



Aide-memoire
First Arab States Regional South-South Development Expo 2014
18-20 February 2014
Doha, Qatar

Introduction and Background Information

The South-South Development Expo is a United Nations system-wide high-profile event for South-South cooperation that strategically and systematically showcases development solutions originating from Southern countries and aimed at replication and scaling up in other parts of the world. It is an integral part of the three-in-one multilateral support architecture of the United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation through which Southern development solutions are produced, marketed and transferred to contribute to the achievement of internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals.

This first Arab States Regional South-South Development Expo, to be held in Doha, Qatar, in 2014, is a result of the success of the annual (since 2008) Global South-South Development Expo model and a direct response to the requests of Member States and institutional partners to bring Southern solutions closer to the regional contexts and deepen the impact of South-South development cooperation through scaling up and replication.

With the motto “Solutions to Action”, the first Arab States Regional South-South Development Expo is designed to raise regional awareness by showcasing and scaling up the impact of successful evidence-based solutions crafted and tested by countries in the Arab States region in addressing development challenges pertinent to the needs and aspirations of the region. The three thematic focus areas of the Expo are youth and women’s employment, energy efficiency and renewable energy, and water and food security.

The main objective of the first Arab States Regional South-South Development Expo is to serve as a platform for matching capacities of the solution providers with the needs of the solution seekers, which will potentially lead to practical exchanges of South-South solutions and experiences in the region. It is an opportunity for countries in the Arab States region to share achievements and replicate successes in the context of the production, marketing and transfer of solutions in response to shared development challenges.

The first Arab States Regional South-South Development Expo will be generously hosted by the State of Qatar and co-organized by the United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation and the United Nations Development Programme Regional Bureau for Arab States. In the spirit of the “Delivering as one” approach, it will feature solution exchange forums led by a number of United Nations specialized agencies, funds and programmes that are active in advancing the South-South cooperation agenda in the Arab States region, including ESCWA, FAO, IFAD, ILO, UNDP, UNEP, UNIDO and UN-Women. It will bring together high-level representatives from various multilateral and bilateral institutions and the development cooperation offices and agencies of the Arab States as well as those countries outside the

Arab States region, which will benefit from the Expo. A number of triangular cooperation champions, such as the Islamic Development Bank and the Japan International Cooperation Agency, will contribute to inclusive participation in the Expo of various relevant stakeholders from around the region.

In addition, the first Arab States Regional South-South Development Expo is designed to serve as a strategic networking opportunity for all South-South cooperation champions and actors active in the Arab States region.

South-South Cooperation and Post-2015 Development Agenda

According to the United Nations Secretary-General, Mr. Ban Ki-moon,¹ the past decade has shown the power of partnerships to advance development. However, despite the strong performance of many developing countries, there remain large pockets of poverty in the global South, even in fast-growing emerging economies.

The United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (RIO+20), held in June 2012, affirmed that equity and fairness must remain at the top of the international agenda as the world seeks to balance social, economic and environmental needs. This principle is guiding the ongoing work of the global international community on the post-2015 development agenda.

South-South cooperation has the potential to balance growth and equity on a global scale. Even in the midst of severe economic, social and political instabilities, South-South cooperation has continued to drive sustainable trade and financial flows in recent years. The countries of the South are building new models of development cooperation that emphasize mutual benefit and solidarity as well as cost-effectiveness. This is helping to provide people with improved access to affordable medicines, technology and credit.

The rapid spread of information technology has dramatically increased connectivity and networking throughout the South, creating enormous opportunities for the sharing of experience, knowledge and good practices that can boost development. South-South cooperation holds great potential for even greater sharing of expertise in areas such as education, health, energy and food security.

Changing Landscape of the Global South

The robust economic growth of a number of countries of the South has had a significant impact on the development prospects of other Southern countries. An increasing number of developing countries have become regional centres of economic dynamism, acting not only as significant beneficiaries but also as benefactors of South-South exchanges. The emergence of new growth poles within the South as more countries become increasingly specialized in their manufacturing, trading and investment activities has dramatically reshaped the global economic landscape, creating new dynamics in trade, investment and development assistance flows both from and within economies of the South.

