RIS Discussion Paper # 340

Southern Perspective on Triangular Cooperation

Sushil Kumar and Riddhi Lakhiani



RIS

Research and Information System
for Developing Countries

विकासशील देशों की अनुसंधान एवं सूचना प्रणाली



CMEC

Centre for Maritime Economy
and Connectivity

समुद्री अर्थव्यवस्था व संयोजन केंद्र





RIS

Research and Information System
for Developing Countries

विकासशील देशों की अनुसंधान एवं सूचना प्रणाली

RIS specialises in issues related to international economic development, trade, investment and technology. Through its following centres/forums, RIS promotes policy dialogue and coherence on regional and international economic issues.



The word “DAKSHIN” (दक्षिण) is of Sanskrit origin, meaning “South.” The Hon’ble Prime Minister of India, Shri Narendra Modi, inaugurated DAKSHIN – Global South Centre of Excellence in November 2023. The initiative was inspired by the deliberations of Global South leaders during the Voice of the Global South Summits. DAKSHIN stands for Development and Knowledge Sharing Initiative. Hosted at the RIS, DAKSHIN has established linkages with leading think tanks and universities across the Global South and is building a dynamic network of scholars working on Global South issues.



AIC at RIS has been working to strengthen India’s strategic partnership with ASEAN in its realisation of the ASEAN Community. AIC at RIS undertakes research, policy advocacy and regular networking activities with relevant organisations and think-tanks in India and ASEAN countries, with the aim of providing policy inputs, up-to-date information, data resources and sustained interaction, for strengthening ASEAN-India partnership.



CMEC
Centre for Maritime Economy
and Connectivity
समुद्री अर्थव्यवस्था व संयोजन केंद्र

CMEC has been established at RIS under the aegis of the Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways (MoPS&W), Government of India. CMEC is a collaboration between RIS and Indian Ports Association (IPA). It has been mandated to act as an advisory/technological arm of MoPSW to provide the analytical support on policies and their implementation.



FITM is a joint initiative by the Ministry of Ayush and RIS. It has been established with the objective of undertaking policy research on economy, intellectual property rights (IPRs) trade, sustainability and international cooperation in traditional medicines. FITM provides analytical support to the Ministry of Ayush on policy and strategy responses on emerging national and global developments.

Continued on back inner cover

Southern Perspective on Triangular Cooperation

Sushil Kumar and Riddhi Lakhiani

RIS-DP # 340

April 2026

RIS Discussion Papers intend to disseminate preliminary findings of the research carried out within the framework of institute's work programme or related research. The feedback and comments may be directed to: Email: dgooffice@ris.org.in. RIS Discussion Papers are available at www.ris.org.in

Contents

<i>Abstract</i>	1
1 Introduction	1
2 Global Trends of Triangular Cooperation.....	4
2.1 Sectoral Distribution of Triangular Cooperation.....	5
3 G20 and Triangular Cooperation	6
4 Southern Perspective on Triangular Cooperation	9
4.1 Approach to Triangular Cooperation: India	11
4.2 Approach to Triangular Cooperation: Brazil	13
4.3 Approach to Triangular Cooperation: South Africa	15
4.4 Approach to Triangular Cooperation: Indonesia	17
4.5 Approach to Triangular Cooperation: Mexico	19
4.6 Approach to Triangular Cooperation: China	20
4.7 Approaches to Triangular Cooperation: Malaysia, Argentina, Thailand and Egypt	21
5 Conclusion and Way Forward.....	23
<i>References</i>	26

Southern Perspective on Triangular Cooperation

Sushil Kumar* and Riddhi Lakhiani**

Abstract: This paper examines the Southern perspective on Triangular Cooperation (TrC) and argues that Southern countries largely align their TrC practices with the principles and modalities of South–South Cooperation (SSC). Their engagement reflects core SSC values such as self-reliance, mutual benefit, equality, respect of national sovereignty, and demand-driven support and non-conditionalities. TrC has become an important mechanism for addressing priority development sectors—including climate change, agriculture, health, women’s empowerment, and rural development—which are central to the development agenda of the Global South.

In a landscape marked by declining ODA, rising geopolitical tensions, and growing development needs, TrC has emerged as an innovative modality for mobilising collective knowledge, resources, and expertise. It promotes multi-actor and multi-country collaboration, strengthens trust-based partnerships, and supports cross-regional learning, thereby contributing to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The paper underscores the need for innovative financing mechanisms, stronger institutional frameworks, and the scaling up of sector-specific TrC initiatives. Recent proposals under the IBSA framework such as the IBSA Digital Innovation Alliance and the IBSA Fund for Climate-Resilient Agriculture reflect the growing commitment of Southern partners to advance TrC. Strengthening complementarities between Southern and Northern modalities will be crucial to unlocking its full transformative potential.

Keywords: Triangular Cooperation, South-South Cooperation, SDGs, Capacity Building

JEL Code: F35, O19, Q01

1. Introduction

In 2015, the international community agreed to embark on a journey towards global sustainability, as outlined in Agenda 2030 and the accompanying Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), and towards addressing the challenge of climate change, as outlined in the Paris Agreement. This commitment was reaffirmed in Buenos Aires at the BAPA+40 conference, where the international community recognized

* Assistant Professor at RIS, Views are personal

** Research Assistant at RIS

that triangular cooperation contributes to achieving the 2030 development Agenda. The outcome document (BAPA+40, paragraph 12) further emphasized triangular cooperation as a complementary effort to South–South cooperation, highlighting its potential to provide a “broader range of resources, expertise, and capacities.”¹ Driven by the demand of developing countries for support in their development trajectories, triangular cooperation has come to represent an important avenue for mutual learning and knowledge sharing between developed and developing countries.²

Triangular cooperation is not, however, a new modality of international development engagement. It has existed for decades as a tool of collaboration among countries at different stages of development. For instance, India and the United States worked together in the late 1950s to build a radio network across Nepal and Afghanistan and to construct the main road in Kathmandu (Chaturvedi, 2012). Similarly, in 1985 Japan and Brazil launched the first triangular cooperation scheme through the Third Country Training Programme (TCTP). Germany, widely recognized as a leading partner in TrC, initiated its first triangular projects in the mid-1980s and has since engaged in more than 150 initiatives across the globe (GPI Spotlight, 2023). The growing importance of TrC is also reflected in Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC), which account for nearly 40 percent of triangular cooperation projects worldwide, with preliminary data estimating its global financial volume at USD 670 million to USD 1.1 billion.³

South–South Cooperation (SSC) and Triangular Cooperation (TrC) together underscore the importance of partnerships in responding to global crises. Both modalities move beyond traditional donor–recipient dynamics, instead promoting more equitable and experience-based collaborations (IsDB et al., 2024). The TrC model combines resources and experiences to accelerate development and enable knowledge exchange, thereby helping the Global South address pressing challenges. Typically, triangular cooperation brings together three or more partners: a beneficiary developing country requesting support; a pivotal partner with relevant expertise and resources; and a facilitating partner providing

financial and/or technical assistance (RIS, 2025; OECD, 2019 and Chaturvedi & Piefer-Söyler, 2021).

This growing relevance of TrC must also be understood in the broader development and financing landscape. At present, the Global South accounts for 45 percent of global GDP, 47 percent of global merchandise trade, 63 percent of total global FDI inflows, and 36 percent of FDI outflows. Its GDP grew at a rate of 4.5 percent in 2024, reaching USD 42.3 trillion. Despite this economic dynamism, however, only 17 percent of the SDGs are currently on track to be achieved (United Nations, 2024). Achieving the SDGs requires an estimated USD 4 trillion annually, even as the Global South faces a collective public debt of USD 32.2 trillion. This challenge is compounded by recent announcements from many DAC member countries to reduce their ODA budgets starting in 2025 (OECD, 2025).

In this context, triangular cooperation has gained saliences as a means of mobilizing additional resources and enhancing the effectiveness of partnerships. The outcome document of the Fourth International Conference on Financing for Development (FfD4) emphasized the need to “enhance triangular cooperation by fostering deeper collaboration and partnerships, ensuring knowledge exchange, aligning efforts with the Sustainable Development Goals, and leveraging innovative financing mechanisms to enhance its sustainability and impact.”

