

CONCEPT NOTE

Virtual Training Workshop

Leveraging South-South and Triangular Cooperation for Reducing Poverty and Hunger, and promoting Rural Development

21–22 November 2022 | 15:30 CET

and

8–9 December 2022 | 09:30 CET

**Co-organized by the South Centre and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the
United Nations (FAO)**

1. Background

The COVID-19 pandemic has led to a big increase in poverty, especially rural poverty, across many developing countries, wiping out much of the gains made in the past few decades. Food insecurity has become a major challenge for Southern countries while the global economic outlook for the coming years is even gloomier.

South-South and Triangular Cooperation (SSTC) is an essential component of international development cooperation. It plays an important role in the sharing, dissemination and scaling-up of successful development solutions in developing countries. In addition, SSTC could catalyse and enhance developing countries' efforts towards poverty reduction, food security and rural development.

The South Centre's research and experience from engaging with government officials, policy makers and other stakeholders from developing countries has shown the multidimensional nature of SSTC. It has also highlighted the potential for further enhancing SSTC capacities among developing countries through the exchange of experiences and lessons learned towards reducing poverty and hunger, promoting rural development and achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Mainstreaming and leveraging of SSTC in development activities requires strengthening national institutions and the technical capacity to formulate and implement specific cooperation programs. The exchange of experiences and lessons learned is critical to improve the understanding of the

different approaches, methodologies, and institutional arrangements by which SSTC can be carried out.

The South Centre, in collaboration with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), is organizing this virtual training workshop for officials and experts from developing countries on the promotion of SSTC for reducing poverty and hunger, and promoting rural development with the purpose of fostering capacities and knowledge on the use of SSTC for achieving such objectives.

This training workshop aims at offering feasible solutions through SSTC to the current and pressing structural challenges facing developing countries. A policy shift to focus on poverty reduction in rural areas and leveraging on SSTC is urgently called for, and the training workshop will provide an occasion for policy makers and other stakeholders to exchange views and experiences and draw concrete policy recommendations.

2. Objectives

The virtual training sessions will be conducted in the framework of the project on ‘South-South and Triangular Cooperation for Reducing Poverty and Hunger, and Promoting Rural Development’ being undertaken by the South Centre, in collaboration with FAO, with the following objectives:

- Increasing institutional and technical capacity on the use of SSTC for promoting efforts towards poverty alleviation (SDG 1) and ending hunger and malnutrition (SDG 2);
- Exchanging experiences and lessons learned among participating countries from an institutional and technical perspectives about mechanism to leverage SSTC; and
- Facilitating SSTC matchmaking and partnerships among participating countries.

3. Methodology

The training workshop will be divided into two days sessions of 1 hour and 30 minutes each. They will include presentations by experts and country representatives on developments in SSTC, the impact of the COVID-19 crisis on the achievement of SDG 1 and SDG 2, and specific challenges faced by developing countries in integrating SSTC in their national projects and programmes. After each set of presentations, the training will provide time for substantive discussions among participants and experts with the objective of allowing the exchange of experiences and good practices.

Day 1 - General Introduction to SSTC and Overview of Efforts towards Poverty Alleviation and Rural Development

The first day will address the evolution of SSTC as an important avenue for implementing SDG 1 and SDG 2, while assessing the impact that the COVID-19 pandemic has had on countries’ efforts towards poverty alleviation, rural development and ending hunger. It will also consider the added value and benefits of SSTC in rural development and agriculture, and provide some examples on the implementation of rural development and agriculture policies for poverty alleviation in developing countries.