New Overall Dynamism in Interregional, Regional and Subregional South-South Cooperation

Regional cooperation and interregional cooperation have increased substantially in recent years in part to promote the equitable distribution of net gains and address inequalities among developing countries, increase economic collaboration, facilitate trade, promote cooperation for mutually beneficial exchanges intraregionally, and share development knowledge and expertise in areas of common concern within regions.

¹ Available from <http://www.un.org/News/Press/docs/2012/sgsm14499.doc.htm>.

Growing Demand for South-South Development Solutions

Developing countries have expressed a consensus on the fact that South-South cooperation continues to serve as a complement to, and not a substitute for, North-South cooperation, particularly in the area of development assistance but also in new areas of cooperation, such as infrastructure development and disaster management. In this context, traditional donor countries are urged by the High-level Committee on South-South Cooperation of the General Assembly and by the General Assembly itself to continue to play an important role in supporting South-South initiatives through triangular arrangements, which consist of activities initiated by collaborating groups of developing countries supported by partners of the North. While there are concerns about trends in official development assistance, many traditional donor countries have actually stepped up their level of support for South-South cooperation through triangular arrangements in recent years, thus complementing and strengthening those partnerships.

Role of the United Nations System and Multilateral Organizations in South-South Cooperation

Against this background, the United Nations system has emerged as a key player in systematically advocating and supporting South-South and triangular cooperation, particularly as global challenges to development have generated opportunities for global partnerships in responding to the unmet internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals.

The 2007 and 2009 triennial comprehensive policy reviews of operational activities for development of the United Nations system² outline a number of areas requiring South-South cooperation in United Nations operational activities for development. The General Assembly, in its resolution on the 2013 quadrennial comprehensive policy review,³ reaffirmed the increased importance of South-South cooperation and triangular cooperation in international development efforts. It called upon the funds, programmes, specialized agencies and other entities of the United Nations system “to mainstream support to South-South cooperation and triangular cooperation into the regular country-level programming of operational activities for development, to strengthen support mechanisms at the global and regional levels, including drawing upon the knowledge networks of global entities and the capacities of the regional commissions and the United Nations development system regional teams, and to help developing countries, at their request and with their ownership and leadership, to develop capacities to maximize the benefits and impact of South-South cooperation and triangular cooperation in order to achieve their national goals, with special emphasis on the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals.

Consequently, South-South cooperation has become a key component of the annual strategic priorities of the United Nations Development Group and is therefore actively promoted as one of the principal mechanisms for the delivery of development support at the country level. It will continue to be a central feature of United Nations operational activities for development in the future, especially in the post-2015 development landscape. The United Nations system is best positioned to continue to play a prominent role vis-à-vis Member States in their South-South and triangular cooperation efforts. In particular, the United Nations system will continue, through its three-in-one multilateral support architecture for South-South cooperation, to serve as an advocate for and convener of policy dialogue, a knowledge broker for capacity development, a partnership builder, and an analyst and monitor of progress for South-South cooperation and triangular cooperation and their contribution towards meeting internationally agreed development goals.

² A/62/73, E/2007/52 and A/62/253.

³ A/RES/67/226. Available from http://www.un.org/esa/coordination/pdf/ga_resolution_a-res-67-226.pdf.

Themes of the First Arab States Regional South-South Development Expo 2014

The *Arab Development Challenges Report 2011*⁴ concluded that the Arab States possess five critical resources: human resources, renewable energy, exhaustible hydrocarbons, water and agricultural land. Wisely planned, inclusive development and utilization of the first two (human resources and renewable energy), which are in great abundance, combined with equitable and prudent distribution and use of the latter three, which present tough and limiting constraints, should be the backbone of any policy that aims to realistically improve the lives of the Arab people.