This paper explores the Southern perspective on triangular cooperation, with a particular focus on key emerging economies such as India, China, Indonesia, Brazil, Mexico, South Africa, and other Southern partner countries. It seeks to answer two central questions:

1. What are the principles and modalities guiding triangular cooperation in these countries?
2. To what extent do their approaches align with the broader philosophy of South-South Cooperation?

By comparing and contrasting these approaches, the paper aims to generate fresh insights into the evolving landscape of triangular cooperation and contribute to the literature on how TrC is conceptualized and practiced across the Global South.

2. Global Trends of Triangular Cooperation

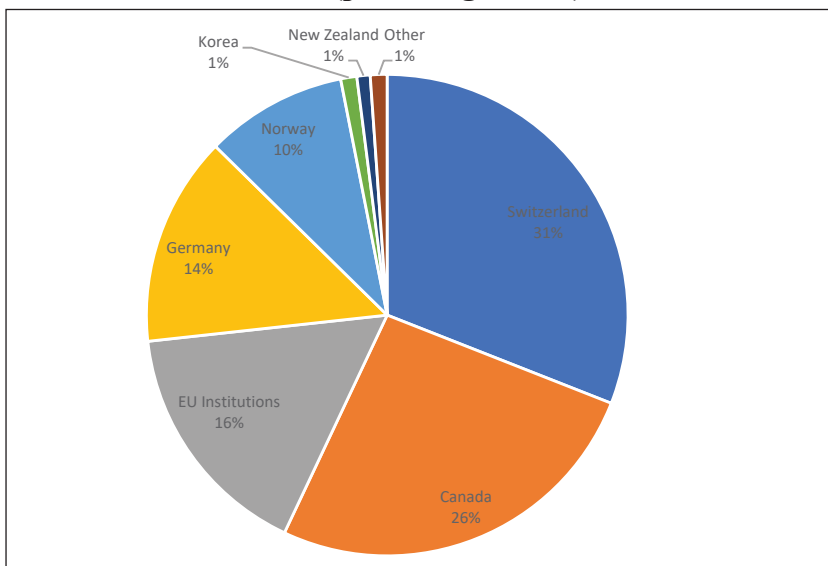
As this paper examines Southern perspective on triangular cooperation, it is equally important to study the global trends of this modality, particularly in terms of the flow of development assistance and its sectoral distribution. Currently, there exists only one comprehensive database that provides systematic information on triangular cooperation-the OECD database, which has been recording such flows since 2016. However, this database covers only the contributions of DAC member countries, while the financial contributions of pivotal partners and beneficiary countries are not systematically reported. The available data indicates that, at present, the overall flow of triangular cooperation is not very high, though there are clear signs of gradual scaling-up over time. Another important characteristic of global triangular cooperation is that the majority of activities remain relatively small in scale and largely project-based, rather than being implemented through large-scale or programmatic approaches. Due to the limited availability of disaggregated data on the contributions of pivotal and beneficiary partners, this section can only provide an analysis based on the OECD-reported figures, acknowledging the existing data gaps.

As we are aware, the BAPA 40+ outcome document mentioned that multilateral, regional and bilateral development cooperation providers should consider increasing financial resources and technical cooperation to promote South-South and triangular cooperation. Figure 1 shows the share of DAC member countries in funding Triangular cooperation activities. It shows that between 2019 and 2023, Switzerland accounted for 31 per cent (USD 102.53 million), followed by Canada 26 per cent (USD 86.22 million), EU Institutions 16 per cent (USD 53.77 million), Germany 14 per cent (USD 47.71 million), and Norway 10 percent (31.56 million). It is important to note that, according to the latest OECD (2025) report, between 2016 and 2023, 18 DAC member countries collectively reported engaging in more than 3,000 triangular cooperation activities.

The BAPA 40+ outcome document mentions, triangular cooperation is an important modality of development cooperation to achieve the Development Agenda 2030. This implies that all development

cooperation partner countries including DAC member countries (and multilateral institutions) need to increase the funding for triangular cooperation activities to overcome the development challenges in the beneficiary partner countries, which helps them to enhance their capacity to achieve their national development goals.

Figure 1: Triangular Cooperation by DAC Members, 2019–2023 (percentage share)



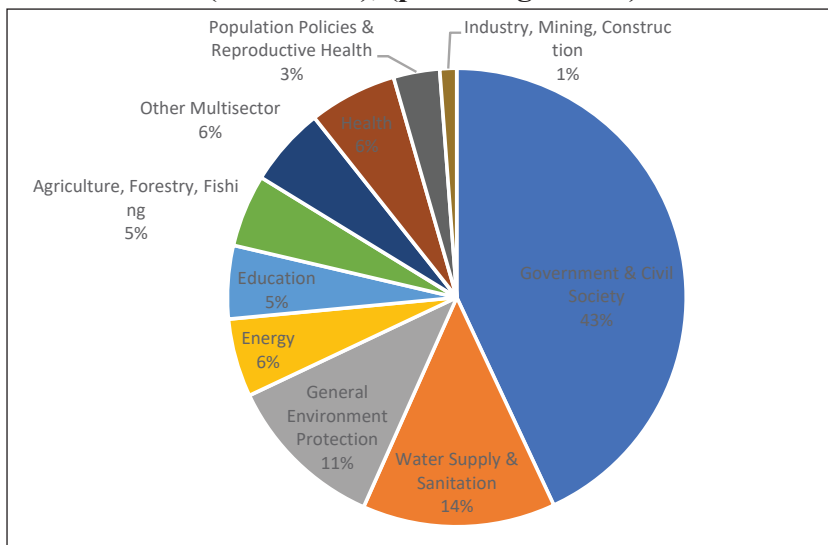
Source: Author's calculation based on OECD stat (<https://tossd.online/>).

Note: Other includes Portugal, Austria, Greece, Spain, Poland, Italy, Sweden, France.

Sectoral Distribution of Triangular Cooperation

Government and civil society sector accounted for the largest share of disbursement of triangular cooperation between 2019 and 2024 at 43 per cent. This was followed by water supply and sanitation, which constituted 14 percent. General environmental protection represented 11 percent, while the energy sector accounted for 6 percent. Additionally, both education and agriculture, forestry, and fishing each contributed 5 percent to the total disbursement (see Figure 2).

Figure 2: Sector wise distribution of Triangular Cooperation (2019–2024), (percentage share)



Source: Author's calculation based on OECD data.

3. G20 and Triangular Cooperation

In recent years, the G20 presidency has been successively hosted by countries of the Global South-Indonesia in 2022, India in 2023, Brazil in 2024, and South Africa in 2025. This sequence underscores the growing leadership role of Southern countries in shaping the global development agenda. Within this context, it becomes essential to analyze the importance of triangular cooperation in their respective presidencies, particularly in terms of discussions, declarations, and priority-setting. For instance, Brazil's G20 Development Working Group (DWG) explicitly prioritized trilateral cooperation as part of its development agenda, reflecting its long-standing commitment to South-South and triangular modalities. Similarly, India's G20 presidency in 2023 placed strong emphasis on the concerns of the Global South, including strengthening South-South cooperation, within which triangular cooperation was highlighted as a complementary mechanism to advance shared development goals. Taken together, these presidencies indicate that triangular cooperation