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| Day 1 | General Introduction to SSTC and Overview of Efforts towards Poverty Alleviation and Rural Development |
| 5 minutes | Welcoming Remarks (South Centre and FAO) |
| 25 minutes | <p>General Introduction to South-South and Triangular Cooperation (South Centre)</p> <p>This session will consider the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on efforts towards the achievement of SDG 1 and SDG2, with examples of participating countries. It will provide an analysis of the structural weaknesses of the South to cope with shocks and how SSTC can be leveraged to address the challenges. In addition, it will offer an overview of the importance and main means of strengthening institutional capacities for the promotion and implementation of SSTC initiatives for achieving SDG1 and SDG2.</p> <p>Relevant issues to be explored:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Has rural poverty in your country increased since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic? If so, what do you think are the reasons for such an increase? What policy measures has your country taken to tackle this challenge? - Has your country engaged in SSTC activities relating to poverty alleviation? - How would you assess the SSTC institutional capacity of your country? What is your understanding about the national ecosystems for SSTC? |
| 15 minutes | <p>Overview of role of South-South and Triangular Cooperation in poverty alleviation and rural development (FAO, South Centre, IsDB)</p> <p>The session will consider the current efforts taken by developing countries in the use of SSTC for rural development. The experts from FAO, South Centre and the Islamic Development Bank (IsDB) will make presentations to set the stage and discuss national and regional initiatives and efforts to achieve SDG1 and SDG2 in rural areas.</p> <p>Participants will be invited to provide examples based on their own experiences.</p> |
| 25 minutes | <p>Institutional setup for poverty alleviation and SSTC at national level and good practices on rural development and agriculture (South Centre and participants)</p> <p>This session will introduce different institutional arrangements of participating countries relating to poverty alleviation and SSTC, including vertical and horizontal institutional arrangements that could facilitate the implementation and promote the effectiveness of poverty alleviation policies.</p> <p>Participants will be invited to comment on the opportunities and challenges arising from such institutional arrangements.</p> |
| 30 minutes | <p>Open discussion among participants and experts.</p> <p>This session will serve as an opportunity to refer to the experiences shared during the previous sessions, and enrich this dialogue through sharing national experiences on the challenges that line ministries and national institutions face when conducting SSTC initiatives and projects for achieving SDG 1 and SDG 2.</p> |

Day 2 - Good experiences and lessons learned

The second day will be devoted to an exchange of experiences and lessons learned among participants from developing countries in their efforts towards reducing poverty and hunger, promoting rural development, and achieving the SDGs and the 2030 Agenda. It will explore the potential of SSTC initiatives to contribute towards attainment of these objectives. It will also strive to identify institutional and technical gaps that developing countries face in engaging in SSTC.

| Day 2 | Good experiences and lessons learned |
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| 5 minutes | <p>Summary of discussions from Day 1 (South Centre)</p> <p>The session will start with a short summary of key elements identified in the previous day. It will identify common challenges, and possible responses, shared by participants during the open discussion of Day 1.</p> |
| 25 minutes | <p>Good experiences and lessons on leveraging South-South and Triangular Cooperation in rural development and poverty reduction (Country Representatives, South Centre, FAO and IsDB)</p> <p>This session will allow country representatives to share their national experiences in achieving SDG 1 and SDG 2, while also providing insights and views on the role that SSTC may have for achieving such objectives. It will also provide space for country representatives to discuss on possible modalities of cooperation and partnerships among the participating countries.</p> <p>Relevant issues to be explored:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. How to identify opportunities? 2. How to finance SSTC initiatives/projects: in-kind contribution, cost sharing, triangular sources, bilateral loans, etc.? 3. How to make projects effective and result-oriented? 4. How to enhance coordination among different governmental ministries and other stakeholders? 5. How to improve institutional setup at national and sub-national levels? 6. Pros and cons of centralized and decentralized poverty alleviation and rural development institutional arrangements. |
| 30 minutes | <p>Open discussion among participants and experts</p> <p>This session will allow for an open discussion on the experiences and lessons learned on leveraging SSTC for rural development and poverty reduction.</p> <p>Relevant Issues to be explored:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - How can government institutions and practitioners address capacity gaps in conducting SSTC initiatives? - What are the best mechanisms and means to strengthen institutional capacities to increase SSTC? - How to promote technical knowledge and expertise for strengthening SSTC at the national level? |
| 30 minutes | <p>Facilitated match-making activity and wrap-up.</p> |

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| | <p>This session will provide a space for possible future partnerships among participants. It will be facilitated by the South Centre. It will finalize with a summary of recommendations for future policies and measures that can be considered by participants in the development of SSTC initiatives for achieving rural development as means to achieve SDG 1 and SDG 2.</p> |
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4. Format

The training workshop will be held using a video conferencing platform. Participants will be requested to register in advance so that they can receive the link to join the session.

5. Target Audience

The training will be open for country officials and experts from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Agriculture and the relevant departments dealing with international cooperation, poverty reduction, food security and rural development. Other stakeholders and academics could be invited by the organizers.