However, the sustainable use of natural resources is perhaps the most serious long-term development challenge facing the Arab region. In addition to the problem of depletion of natural resources that serve as the income base for many of the Arab States, such as oil and gas, wasteful consumption practices in combination with potentially increasing episodes of drought due to climate change might pose a major water security challenge for the region. In all Arab countries with the exception of Iraq, Lebanon and Sudan, the per capita share of renewable water resources falls below the international water poverty line (1,000 cubic metres annually). In Yemen, the per capita share of water has actually reached 100 cubic metres annually, a tenth of the international water poverty line.

Another serious challenge for the region is that its rent-based economic prosperity has not corresponded to the respective growth in decent employment opportunities, especially for youth and women. Arab women in particular bear the brunt of unemployment and of vulnerable employment.

More populous Arab countries with a higher concentration of human and income poverty face declining levels of natural resource rents and most of them have turned into net oil importers. Today's global trading context is more competitive than ever, which, in combination with the rising levels of higher education across the region, makes the challenge of creating decent jobs very difficult. The recent low average levels of rainfall and the spike in food prices increase the vulnerability of the region by creating food insecurity and threatening the livelihoods of population groups that farm the land.

Value Propositions

The first Arab States Regional South-South Development Expo is organized in direct response to the requests of Member States and institutional partners to bring Southern solutions closer to the regional contexts and to deepen the impact of South-South development cooperation through concrete scaling up and replication efforts.

The attendance at the Expo will include four groups of champions and stakeholders: *high-level policymakers, solution providers, solution seekers and those seeking to scale up solutions*. For each of these groups, the Expo will offer the following value-added propositions:

- (a) For *policymakers*, the Expo is a powerful platform for contextualizing South-South cooperation in new regional and global challenges, setting new directions and priorities for such cooperation, and championing concrete South-South and/or triangular-cooperation partnership initiatives on a regional (Arab States), global and United Nations system-wide basis. With its three broad themes of youth and women's employment, energy efficiency and renewable energy and water and food security, the Expo is expected to create new inspiration and momentum for South-South cooperation to contribute more to the post-2015 development agenda.

⁴ Available from <http://www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/librarypage/hdr/arab-development-challenges-report-2011.html>.

- (b) For *solution providers*, the Expo will offer the opportunity to organize and showcase successful, sustainable and scalable Southern-grown development solutions that contribute to the three broad themes mentioned above. It will therefore seek to stimulate the interest of potential partners (solution seekers) to explore and identify potential collaborative initiatives that could be replicated in other countries and regions of the South and that build on the successes and lessons of the solution providers.
- (c) For *solution seekers*, the Expo will offer them the opportunity to learn from a wide range of Southern-grown development solutions in their efforts to solve similar development problems using South-South approaches. It will therefore be an opportunity for solution seekers to engage with solution providers to explore potential approaches for initiating collaborative activities designed to replicate the successes and best practices showcased by the solution providers.
- (d) For *those seeking to scale up solutions*, the Expo will offer the opportunity to appreciate the true value of the showcased Southern-grown development solutions and to take informed and strategic decisions to support scaling-up efforts through innovative South-South, triangular and public-private partnership arrangements and funding mechanisms.

The Programme Structure of the First Arab States Regional South-South Development Expo 2014

The Expo in Doha will tentatively consist of the following segments:

Day One – 18 February 2014

(a) High-level Opening Ceremony

The first Arab States Regional South-South Development Expo will begin with a high-level opening ceremony featuring distinguished and powerful champions of South-South cooperation. Attendees at this event will include the political leadership of the State of Qatar as the host of the Expo, government ministers from the Arab States region, the President of the United Nations General Assembly, special representatives of the United Nations Secretary-General, Heads of United Nations agencies and other prominent multilateral institutions that promote the South-South cooperation agenda in the Arab States region.

(b) Launching of the Mapping of South-South Cooperation Mechanisms and Solutions in the Arab Region

The mapping is the response to the existing demand for filling the information gap on the range of existing tools and mechanisms for effective South-South cooperation specific and unique to the Arab States region. It aims to provide practical, easy-to-use information for use by the government agencies that are focal points for South-South cooperation as well as the United Nations agencies, funds and programmes active in the region in their work aimed at advancing South-South cooperation in the region in compliance with the provisions of the High-level United Nations Conference on South-South Cooperation.