has gained visibility in G20 deliberations, especially as a bridge between traditional donors and Global South partners. This analysis of G20 discussions and measures provides valuable insights into the Southern perspective on triangular cooperation, linking global governance forums with broader development cooperation debates. Triangular cooperation has been promoted in the G20 to contribute to implementing the 2030 development agenda. Developed and developing countries can both enable and benefit from the inclusive and horizontal nature of triangular cooperation.⁴ It is important to mention that, in the context of the slow global economic recovery and the ongoing need to narrow the development gap and reduce poverty in developing countries, particularly low-income countries (LICs), G20 Leaders agreed during the June 2010 Toronto Summit to establish the Development Working Group (DWG).⁵ In 2013 the outcome document of G20 mentioned the strong commitment for the close partnership with low-income countries through South-South and Triangular cooperation⁶ (Saint Petersburg Development Outlook, 2013). The outcome document of DWG (2016) highlighted the global partnership including the triangular cooperation in the high-level principles on the implementation of 2030 agenda. The G20 DWG held a workshop on "Prospects for Triangular Cooperation in the G20" in 2018, and the discussion noted that the G20, as a global forum that brings together developed and developing countries, can both enable and benefit from the inclusive and horizontal nature of triangular cooperation. This type of cooperation can promote partnership formation, knowledge sharing, peer-to-peer learning, and capacity building among G20, non-G20, developing countries, and other stakeholders through political dialogue and joint activities. It can also help to build and strengthen knowledge networks and develop outcome-oriented actions that link sustainable development demands to existing capacities and experiences (Buenos Aires Update, 2018).⁷ In 2019, the Japan presidency of G20 also organised a side event on triangular cooperation. This event aimed to provide political support to triangular cooperation as an emerging modality of international development cooperation. It is essential to mention that the discussion highlighted key factors for effective triangular collaboration, such as the demand-driven approach

and the need for related G20 members to develop new partnerships and broaden the support for this approach (Osaka Update, 2019). During the DWG meeting under the Saudi presidency of G20, A side event also organized on South-South and Triangular Cooperation as a practical, inclusive, voluntary and horizontal approach to share knowledge, lessons learned, and advance the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs (G20 Saudi Arabia, 2020). The DWG outcome document under the Italian presidency (2021) mentioned that G20 Development Ministers are committed to promoting enhanced mobilization, alignment, and impact on the SDGs of all sources of finance, including domestic resources and ODA, in line with existing commitments, as well as South-South and Triangular co-operation initiatives, blended financing, and private sector financing (G20 Italy, 2021). During India's G20 Presidency, India emphasized the need to enhance North-South, South-South and Triangular cooperation to achieve Sustainable Development Goals (G20, 2023). The Brazilian G20 Presidency has also set trilateral cooperation as one of its priorities since it has the potential to boost cooperation for development. Brazil is a large provider of trilateral cooperation (G20 (Brazil), 2024) through the Brazilian Cooperation Agency (ABC, in Portuguese), that is based on the following principles: actions are taken in response to requests made by developing countries; such response is based on foreign policy guidelines and takes into account the specific interests of Brazilian cooperating institutions; initiatives are focused on developing human skills and expertise, institutional competences, and productive capacities; and there is no direct transfer of financial resources to partner countries, but rather the sharing of knowledge and successful experiences acquired by Brazilian institutions. Among others, the Brazilian cooperation is also guided by the principles of horizontal relationships, neutrality, non-conditionality, and mutual benefits (G20, Brazil (2024)). The outcome document of the DWG meeting in Rio de Janeiro on July 22-23, 2024 (Brazil) mentioned that mobilization of affordable, adequate and accessible financing from all sources and implementation of the Addis Ababa Action Agenda (AAAA) remains a significant challenge for the implementation of 2030 Agenda for SDGs and G20 call on all partner to mobilize affordable, adequate and accessible development finance from

all sources (DWG, 2024). The declaration also emphasized that developed countries should fully deliver on their respective Official Development Assistance (ODA) commitments. Such commitments can complement and encourage development financing from multiple sources, including public and private, as well as domestic and international sources. The G20 also recognized that development cooperation including North–South, South–South, and triangular cooperation, enables developing countries make progress towards sustainable development.⁹

4. Southern Perspective on Triangular Cooperation

As Section II analyzed global trends of triangular cooperation and Section III examined the role of the G20 in advancing this modality, this section turns to the Southern perspective on triangular cooperation (TrC). For this purpose, the paper focuses on leading Southern countries actively engaged in TrC, namely India, Brazil, China, South Africa, Indonesia, Mexico, Thailand, Malaysia, Egypt, and Argentina. The rationale for selecting these countries lies in their significance as emerging and large economies in the Global South and their geographical spread, which allows representation from across different continents. In doing so, this section seeks to address critical questions:

1. What are the guiding principles of triangular cooperation from the Southern perspective?
2. How do bilateral development cooperation approaches differ from triangular cooperation?
3. What are the mechanisms and institutional setups supporting their development cooperation activities under triangular cooperation?

This analysis makes a fresh contribution to the literature on triangular cooperation. To the best of the author's knowledge, no existing document has simultaneously examined the approaches of major Southern countries toward triangular cooperation in such a comparative manner.

Although triangular cooperation is not a new tool in development cooperation, it has evolved considerably. As Chaturvedi (2012) notes, TrC has long functioned as a mechanism of engagement between countries at different stages of development. However, it has acquired

renewed prominence as many developing countries transitioned into middle-income status. The adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Addis Ababa Action Agenda (AAAA) further elevated its importance. Other milestone frameworks-such as The Future We Want (United Nations General Assembly, 2012), the outcome document of the Rio+20 Conference on Sustainable Development (2012), the Busan Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation (2011), and successive G20 Development Ministerial Meetings-have underscored the value of TrC.¹⁰

Recent developments have reinforced this trajectory. The Fourth International Conference on Financing for Development (2025) committed to strengthening triangular cooperation by fostering collaboration, promoting knowledge exchange, aligning initiatives with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), and leveraging innovative financing mechanisms to ensure sustainability and long-term impact. Similarly, at the Eighth International Meeting on Triangular Cooperation (2024), the United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation (UNOSSC) established the Triangular Cooperation Window within the United Nations Fund for South-South Cooperation (UN, 2025). These initiatives reflect the global momentum behind TrC as a bridge between South-South and North-South cooperation, offering pathways to mobilize additional resources, generate innovative partnerships, and co-create solutions (Chaturvedi & Soyler, 2021).

A critical debate within the Global South concerns the distinction between South-South Cooperation (SSC) and triangular cooperation. The Delhi Process IV Report (2019) highlights that while SSC is guided by principles such as solidarity, horizontality, and non-conditionality, triangular cooperation requires further articulation of its principles. Some broad principles that emerge for TrC from a Southern perspective include:

- Ownership
- Mutual respect
- Fair balance in partnership
- Resource mobilization
- Role of knowledge (capacity to use and share knowledge)

- Institutional connections (multi-stakeholder engagement)
- Political considerations
- Evaluation mechanisms

4.1 Approach to Triangular Cooperation: India

India has been an important development cooperation partner of the Global South since its independence, and its approach has largely followed the principles and modalities of South-South Cooperation (SSC). In recent years, India has also announced several important initiatives for the Global South, signalling a broader and more ambitious role in development cooperation. For instance, India launched the Global South Centre of Excellence - DAKSHIN and the Global Development Compact, alongside its advocacy for greater representation of the South in global governance structures, including its successful initiative to secure the African Union's permanent membership in the G20. In this evolving context, it is worth analyzing India's approach to triangular cooperation (TrC), as it increasingly complements its traditional SSC model by engaging with Northern partners and multilateral institutions to mobilize resources, expand outreach, and co-create sustainable solutions tailored to the needs of partner countries.

India's approach to development cooperation is deeply rooted in the principles of South-South cooperation, underpinned by the concept of Vasudaiva Kutumbakam-the idea that "the world is one family"(G20, 2023) India's development cooperation is human centric, based on principles of mutual respect and national ownership with a commitment to sustainable development for all. India's development cooperation approach is founded on respect for partner countries and alignment with their development priorities. Unlike traditional aid donors, India's development assistance does not impose conditionalities. Its development cooperation model is comprehensive, encompassing multiple instruments such as grants, concessional finance, capacity building, trade, and technology transfer. According to Chaturvedi (2016), triangular cooperation should be demand-driven, tailored to the specific needs of the partner country, and designed to deliver tangible results. The potential benefits of such cooperation include better returns on past

