



United Nations
Office for South-South Cooperation

INTRODUCTION

- It is my pleasure to be with you at this Interactive Dialogue convened by the President of the General Assembly.
- I welcome the focus on transforming agriculture to combat hunger. Countries of the South can advance this cause significantly by sharing policies, commodities, tools and especially concrete best practices that work, to feed more people.
- I would like to express my gratitude to H.E. Mr. Tijjani Muhammad-Bande for keeping South-South and Triangular cooperation high in his Agenda.
- I take this opportunity to convey my thanks Mr. Qu Dongyu, Director-General of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, for his leadership on this important subject; and through him to our colleagues at FAO for their tireless work on food security and agricultural development.

CURRENT HUNGER and FOOD SECURITY FACTS

- The challenge hunger presents is great. And it is crosscutting.
- Today, the number of people who go to bed hungry exceeds 820 million.
- Asia accounts for nearly two thirds, 63 percent, of this group.
- Sub-Saharan Africa remains the region with the highest prevalence of hunger, with the rate increasing from 20.7 percent in 2014 to 23.2 percent in 2017.
- Every year the world wastes about a third of the food it produces.
- Meanwhile, studies indicate that climate change could add 12 percent to food prices in Africa by 2030 – where food consumption in the poorest households amounts to over 60 percent of their total spending

SOUTH-SOUTH COOPERATION

- There is a wealth of agricultural experience existing in the South that has enormous potential to transform the state of food security and hunger in other countries of the South.
- For example, Brazil transformed its vast tropical savannah into one of the world's hubs of soybean production in two decades.

United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation

- Through appropriate policy changes, Vietnam turned itself from one of the world's largest importers of rice into the world's second-largest exporter.
- Fertilizer subsidy programs turned Malawi into a net exporter of maize.
- South-South cooperation can play a greater role than ever before in tackling food challenges.
- We all recognize that relevant lessons of development experience and practice can come from any part of the world.
- We have witnessed the power of South-South cooperation and how it draws on principles of mutual benefit and symbiotic partnerships.
- We see how knowledge exchange inspires partners to adapt and adopt solutions and approaches that work for them.
- We know how South-South knowledge sharing helps to empower countries to lead their own development processes based on their specific priorities.

BAPA+40 and SDG2

- As you may know, the year 2019 marked a new beginning for South-South and Triangular Cooperation.
- The Second High-level United Nations Conference on South-South Cooperation (BAPA+40) which took place in March last year, in Buenos Aires, Argentina, demonstrated once again the great potential of South-South Cooperation in boosting productive capacity, trade, promoting technology transfer, and supporting inclusive growth in developing countries.
- The BAPA+40 outcome specifically singles out the importance of using South-South cooperation in agriculture toward ensuring food security.
- SDG 2, Zero Hunger, can be reached more effectively if we “leverage the role of South-South and Triangular cooperation as a means to ensure food security and nutrition, including through the promotion of sustainable agriculture and food systems, food processing agro-industries, which have the potential to link with global value chains and effectively address the market needs of developing countries”.
- Last year's High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF), held in New York in July, highlighted the need to employ all means possible, including SSTC, to ensure that the 820+million food insecure and malnourished people are not left behind in benefitting from development and humanitarian initiatives.
- Last September, at UN Headquarters and worldwide, we marked the United Nations Day for South-South cooperation where we re-affirmed our commitment to take joint action to deliver SDG2 – Zero Hunger, and the larger SDG Agenda.

MOVING FORWARD – POST BAPA+40

United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation

- Countries in the South have a rich history of collaboration for development.
- Our commitment to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) reminds us that new partnerships and the adoption of a modern approach are needed if we are to deliver on this ambitious agenda.
- Moving forward we need find ways to match supply and demand strategically to address priority development challenges.
- We need to design, finance and implement South- South exchanges with an emphasis on results.
- We must also facilitate the development of institutional capacity to enable countries to exchange knowledge efficiently and effectively.
- My office, UNOSSC, is continuing to support SSC/TrC within many different thematic areas including tackling issues of food insecurity, poverty and sustainable agriculture.
- Two months ago, the 11th DG Forum, the first one after the BAPA+40, was organized by UNOSSC together with IsDB, JICA and other partners in Istanbul. It was an opportunity for Directors-General of national development cooperation agencies to reflect and exchange views on methods and approaches to implement the BAPA+40 outcome document. Among other things, participants emphasized the importance of the UNOSSC as the focal point for the promotion and coordination of South-South and triangular cooperation on a global and UN system-wide basis and its key role in bringing together all stakeholders toward the implementation of the BAPA+40 recommendations.
- UNOSSC will continue to support the HLC on SSC as its substantive secretariat. The BAPA+40 outcome document gives a stronger role to the HLC on South-South Cooperation by engaging Member States and other stakeholders to further enhancing South-South and Triangular Cooperation through peer-learning, sharing knowledge and experiences as well as best practices on a voluntary basis, and to present recommendations to the GA. The HLC on SSC will take place this year, from 8-11 June.
- Furthermore, we have established an interagency mechanism that coordinates and supports South-South and Triangular cooperation in the UN System. Currently, 40 UN entities participate in the mechanism. Through this group, we are developing the United Nations System-wide Strategy on South-South Cooperation and other follow-up action mandated by BAPA+40.
- Toward ensuring food security, the UNOSSC Cities Project, implemented together with the China Institute for South-South Cooperation in Agriculture (CISSCA), World Food Programme (WFP) China Centre of Excellence, United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Uzbekistan, International Fund for Agriculture Development (IFAD), and the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) is sharing good practices in SSC for agriculture development and poverty eradication.
- We have also recently launched South-South Galaxy, a global knowledge sharing and partnership brokering platform, and I invite you all to take the opportunity and explore this platform.
 - South-South Galaxy connects and links all the existing South-South knowledge-sharing platforms, making it easier for Southern partners to access, navigate, and use. It will enable users to access a broad range of knowledge, solutions, research, partners, and capacity building initiatives.

United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation

- Southern partners will be able to publish their Southern development solutions and needs, exchange knowledge, foster partnerships, access to cutting-edge research, feature and engage in capacity building initiatives, and connect the UN system and South-South partners.
- Discussions today will point to concrete ways in which global organizations can collectively help advance our work toward achieving the Sustainable Development Goals through South-South and triangular collaboration.
- We stand ready to support your work.
- And we look forward to continuing the important deliberations you begin today during the High-level Committee in June; and then during the Global South-South Development Expo – hosted this year in November by Thailand and ESCAP.