(c) Special Session on Successful Solutions from the Host Country, the State of Qatar

The State of Qatar has a wide range of successful solutions relevant to the three broad themes to be covered by the first Arab States Regional South-South Development Expo. A number of Qatari home-grown solutions will be presented during this special session by a number of stakeholders representing the national government, civil society and the private sector.

(d) Special Session on South-South Cooperation in People-centred Investment

This session will demonstrate the important role that the private sector could play and is already playing in addressing the themes of the first Arab States Regional South-South Development Expo through South-South cooperation partnerships in the Arab States region and beyond. Practical cases of private-sector-supported initiatives on the transfer of knowledge, skills and technologies that have brought about the solutions to the problems will be the substantive focus of this session.

Days One and Two – 18-19 February 2014

(e) Solution Exchange Forums

- **ESCWA**-led Solution Exchange Forum
- **FAO**-led Solution Exchange Forum
- **IFAD**-led Solution Exchange Forum
- **ILO**-led Solution Exchange Forum
- **UNDP**-led Solution Exchange Forum
- **UNEP**-led Solution Exchange Forum
- **UNIDO**-led Solution Exchange Forum
- **UN Women**-led Solution Exchange Forum

The eight Solution Exchange Forums will showcase innovative, sustainable and replicable solutions within the context of the three broad themes of *youth and women's employment*, *energy efficiency and renewable energy*, and *water and food security*. The solutions presented will highlight attributes of South-South cooperation including Southern priority/demand-driven, Southern ownership and Southern leadership and will also demonstrate broad-based partnership, innovation, efficiency, sustainability and scalability.

Each Solution Exchange Forum will feature presentations of five to six solutions relevant to its respective theme. The featured development solutions will take many forms, including Arab States home-grown solutions, South-South partnership solutions, North-South-South triangular partnership solutions, and public-private partnership (PPP) solutions, and will have the potential for scaling up. To the extent possible, each solution will be presented by a champion/key beneficiary stakeholder rather than by the implementing United Nations agency.

All Southern-grown development solutions to be showcased will address such questions as: why a specific solution worked in a given environment; the kinds of benefits that it generated and whether those benefits were equitably shared; what made it sustainable; whether the same Southern development solution was adapted to a different country context and, if so, what lessons were learned from that experience; what the minimal requirements are in order for another country to implement the solution; the kind of technical support that the country of origin of the solution might provide; and, last but not least, what a traditional donor, multilateral organization, or private-sector or civil society organization could contribute to support mutual learning and scaling up.

Day Three – 20 February 2014

(f) First Regional High-level Forum of Directors-General for Development Cooperation

The Expo in Doha will feature a High-level Forum of Directors-General for Development Cooperation co-organized by the Japan International Cooperation Agency and the United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation, and hosted by the State of Qatar. This is an interactive dialogue session designed to

provide a unique space for Directors-General of development cooperation agencies (national and international) to share experiences, exchange best practices and build new partnerships, with the common goal of helping to scale up the development impact of such cooperation in the Arab States region and beyond. Participants will be encouraged to discuss experiences, best practices, solutions and opportunities in the following five major sessions:

Session 1: Intraregional South-South Cooperation as a Driver for Effective Policy Coordination and Development Coordination in the Arab States;

Session 2: Role and Positioning of the Arab Region within the Cross-regional Cooperation Frameworks for Equitable Participation in Global Decision-making;

Session 3: Successful Country Strategies and Frameworks for South-South and Triangular Cooperation towards Effective Development in the Arab Region;

Session 4: Role of Development Cooperation Stakeholders, the United Nations System and other Multilateral Organizations in Catalysing South-South and Triangular Cooperation in the Arab Region;

Session 5: Way Forward: Regionally Owned Arab Roadmap on Fostering South-South and Triangular Cooperation as a Practical Way of Harmonizing Efforts at the Regional Level.