investments, reduced future costs, the effective use of complementary strengths, and the promotion of SSC (Chaturvedi, 2012). India's model of triangular cooperation has several defining characteristics. First, it leverages domestic innovations and the diverse strengths of India's development landscape, scaling up bilateral cooperation through triangular partnerships.¹¹ Second, most initiatives are backed by agreements at the highest political levels, aimed at creating strategic partnerships that transcend traditional donorrecipient relationships. Finally, implementation often occurs through non-governmental channels, such as civil society organisations, private sector entities, and research institutes (Chaturvedi & Söyler, 2021). Through triangular projects, India collaborates with advanced economies and multilateral originations like the United States, the United Kingdom, Japan, Germany, and France, implementing development initiatives in third countries. These projects focus on knowledge sharing, capacity building, and technology transfer in sectors such as agriculture, food security, women's entrepreneurship, healthcare, and technology. Examples include India's collaboration with USAID to train agricultural executives across African nations, its partnership with Germany to share innovative agricultural technologies with Cameroon, Ghana and Malawi and its work with the UK to scale Indian innovations in third countries to achieve the SDGs. In these ways, India's triangular cooperation model not only fosters regional and global partnerships but also promotes sustainable development in the Global South. India's model of triangular cooperation reflects a dynamic and multifaceted approach to international development, emphasizing the synergy between domestic strengths, strategic political partnerships, and non-governmental implementation channels (Chaturvedi & Söyler, 2021). In this context, triangular cooperation with India can be defined as development initiatives that focus on transferring Indian expertise, sharing technological knowledge, enhancing skills, and promoting mutual learning. These projects closely involve Indian institutions, international development agencies, and host-country institutions throughout the entire project lifecycle - from initiation and design to implementation, management, and impact assessment. Each partner contributes financial resources, technical expertise, and/or in-kind support, with the cooperation

being demand-driven, mutually beneficial, free of conditions, outcome-oriented, and and respect the national sovereignty (Kumar, 2025). India's approach to triangular cooperation clearly demonstrates its alignment with the broader philosophy of the country's bilateral development cooperation. India has consistently emphasized solidarity, mutual benefit, and demand-driven engagement in its South-South initiatives, and these principles are equally reflected in its triangular cooperation practices. Recent initiatives, such as the Global South Centre of Excellence and the Global Development Compact, promote knowledge exchange and collaborative problem-solving. At the institutional level, the Development Partnership Administration (DPA) within the Ministry of External Affairs serves as the primary mechanism for coordinating and implementing India's triangular cooperation activities, ensuring that they remain consistent with the country's overall development cooperation strategy.

4.2 Approach to Triangular Cooperation: Brazil

Brazil is an important development cooperation partner in the Global South, and over time its development cooperation activities have significantly increased. In broad terms, Brazil's development cooperation can be divided in three modalities, namely Brazil's bilateral development cooperation with other developing countries under the framework of South-South cooperation. The second modality is decentralized South-South cooperation, which occurs between Brazilian subnational bodies and the subnational bodies of other developing countries, and finally, Trilateral cooperation, which can occur (a) between Brazil and two developing countries; (b) between Brazil, one developed country and one developing country and (c) between an international organization and developing country, when it is carried out under the framework of regional /subregional arrangements (Baumann et al., 2022). It is important to mention that the main component of Brazilian development cooperation is contributions to international organizations,¹² that account for around and around 94 per cent of the expenditures during the period 2019-20.¹³ Brazil's development cooperation is focused on other Latin American countries, followed by countries in sub-Saharan Africa, especially those with lower per capita incomes. Over 100 countries cooperate with Brazil.

According to the latest survey carried out by IPEA for 2019-2020, the federal government spent approximately USD 1 billion on Brazilian international cooperation.¹⁴

Triangular, or trilateral cooperation has a long history in Brazil and is a key element of its development cooperation.¹⁵ Brazil is active in multiple international cooperation for development fronts: technical, educational, scientific, technological and humanitarian cooperation, as well as contributions to international organizations, peacekeeping operations and refugee support in Brazil. Triangular, or trilateral, cooperation has a long history in Brazil and remains a central component of its development cooperation framework. Brazil is actively involved in diverse areas of international development cooperation, including technical, educational, scientific, technological, and humanitarian initiatives, alongside contributions to international organizations, peacekeeping operations, and refugee assistance. Brazil's contribution to trilateral technical cooperation initiatives is steered by the principles of South-South cooperation; namely, it is driven by demands from developing countries, non-interference in the domestic affairs of countries benefiting from trilateral technical cooperation, non-conditionality and non-association with trade operations (ABC, 2019). Additionally, Brazilian technical cooperation experience points to the importance of focusing on the horizontal approach that involves partner countries as a strategy that contribute to initiative's sustainability through autonomy and ownership.¹⁶ In 2021, Brazil allocated USD 8.5 million for triangular cooperation activities (OECD, 2023). The main sectors of its trilateral projects are government and civil society and the agriculture, forestry and fishing sectors.

During its 2024 presidency of the G20, Brazil prioritised Trilateral Cooperation within the Development Working Group, aiming to enhance collaboration among developed and developing partner countries, and international organizations, particularly focusing on the Global South. This approach sought to leverage diverse resources and capacities to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), creating an inclusive platform for sharing expertise among partners. By promoting knowledge-sharing mechanisms and strategic visions among G20 members, Brazil

aimed to improve national systems, manage data effectively, and develop new projects, thereby accelerating SDG progress during the Decade of Action (Yuri, 2025).¹⁷ By engaging in trilateral cooperation with developed countries and international organizations, Brazil seeks to expand the scale and impact of cooperation initiatives-without compromising on its core principles of horizontality, non-conditionality, and the strengthening of national autonomy. After analyzing the trilateral cooperation approach, it is important to note that Brazil's approach to triangular cooperation is designed to enhance the self-reliance of partner countries, promote mutual benefits and horizontality, and support partner countries in expanding their capacity to overcome development challenges. This approach closely aligns with Brazil's bilateral development cooperation approach, reflecting a consistent philosophy of solidarity and partnership in its international engagements.

4.3 Approach to Triangular Cooperation: South Africa

South Africa hosted the G20 presidency in 2025 and has prioritized key development issues under its leadership. These priorities are particularly significant for the Global South, as they include a strong emphasis on South-South Cooperation (SSC) and Triangular Cooperation (TrC). South Africa has been hailed as one of the 'emerging donors' and most prominent African Development partner now its place in the international development architecture (Besharati, 2015). It has been providing vary substantial budget support to its immediate neighbors (Botswana, Namibia, Swaziland, Lesotho) through the Southern African Customs Union (SACU). It has become more active under the current post political dispensation through a variety of avenues, including peace-keeping operations, regional infrastructure development, elections monitoring, technical assistance, capacity building and conflict mediation.¹⁸ It is important to mention that South-South Cooperation is an essential element of South Africa's foreign policy agenda, drawing on its participation in forums like IBSA (India, Brazil and South Africa), G77, NAM, BRICS, SADC and other multilateral forums of Global South. South Africa believes in the spirit of solidarity among the countries of Global South, the principles of SSC, namely non-conditionality, self-reliance, respect

for national sovereignty, mutual benefits, demand-driven, horizontality and multi-stakeholder partnerships (as agreed during the 2009 high-level UN conference on SSC in Nairobi) are the crux of South Africa's position of South-South cooperation. South Africa always supported the notion of SSC as separate but complementary to North-South cooperation. In the context of Triangular collaboration, South Africa sees it as a beneficial, complementary modality of development cooperation with great potential for enriching partnerships based on the philosophy and principles of South-South cooperation (Faith Mabera, 2019). It is also important to mention that South Africa was one of the first pivotal partners to engage in Triangular cooperation in Sub-Saharan Africa and its focus on Triangular cooperation partnerships across the African continent and with Cuba and the Palestinian Authority and the main sector of Triangular cooperation activities are governance issues, regional integration, post-conflict reconstruction and peace and security (OECD/IsDB (2023)).

It is important to mention that South Africa established the African Renaissance and International Cooperation Fund (ARF) under the 2000 Act (Act 51 of 2000) to promote democracy, good governance, conflict resolution, socio-economic development, humanitarian assistance, and human resource development, particularly in Africa (DIRCO, 2024). According to OECD estimates, South Africa's bilateral development cooperation reached USD 31.8 million in 2023, remaining stable compared to 2022. The country also engages in triangular cooperation with partners such as Canada, the EU, Norway, Spain, Sweden, and Switzerland, and is a member of the Global Partnership Initiative on Effective Triangular Co-operation (OECD, 2025). The ARF has a budget allocation of R163.5 million under the Medium Term Economic Framework (MTEF), including R52.1 million for 2024/25 (DIRCO, 2024).

