



Asia Pacific Development Cooperation Forum

JOINT STATEMENT

Adopted

22 October 2008

1. We, the participants at the Asia-Pacific regional workshop on trends and progress in triangular and South-South development cooperation held in Bangkok, Thailand, from 21 to 22 October 2008, recognise that South-South and triangular cooperation is of growing importance in Asia-Pacific regional development cooperation. Some of the success in the ESCAP region is now replicated in other developing regions.
2. We recognise that South-South Cooperation (SSC) and Triangular Development Cooperation (TDC) are integral to the efforts to assist developing countries in achieving sustainable and inclusive economic growth, poverty reduction, stable social development and progress, environmental sustainability, and transparent and accountable governance, in order to become less dependant on external aid in the future.
3. We reaffirm that South-South Cooperation is a valuable complement to North-South cooperation. It should observe the principle of non interference in internal affairs, equality among developing country partners and respect for their independence, national sovereignty, cultural diversity and identity and local content. (Accra Agenda for Action, para 19 (e))
4. We take note that the principles of the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness are relevant to South-South and triangular cooperation and we appreciate the references to both in the Accra Agenda for Action.
5. We fully recognize the comparative advantages of triangular development cooperation in the regional context. Those include its cost effectiveness, its role in the transfer of skills and expertise within the region, its impact on capacity development, as well as on transfer of appropriate technology. We encourage traditional and multilateral donors to route a higher

proportion of their development assistance through this modality in the future follow up process for the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness.

6. We must build on the High-Level Committee for the Review of South-South Cooperation, the High-Level Event of the General Assembly on the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) as well as on the Accra High-Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness, the China-Africa Cooperative Forum (2006), the Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD) IV (2008), the India-Africa Forum Summit (2008) and other events. We must also make use of the forthcoming Review of the implementation of the Monterrey Consensus on Financing for Development (2008) and Ministerial Review of South-South Cooperation (2009), to further energize the spirit of partnership and solidarity among developing countries in realizing the Internationally Agreed Development Goals (IADGs), including the MDGs.

A. Triangular development cooperation: sharing experiences within the ESCAP region and with other regions

7. An increasing number of initiatives of South-South Cooperation in the ESCAP region has begun to be supported by traditional donors and multilateral organizations in a triangular manner, making full use of developing countries' comparative advantages regarding cost-effectiveness, expertise, appropriate policies and technologies.

8. A growing number of triangular development cooperation projects executed by southern contributors in the ESCAP region involve recipient countries in other regions such as the "New Rice for Africa (NERICA)" and the "TICAD Asia-African Partnership". We stress the importance of scaling-up and replicating these experiences for the benefit of other developing regions. The ESCAP region can also learn from good practices in other regions.

9. We believe that SSC and TDC have an effective and important role in reducing and ultimately eliminating poverty by scaling up successful initiatives like the Grameen Bank, the Aga Khan Rural Support Programme (AKRSP), the Self Employed Women's Association (SEWA), the Society for Eliminating Rural Poverty (SERP) and many others.

10. We underscore the importance of promoting a broad stakeholder approach to achieve synergy in triangular cooperation. Engaging key development actors such as the private sector and civil society is also important.

B. Monitoring and evaluation of triangular and South-South development cooperation in the region

11. We note that there is little monitoring and evaluation (M & E) of South-South and triangular development cooperation beyond scrutiny of timeliness and completion of projects. There is need for developing effective nationally owned and inclusive M & E systems for evaluating the impact of South-South and triangular development cooperation, while not hampering the flexibility of this type of cooperation.

12. Traditional donors and multilateral development agencies should provide assistance for building technical and administrative capacity of programme countries in M & E, at their request.

C. Data collection and analysis on South-South and triangular development cooperation

13. There is need for strengthening data collection on South-South and triangular development cooperation in a comprehensive manner including mapping of capacities and needs of developing countries as well as funding sources. This is due to the absence of coordinating agencies at the national level in some cases and the lack of guidelines for reporting. As a result there is little analytical work on the scale, effectiveness and quality of South-South and triangular development cooperation at the national and regional levels.

14. Given the increasing complexity of development cooperation and the growing number of Southern contributors, new ways of keeping track of various forms of cooperation must be developed.

15. Southern cooperating countries may consider designating a national agency for coordinating with all departments concerned with South-South and triangular development cooperation. These agencies would be encouraged to collect data and share information on various initiatives of South-South Cooperation undertaken by the countries including total disbursement of loans and grants, technical cooperation, trade, investment, transfer of technology, thematic and sector focus, and geographical coverage.

16. We call for examining modalities for compiling information on triangular development cooperation. As a starting point, the OECD/DAC could request its member countries to report triangular development cooperation separately from their normal North-South assistance.

D. South–South and triangular development cooperation in Asia-Pacific: How can the United Nations help?

17. We recognize that the United Nations System is an important actor in actively supporting and promoting South-South and triangular development cooperation including at the national, regional and global levels. We strongly urge the United Nations system to do more work in terms of raising funds, planning, and coordination in promoting South-South and triangular cooperation. The Special Unit for South-South cooperation in UNDP should receive adequate financial and technical resources to facilitate this work.

18. In view of the uniqueness of South-South Cooperation, the DCF could provide a useful medium for Southern contributors to present their views and share their experiences. This could be done through regular meetings on South-South Cooperation at regional and international levels. In the Asian and Pacific region, ESCAP provides a broad platform for promoting South-South cooperation as an effective development instrument.

19. The work of the DCF could help in identifying and compiling best practices in South-South and triangular development cooperation. It could also help develop a definition of South-South Cooperation as well as ways of measuring it more accurately, including development of conversion factors for international comparability (considering the wide variation in the cost of goods and services).

20. The DCF could help to maintain the focus on the role of the UN system in mainstreaming South-South and triangular development cooperation in accordance with the mandate provided by General Assembly resolution 62/208 on the 2007 Triennial Comprehensive Policy Review of Operational Activities for Development of the United Nations System. We encourage the DCF to continue its close cooperation with OECD/DAC in these areas.

21. The DCF, in collaboration with ESCAP and the Special Unit for South-South Cooperation in UNDP, could consider formulating a mechanism to sustain the momentum of this workshop.