(g) Special Session on Cross-regional Sharing of Knowledge and Experiences between the Arab States and Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States

This special session will provide space for an in-depth discussion on the exchanges of knowledge and experience between civil society and public-sector practitioners from the two regions and showcase examples of practical initiatives connecting experiences from Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) and the Arab States. The event will serve as a platform for discussions on the successes, opportunities and challenges of cross-regional exchanges, for networking with potential partners from both regions, and for the announcement of a competition for a cross-regional grant relating to the three themes of the first Arab States Regional South-South Development Expo.

(h) Round-table Discussion: Network for the Economic Empowerment of Women of the South

This round-table discussion will serve as an important platform for the exchange of knowledge and good practices across the Arab States region and beyond regarding gender mainstreaming and the economic empowerment of women in the region as well as in the global South at large in the context of the post-2015 development agenda for sustainable development and poverty alleviation. The session will also highlight innovative ideas for the economic empowerment of women through South-South knowledge exchange. Key international dignitaries will be invited as panellists.

(i) Round-table Discussion: Role of Information and Communications Technology in Fostering South-South Development Cooperation

This round-table discussion will be an interactive dialogue on the critical role of information and communications technology (ICT) as a driver of effective and relevant South-South development cooperation. It will be attended by high-level representatives from the region and senior officials of the United Nations and will feature renowned leaders and experts in the field of ICT and South-South and triangular cooperation.

(j) High-level Closing Ceremony

The High-level Closing Ceremony of the first Arab States Regional South-South Development Expo will be a grand celebration of the event's successes. Future perspectives and the course of action in further advancing South-South cooperation in the Arab States region and beyond in the context of the post-2015

development agenda will be shared at the Closing Ceremony based on the planned commitments of eminent leaders in South-South and triangular cooperation in the region, including government officials, leaders of United Nations agencies and intergovernmental organizations, and other prominent South-South cooperation champions.

Days One, Two and Three – 18-20 February 2014

(k) Exhibition Floor: Showcasing of Successful Solutions (18-20 February 2014)

Throughout the entire event, the exhibition floor will showcase some of the most successful and innovative development solutions originating from the Arab States region and/or other parts of the global South, the shining examples of the current and potential strength of South-South cooperation. A number of South-South and triangular partnership solutions relevant to the three broad themes of the Expo will be displayed through the use of posters, audio-visual equipment, printed materials and publications. The showcased solutions will embody the following key attributes: (a) Southern priority/demand driven; (b) Southern ownership; (c) Southern leadership; (d) broad-based partnership; (e) innovation; (f) efficiency; (g) sustainability; and (h) scalability.

(l) South-South Global Assets and Technology Exchange and Partnerships Space (18-20 February 2014)

The South-South Global Assets and Technology Exchange (SS-GATE) will host a matchmaking space that will offer solution providers, solution seekers and potential investors the opportunity to leverage SS-GATE expertise in deal-making and project facilitation. Viable solutions will be prepared and loaded onto the SS-GATE e-platform in real time for dissemination throughout the global network. In cases where provider, seeker and investor/donor are matched, SS-GATE will provide on-site facilitation to maximize the chances of a successful deal.

Conclusion

Efforts to find solutions to the complex development challenges facing the Arab States region require collective action, innovation and broad-based partnerships. The strength of the Arab States Regional South-South Development Expo lies in concrete and replicable development solutions in the most pivotal areas relevant to the needs of the countries in the Arab States region, thus further promoting critical sharing and, possibly, scaling up of solutions across the region and the global South at large.

With active leadership from the State of Qatar as the host for the first Arab States Regional South-South Development Expo and the full engagement of the entire United Nations system as well as proactive commitment from other development actors from government, civil society, private-sector stakeholders and the international development community, we are confident that the Expo in Doha will go beyond showcasing successful solutions in the Arab States and other developing regions to serve as a powerful platform to form inclusive partnerships to scale up the development impact of those solutions towards achieving the unmet Millennium Development Goals and sustainable development beyond 2015.

*For more information, please contact the
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