4.3 Approach to Triangular Cooperation: Indonesia

Indonesia has been an active participant in development cooperation through both bilateral and triangular frameworks. In recent years, South-South Cooperation (SSC) and triangular cooperation have grown significantly, emerging as vital mechanisms for knowledge sharing among

developing countries. Indonesia views SSC not as a replacement for North-South cooperation, but as a complementary force that strengthens the overall global development architecture. As a cornerstone of Indonesia's foreign policy, SSC and triangular cooperation play a pivotal role in promoting nation-building, as well as advancing a world order grounded in freedom, peace, and social justice.

A historical review of Indonesia's development cooperation highlights its long-standing commitment to collaboration among developing countries. In 1955, Indonesia played a leading role in organizing the first Asian-African Conference, alongside other developing nations such as India, Myanmar and Sri Lanka. This landmark event culminated in the Bandung Conference, which produced the Bandung Principles—an essential framework for South-South cooperation and solidarity. Further institutionalization of Indonesia's South-South cooperation occurred with the adoption of the Buenos Aires Plan of Action (BAPA) in 1978. This document laid the foundation for Indonesia's early initiatives in South-South cooperation. The establishment of the Coordinating Committee for International Technical Cooperation (CCITC) in the early 1980s further strengthened Indonesia's commitment to technical cooperation with other developing countries. In 1985, Indonesia launched its first technical cooperation project, the Apprenticeship Project on Rice Culture, in collaboration with Gambia and Tanzania.

Three core principles underpin Indonesia's approach to international development cooperation: capacity building, investment leverage, and international cooperation. Through these principles, Indonesia has worked to empower other nations with the knowledge and tools necessary for sustainable development, while also fostering stronger international partnerships (The Government of Indonesia & JICA, 2015).

Triangular Cooperation (KST)¹⁹ has become a central pillar of Indonesia's international development diplomacy, complementing South-South Cooperation (KSS)²⁰ and reflecting the spirit of the 1955 Asia-Africa Conference and Indonesia's "independent and active" foreign policy (VNR, 2021). Indonesia's experience began with Japan through JICA, notably in developing the Maternal and Child Health (MCH) Handbook, which has since been adopted in 20 countries as a

model for improving maternal and child health services. Building on this foundation, partnerships expanded to the US, UK, Germany, and the Islamic Development Bank (IDB), with the Reverse Linkage Program supporting countries such as Morocco and Tunisia (VNR, 2019). Between 2021 and 2024, Indonesia strengthened the institutional framework for South-South and Triangular Cooperation (SSTC) by integrating it into the 2025–2029 RPJMN,²¹ operationalizing the Indonesia Development Cooperation Fund (Indonesian AID), and delivering training for participants from more than 30 countries while deploying experts to Africa and Timor-Leste. Indonesia actively engages with numerous development partners by bringing its technical expertise to triangular co-operation initiatives, particularly in LDCs, through five modalities-projects, joint programmes, capacity-building, dispatch of technical co-operation agents, and humanitarian assistance-in priority sectors such as agriculture, fisheries, renewable energy, health, climate change, peace and security, and inclusive economic development(OECD, 2025). Through these efforts, it fosters solidarity, promotes innovation, and mobilizes additional resources by responding flexibly to partner needs and enhancing ownership and learning through inclusive, demand-driven partnerships (OECD, 2025). Recent cooperation with Germany included vocational training in Tanzania, while a 2024 MoU with GIZ launched “Strengthening Capacities for Policy Planning for the Implementation of the 2030 Agenda in Indonesia and in the Global South (SDGs SSTC) Phase II” underscoring the growing role of Triangular Cooperation in advancing inclusive development and global partnerships (VNR, 2025).

4.5 Approach to Triangular Cooperation: Mexico

Mexico’s approach to international development cooperation is characterised by the active participation of government agencies, civil society, international organisations, academia, the private sector, and think tanks. Together, these actors promote initiatives that advance sustainable human development, improve quality of life, and strengthen Mexico’s soft power. Central to this approach is a strong emphasis on knowledge sharing, information exchange, technology transfer, and the dissemination of best practices.²²

A defining feature of Mexico's cooperation model is its alignment with the national development priorities of partner countries. It employs outcome- and results-based frameworks and promotes inclusive partnerships grounded in transparency, accountability, and mutual benefit. The guiding principles of Mexico's cooperation include national ownership, results-based management, transparency and mutual accountability, inclusive partnerships, international solidarity, human rights, gender equality, the rule of law, sustainability, co-financing, and complementarity (AMEXCID, 2024)

Mexico's cooperation strategy prioritises not only the transfer of knowledge but also capacity building, institutional strengthening, and the mobilisation of human, technical, and financial resources. While global in its outreach, Mexico places particular emphasis on Central America and the Caribbean, drawing on shared cultural and political affinities to maximise development impact (OECD, 2025).

Triangular cooperation (TrC) is a central pillar of this strategy. Since its launch in 2011, Mexico has built a multidimensional TrC architecture involving 16 cooperating entities and key partners such as Germany, Japan, and Spain. These partnerships complement its bilateral and regional cooperation agendas and help strengthen regional integration (OECD, 2023). Long standing mechanisms, including the Mexico-Japan Joint Program (JMPP), the Mexico-Chile Joint Fund (2006), and the Mexico-Uruguay Joint Fund (2009), support both bilateral and third-country initiatives (Corona, 2024). The 2024 Panama forum marking the Uruguay Fund's 15th anniversary illustrated the growing networks of cooperation with Central America, Colombia, and the Dominican Republic. At the regional level, the Pacific Alliance bringing together Chile, Colombia, Mexico, and Peru has evolved into a platform for triangular initiatives. Since the launch of its Cooperation Fund in 2020, it has implemented 23 projects, with additional initiatives approved in 2024.

Overall, triangular cooperation has become an essential component of Mexico's international development policy. In 2023, AMEXCID implemented 15 TrC projects as part of its broader cooperation portfolio. This model enables Mexico to transfer adaptable knowledge, strengthen

regional capacities, and derive mutual institutional benefits from partner countries. Importantly, triangular cooperation positions Mexico as a bridge between the Global North and South and reinforces its leadership in Latin America by promoting a cooperation paradigm anchored in solidarity, horizontality, and shared responsibility (GPI (2023), OECD (2024), AMEXID (2024)).

4.6 Approach to Triangular Cooperation: China

China's white paper, namely China's International Development Cooperation in the New Era, which was released in 2021, highlighted that the global development partnership is an important part of the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. China's approach to triangular cooperation (tripartite cooperation) is that it has accumulated a lot of development experience. China is ready to explore cooperation approaches with other parties to complement each other's strengths and achieve greater synergy to benefit recipient countries (China's white paper 2021). China is open to exchange and tripartite cooperation in international development cooperation. The main principles of China's tripartite cooperation are mutual respect, mutual learning, and enhanced mutual understanding and trust. The goal of tripartite cooperation is to benefit the recipient countries. Prantz & Zhang (2021) mentioned that utilizing the triangular cooperation modality, China has acted primarily as a pivotal partner, implementing projects with facilitating partners and beneficiaries. Roles and responsibilities between China and facilitating partners differ greatly. Three approaches can be distinguished:

1. Facilitating partner provides financial resources, and China provides expertise.
2. China provides financial resources and facilitating partner implements.
3. China and facilitating partner provide financial resources and jointly plan and implement together with the beneficiary.

4.7 Approaches to Triangular Cooperation: Malaysia, Argentina, Thailand and Egypt

Table 1 shows the triangular cooperation approaches of Malaysia, Argentina, Thailand and Egypt. For example, as table 1 shows that Malaysia's approach to triangular cooperation is rooted in the principles of respect, equality, and mutual benefit, with South–South Cooperation (SSC) forming a core element of its development strategy. The main objectives are to promote sustainable economic growth, support nation-building efforts, and strengthen collective self-reliance among partner countries. A prime modality through which Malaysia implements this vision is the Third Country Training Programme (TCTP). Under this program, Malaysia has carried out more than 150 training courses in collaboration with international partners such as JICA, the Islamic Development Bank, GIZ, AARDO, and TİKA. The institutional framework for these efforts is the Malaysia Technical Cooperation Programme (MTCP), managed by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, which oversees technical assistance, training, and capacity-building initiatives (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Malaysia, 2025).

Argentina has emerged as a leading actor in Triangular Cooperation since hosting the first BAPA conference in 1978 and the BAPA+40 conference in 2019. Through its Argentine Fund for South-South and Triangular Cooperation (FO.AR), established in 1992, Argentina has implemented over 11,000 cooperation projects in more than 80 countries, emphasizing horizontality, solidarity, mutual learning, and demand-driven partnerships. FO.AR focuses on areas where Argentina offers unique value—such as agroindustry, science and technology, creative industries, environment, healthcare, and human rights—benefiting primarily Latin America, with growing engagement in Africa and Asia. Between 2022 and 2023, Argentina participated in 189 cooperation activities, including 40 triangular projects. Notable recent initiatives include the Argentina-Portugal-Angola Triangular Cooperation Project on innovation and governance in education for development, and collaboration with the Philippines and the United Nations in forensic anthropology, involving training and exchange of best practices by Argentine forensic experts (see table 1).

Since 1994, the Thailand International Cooperation Agency (TICA) has promoted development aid through trilateral cooperation by sharing resources with partners like Japan, Canada, and UNDP to support training and capacity-building for developing countries. Today, most activities are implemented through the Third Country Training Program (TCTP) with partners such as JICA, UNDP, UNICEF, and UNFPA, offering training in Thailand based on partner countries' needs. Thailand's approach, guided by the 3P principles-Political Commitment, Partnership, and Priority, emphasizes joint initiatives, shared responsibility, and alignment with partner priorities. A notable partnership includes the Thailand-Germany Trilateral Cooperation (since 2008) supporting projects in Lao PDR, Vietnam, and Timor-Leste. More recently, in 2025, TICA, KOICA, and Thailand's Ministry of Industry launched a five-year project on Carbon Neutrality Capacity Building in the Electrical and Electronics Industry in ASEAN

Table 1: Triangular Cooperation Approaches of Southern Partners

Country	Key Principles / Objectives	Modalities / Sectors / Activities	Institutional Setup & Partners
Malaysia	Respect, equality, mutual benefit; SSC as a core element; sustainable growth; nation-building; collective self-reliance.	Third Country Training Programme (TCTP); conducts 150+ courses in partnership with JICA, IDB, GIZ, AARDO, Tika.	Malaysia Technical Cooperation Programme (MTCP), Ministry of Foreign Affairs.
Argentina	Horizontal, solidarity, mutual learning; demand-driven.	Agriculture & livestock; legal and judicial development & human rights; science & technology.	Argentine Fund for South-South and Triangular Cooperation (FO.AR); Ministry of Foreign Affairs, International Trade and Worship (est. 1992).

Continued...

Continued...

Thailand	Joint initiatives; shared responsibility; “3Ps”—political commitment, partnership, priority; balance economic & environmental sustainability	Triangular training/ scholarship with JICA, UNDP, UNICEF, UNFPA; Triangular Cooperation for Carbon Neutrality in ASEAN EEI sector (2025–2029) with Korea	Thailand International Co-operation Agency (TICA) under Ministry of Foreign Affairs; Neighbouring Countries Economic Development Cooperation Agency (NEDA) under Ministry of Finance*
Egypt	Expand opportunities for SSTC; enhance knowledge exchange & peer learning; replicate sustainable development & climate action experiences across Global South	Sustainable development; climate action; peer-learning platforms; cooperation with UN agencies and African/Arab partners	Egyptian Agency of Partnership for Development (EAPD), Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Source: Author’s compiled from various sources “*” see OECD (2025).

5. Conclusion and Way Forward

This paper analyses the Southern perspective on Triangular Cooperation (TrC) and finds that Southern countries largely align their approach to TrC with their established bilateral development cooperation practices. More specifically, their engagement reflects the core philosophy of South–South Cooperation (SSC), which is grounded in the principles of self-reliance, demand-driven initiatives, mutual benefit, equality, respect for national sovereignty, and sustainability. The key sectors addressed through triangular cooperation such as climate change, health, agriculture, women’s empowerment, and rural development are of critical importance for the Global South.

In a global context marked by declining ODA, rising geopolitical tensions, and expanding development needs, TrC has emerged as an innovative modality for leveraging collective strengths, mobilising knowledge, and building trust-based partnerships. It has created new avenues for collaboration and exchange among diverse stakeholders, offering a unique partnership model in which all actors have lessons to share and lessons to learn. By enabling multi-actor and multi-country engagement, triangular cooperation fosters synergies, innovation, and cross-regional learning, making it an increasingly valuable tool for advancing the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). This modality strengthens global solidarity, encourages creative problem-solving, and supports flexible, context-specific action—thus contributing to multi-stakeholder partnerships rooted in shared responsibility, joint efforts, and mutual learning.

The paper recommends that, although triangular cooperation is an innovative modality, there is a need to enhance financing for TrC initiatives and explore opportunities for scaling up towards large-scale projects. Strengthening institutional mechanisms for TrC is equally important to ensure effective coordination, while expanding sector-specific triangular initiatives can help address persistent development challenges in the Global South. In this context, recent discussions at the IBSA Leaders' Meeting are significant. India's proposal for an IBSA Digital Innovation Alliance to facilitate the sharing of Digital Public Infrastructure (such as UPI, CoWIN, cybersecurity frameworks, and women-led tech innovations) and the proposal for an IBSA Fund for Climate-Resilient Agriculture represent important steps forward for South–South and triangular cooperation.

Going ahead, triangular cooperation needs to be strengthened through bilateral, regional, and multilateral frameworks so that its full potential can be realised. Today, TrC encompasses financial contributions, technology transfer, the exchange of best practices, and multi-layered partnerships ensuring broader and more sustainable development impacts. From a Southern perspective, it is equally important to build synergies between the cooperation modalities of the Global South and those of the North to fully harness the transformative potential of triangular cooperation.

Endnotes

- ¹ <https://www.unsouthsouth.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/N1911172.pdf>
- ² <https://ris.org.in/newsletter/dcr/2024/ssc.pdf>
- ³ Chaturvedi (2025)
- ⁴ OSAKA UPDATE ON THE G20 ACTION PLAN ON THE 2030 AGENDA FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT file:///C:/Users/RISC-243SUSHIL/Downloads/2019-Osaka-Update%20(1).pdf
- ⁵ file:///C:/Users/RISC-243SUSHIL/Downloads/2013-Saint-Petersburg-Development-Outlook%20(1).pdf
- ⁶ file:///C:/Users/RISC-243SUSHIL/Downloads/2013-Saint-Petersburg-Development-Outlook.pdf
- ⁷ file:///C:/Users/RISC-243SUSHIL/Downloads/2018-Buenos-Aires-Update%20(2).pdf
- ⁸ G20 (Brazil), 2024
- ⁹ <https://www.g20.org/pt-br/documentos/documentos-resultantes-da-reuniao-ministerial-de-desenvolvimento-do-g20-rio-de-janeiro-22-e-23-de-julho-de-2024>
- ¹⁰ Chaturvedi (2025)
- ¹¹ Chaturvedi & Söyler, 2021
- ¹² Contributions to International courts, capital transfers to banks (The World Bank, the inter-American Development bank, the new Development Bank, the Development Bank of Latin America and the African Development Bank, among other
- ¹³ https://ipcig.org/sites/default/files/pub/en/PRB87_How_does_Brazil_quantify_brazilian_cooperation_for_international_development_Ipea.pdf
- ¹⁴ See Baumann et al., 2022
- ¹⁵ <https://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/sites/436887cc-en/index.html?itemId=/content/component/436887cc-en>
- ¹⁶ file:///C:/Users/RISC-243SUSHIL/Downloads/ManualDiretrizesTrilateral2018_ENG.pdf
- ¹⁷ Wofsi Yuri de Souza's presentation at the Conference on Global South & Triangular Cooperation: Emerging Facets – 3-4 June, 2025. New Delhi, India
- ¹⁸ See Besharati, 2015
- ¹⁹ Kerja Sama Triangular
- ²⁰ Kerja Sama Selatan-Selatan'
- ²¹ National Medium-Term Development Plan (RPJMN).
- ²² <https://www.gob.mx/amexcid/acciones-y-programas/que-es-la-cooperacion-internacional-para-el-desarrollo-29339>

References

- Baumann, R., Schleicher, R., Barros, J. A., Ferreira, J., & Santana, P. M. (2022). How does Brazil quantify Brazilian Cooperation for International Development?. https://ipcig.org/sites/default/files/pub/en/PRB87_How_does_Brazil_quantify_brazilian_cooperation_for_international_development_Ipea.pdf
- BMZ (2013) Triangular Cooperation in German Development Cooperation, BMZ Strategy Paper 5/2013, Bonn: Bundesministerium für wirtschaftliche Zusammenarbeit und Entwicklung.
- Brazilian Cooperation Agency. (2019). General guidelines for the design, coordination and management of trilateral technical cooperation initiatives (1st ed.). Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Brazilian Cooperation Agency. <http://www.abc.gov.br>
- Chaturvedi, S. (2012), Characteristics and Potential of Triangular Development Cooperation (TDC): Emerging Trends, Impact and Future Prospects. A Study prepared for Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat (UNDESA).
- Chaturvedi, S. (2016), 'Expanding Frontiers, New Trends and the Way Forward' in The Logic of Sharing: Indian Approach to South-South Cooperation, Cambridge University Press.
- Chaturvedi, S. (2019). TCDC to Triangular Development Cooperation: Reconfiguring partnerships for efficacy and localisation. Development Cooperation Review, 1(10-12), 1-12. RIS, New Delhi. https://www.ris.org.in/sites/default/files/2021_09/DCR%20Special%20Issue_BAPA%2040_0%20%281%29.pdf
- Chaturvedi, S. (2023). In my view: Work with Southern providers to achieve greater scale and relevance, Development Co-operation Report 2023. https://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/sites/f6edc3c2-en/1/3/3/9/index.html?itemId=/content/publication/f6edc3c2-en&_csp_=e36383223262bf9cf22bfe7104af3a9&itemIGO=oecd&itemContentType=book
- Chaturvedi, S. (2025, July 3). Rephasing global development finance. The Hindu. <https://www.thehindu.com/opinion/lead/rephasing-global-development-finance/article69765160.ece>
- Chaturvedi, S. (2025, July 3). Rephasing global development finance. The Hindu. Retrieved July 17, 2025, from <https://www.thehindu.com/opinion/lead/rephasing-global-development-finance/article69765160.ece>
- Chaturvedi, S. and N. Piefer-Söyler (2021), "Triangular co-operation with India: Working with civil society organisations", OECD Development Co-operation Working Papers, No. 89, OECD Publishing, Paris, <https://doi.org/10.1787/285b1a9a-en>.

- Department of International Relations and Cooperation. (2024). African Renaissance and International Cooperation Fund (ARF) strategic plan for 2020–2025: Annual performance plan 2024/25. Republic of South Africa. Retrieved from <https://dirco.gov.za/african-renaissance-and-international-cooperation-fund-arf-strategic-plan-2020-2025-and-annual-performance-plan-2024-2025/>
- ECOSOC (2008) Background Study for the Development Cooperation Forum: Trends in South–South and Triangular Development Cooperation, New York NY: United Nations Economic and Social Council.
- Galván Corona, J. A. (2024). La operación de proyectos de cooperación internacional en México: situación actual y perspectivas / The operation of international cooperation projects in Mexico: Current situation and perspectives. Instituto Matías Romero, Secretaría de Relaciones Exteriores. https://www.gob.mx/cms/uploads/attachment/file/939387/Libro_CD18-Amexcid-2024.pdf
- Global Partnership Initiative on Effective Triangular Cooperation (GPI). (2023). Spotlight on Mexico: Triangular cooperation in practice. Retrieved from <https://triangular-cooperation.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/10/GPI-Spotlight-Mexico-final.pdf>
- Government of Indonesia, Ministry of National Development Planning (Bappenas). (2025). Indonesia Voluntary National Review 2025: Fostering inclusive growth: Advancing sustainable and resilient Indonesia. <https://sdgs.bappenas.go.id/website/wp-content/uploads/2025/08/VNR-2025-Main-book.pdf>
- Government of Indonesia. (2019). Voluntary National Review (VNR) 2019: Empowering people and ensuring inclusiveness and equality. United Nations. https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/23803INDONESIA_Final_Cetak_VNR_2019_Indonesia_Rev2.pdf
- Government of Indonesia. (2021). Indonesia's Voluntary National Review (VNR) 2021: Sustainable and resilient recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic for the achievement of the 2030 Agenda. United Nations Sustainable Development. https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/280892021_VNR_Report_Indonesia.pdf
- Group of 77, (2024). Outcome of the Third South Summit. Group of 77. Retrieved from https://www.g77.org/doc/3southsummit_outcome.htm
<https://doi.org/10.1787/29e2cbc0-en>.
<https://socialprotection.org/discover/publications/general-guidelines-design-coordination-andmanagement-trilateral-technical>.

- Islamic Development Bank, South Centre, United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, & United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation. (2024). Leveraging the potential of South-South and triangular cooperation for the Decade of Action. https://southsouthstg.wpenginepowered.com/wp-content/uploads/2024/04/Leveraging-the-Potential-of-South-South-and-Triangular-Cooperation-for-the-Decade-of-Action_FINAL.pdf
- Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA). (2010). Boosting growth: JICA Annual report 2010. Japan International Cooperation Agency. Retrieved from <https://www.jica.go.jp/english/publications/reports/annual/index.html>
- Kumar, S. (2024). Global trends of triangular cooperation: SSC statistics. *Development Cooperation Review*, 7(2). https://ris.org.in/newsletter/dcr/2024/DCR_Apr-June-2024.html
- Kumar, S. (2024). Global Trends of Triangular Cooperation, *Development Cooperation Review*, Vol. 7, No. 2. RIS, New Delhi.
- Mabera, Faith (2029). Appraising the Dynamics of South-South Cooperation and Triangular Cooperation Lesson beyond the BAPA+40 conference, Institute for Global Dialogue.<http://www.jstor.com/stable/resrep23050> (access on 20-02-2024)
- Mexican Agency for International Development Cooperation (AMEXCID). (2024). International development cooperation . https://www.gob.mx/cms/uploads/attachment/file/373054/Booklet_English.pdf
- Milindo Chakrabarti & Sushil Kumar (Ed.)Emerging Contours of Triangular Cooperation and Global South (Ed.). RIS Publication. ISBN: 81-7122-188-2. https://www.ris.org.in/sites/default/files/Publication/Triangular_Cooperation_Report-2025.pdf
- Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Japan. (2019). Osaka update on the G20 Action Plan on the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. https://www.mofa.go.jp/policy/economy/g20_summit/osaka19/pdf/documents/en/annex_11.pdf
- Neissan Alessandro Besharati (2015), The Case of the South African Development Partnership Agency (SADPA) chapter in book institutional Architecture & Development: Responses from Emerging Powers (editors: Sidiropoulos, Elizabeth / Jorge A. Pérez Pineda / Sachin Chaturvedi / Thomas Fues.
- OECD (2013) Triangular Co-Operation: What's the Literature Telling Us?, Paris: DAC Global Relations, Development Assistance Committee of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development.
- OECD. (2025). Development co-operation profiles: South Africa. Paris: Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development. Retrieved from <https://www.oecd.org/content/dam/oecd/en/publications/>

- reports/2025/06/development-co-operation-profiles_02ffa45c/south-africa_bbd7fadc/48902c88-en.pdf
- OECD. (2025, June 11). Development Co-operation Profiles: Indonesia – Country Note. OECD. https://www.oecd.org/en/publications/development-co-operation-profiles_04b376d7-en/indonesia_2de3e355-en.html
- OECD/IsDB (2023), Global Perspectives on Triangular Co-operation, OECD Publishing, Paris, <https://doi.org/10.1787/29e2cbc0-en>.
- Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). (2025). Mexico: Development co-operation profiles 2025. OECD Publishing. Retrieved from https://www.oecd.org/content/dam/oecd/en/publications/reports/2025/06/development-co-operation-profiles_02ffa45c/mexico_efe81e54/d55d3494-en.pdf
- Secretaría de Relaciones Exteriores. (2024). México y la cooperación internacional para el desarrollo: Evolución reciente y perspectivas / Mexico and international development cooperation: Recent evolution and outlook (Digital ed., ISBN 978-607-446-347-7). Instituto Matías Romero.
- State Council. 2021. White Paper on China's International Development Cooperation in the New Era. State Council Information Office of the People's Republic of China, 10 January. https://english.www.gov.cn/archive/whitepaper/202101/10/content_WS5ffa6bbbc6d0f72576943922.html
- The Government of Indonesia & JICA (2015) Annual Report: Indonesia's South-South and Triangular Cooperation (SSTC), Secretariat of National Coordination Team of South-South and Triangular Cooperation of Indonesia (NCT of SSSTC), ISBN 978-602-73578-0-8
- United Nations General Assembly Resolution. (2010). 64/222 Nairobi outcome document of the High-level United Nations Conference on South-South Cooperation. Available at https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/673728/files/A_RES_64_222-EN.pdf
- United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation (2018), Good Practices in South-South and Triangular Cooperation for Sustainable Development - Volume 2. file:///C:/Users/RISC-243SUSHIL/Downloads/Good%20Practices%20in%20SSTC%20for%20Sustainable%20Development%20-%20Vol.%202%20(2018).pdf
- United Nations. (2019). Buenos Aires outcome document of the second High-level United Nations Conference on South–South Cooperation (A/RES/73/291). United Nations. <https://www.unsouthsouth.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/N1911172.pdf>
- United Nations. (2025). Sevilla Commitment: Outcome document of the Fourth International Conference on Financing for Development (A/

CONF.227/2025/L.1). https://unctad.org/system/files/official-document/aconf227-2025-11_en.pdf

United Nations. (2025, July 24). State of South-South cooperation: Report of the Secretary-General (A/80/256). General Assembly, Eightieth session, Item 23 (b). <https://unsouthsouth.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/09/2512161E.pdf>

UNOSSC. (2022) IBSA fund annual report 2022: India, Brazil and South Africa Facility for Poverty and Hunger Alleviation, UNOSSC/UNDP. Available from: <https://unsouthsouth.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/06/ISBA-Fund-Report-2022.pdf>

About the Authors



Dr. Sushil Kumar is an Assistant Professor at the Research and Information System for Developing Countries (RIS), New Delhi, India. He holds a Ph.D. in Economics from Jamia Millia Islamia. His research focuses on South-South Cooperation, Triangular Cooperation, India's Development Cooperation, and Development Finance. He contributes extensively to policy briefs, discussion papers, academic publications, reports, and international collaborative projects in the field of international development cooperation. Email : sushil.kumar@ris.org.in



Ms. Riddhi Lakhiani is a Research Assistant at the Research and Information System for Developing Countries (RIS), New Delhi. She holds a Master's degree in Economics from Azim Premji University, Bengaluru. Her work focuses on development and policy research across areas such as gender equality, disability inclusion, financial inclusion, and international trade. Her research interests include development economics, international trade and policy issues. Email: Riddhi.lakhiani@ris.org.in

Acknowledgements

Authors are grateful for the comments and suggestions received from reviewers for finalising the Discussion Paper. Thanks are also due to the publications team at RIS, comprising, Mr. Sanjay Singh, Mr. Sachin Singhal, Mr. Sanjeev Karna and Ms. Karanpreet Kaur for arranging the production of this Discussion Paper

RIS Discussion Papers

Available at: <http://www.ris.org.in/discussion-paper>

- DP#339-2026 *Breaking the Cycle of Malnutrition: Integrated Strategies and Global Lessons for India and the Global South* by Monika Kochar
- DP#338-2026 *Evolving Bioeconomy Policy Discourse: An Assessment of Trends and Drivers* by Amit Kumar and Anupama Vijayakumar
- DP#337-2026 *Protection & Indemnity Insurance for India* by Shishir Shrotriya, Deeksha Gupta, Sanjiv Singh
- DP#336-2026 *Reimagining India's Quality Ecosystem* by Shishir Shrotriya, Deeksha Gupta, Sanjiv Singh
- DP#335-2026 *The Fragmenting Trade Order: What Lies Ahead for the WTO?* by Shailja Singh, Priyadarshi Dash and Pragyan Agarwal
- DP#334-2026 *WTO Reform for an Inclusive Multilateral Trading System* by Harsha Vardhana Singh, Atul Kaushik and Teesta Lahiri
- DP#333-2026 *Reforming WTO Dispute Settlement System: Substantive Work Needed Beyond 14th Ministerial Conference* by Atul Kaushik and Renu Mann
- DP#332-2026 *WTO Agriculture Negotiations: A Divided Landscape* by Sachin Kumar Sharma, Talha Akbar Kamal, Alisha Goswami, Yogeshwari Mahajan and Kamna Chaudhary
- DP#331-2026 *Investment Facilitation for Development at WTO: Issues and Implications* by Anwar Hussain Shaik, Pankaj Vashisht and Vaasu Aggarwal
- DP#330-2026 *India's Push for Balancing Industrial Policy Space in WTO: A Developing Economy Lens* by Pritam Banerjee, Zaki Hussain, Amit Randev, Kanika Karwal and Riddhi Lakhiani

BEF

BLUE ECONOMY FORUM

BEF aims to serve as a dedicated platform for fostering dialogue on promoting the concept in the Indian Ocean and other regions. The forum focuses on conducting studies on the potential, prospects and challenges of blue economy; providing regular inputs to practitioners in the government and the private sectors; and promoting advocacy for its smooth adoption in national economic policies.

FIDC

FORUM FOR
INDIAN DEVELOPMENT
COOPERATION

भारतीय विकास सहयोग मंच

FIDC, has been engaged in exploring nuances of India's development cooperation programme, keeping in view the wider perspective of South-South Cooperation in the backdrop of international development cooperation scenario. It is a tripartite initiative of the Development Partnership Administration (DPA) of the Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India, academia and civil society organisations.



**Forum for Indian
Science Diplomacy**

FIRD aims to harness the full potential and synergy between science and technology, diplomacy, foreign policy and development cooperation in order to meet India's development and security needs. It is also engaged in strengthening India's engagement with the international system and on key global issues involving science and technology.



As part of its work programme, RIS has been deeply involved in strengthening economic integration in the South Asia region. In this context, the role of the South Asia Centre for Policy Studies (SACEPS) is very important. SACEPS is a network organisation engaged in addressing regional issues of common concerns in South Asia.



Knowledge generated endogenously among the Southern partners can help in consolidation of stronger common issues at different global policy fora. The purpose of NeST is to provide a global platform for Southern Think-Tanks for collaboratively generating, systematising, consolidating and sharing knowledge on SSC approaches for international development.



DST-Satellite Centre for Policy Research on STI Diplomacy at RIS aims to advance policy research at the intersection of science, technology, innovation (STI) and diplomacy, in alignment with India's developmental priorities and foreign policy objectives.

RIS A Think-Tank of Developing Countries

Research and Information System for Developing Countries (RIS) is a New Delhi-based autonomous policy research institute that specialises in issues related to international economic development, trade, investment and technology. RIS is envisioned as a forum for fostering effective policy dialogue and capacity-building among developing countries on global and regional economic issues.

The focus of the work programme of RIS is to promote South-South Cooperation and collaborate with developing countries in multilateral negotiations in various forums. RIS is engaged across inter-governmental processes of several regional economic cooperation initiatives. Through its intensive network of think tanks, RIS seeks to strengthen policy coherence on international economic issues and the development partnership canvas.

For more information about RIS and its work programme, please visit its website: www.ris.org.in

Research shaping the development agenda



RIS

**Research and Information System
for Developing Countries**

विकासशील देशों की अनुसंधान एवं सूचना प्रणाली

Core IV-B, Fourth Floor, India Habitat Centre
Lodhi Road, New Delhi-110 003 India., Tel. 91-11-24682177-80
Fax: 91-11-24682173-74, Email: dgooffice@ris.org.in
Website: <http://www.ris.org.in>