



EVALUATION OF

UNDP CONTRIBUTION TO SOUTH-SOUTH COOPERATION

SOUTH-SOUTH
PARTNERSHIPS



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EVALUATION OF SOUTH-SOUTH COOPERATION IN UNDP

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FOREWORD

Over the past 30 years, there has been a remarkable upsurge in South-South cooperation. Sustained economic growth since the late 1980s has led to an increasing number of developing countries becoming regional centres of economic dynamism. To support emerging needs, member countries expect the United Nations development system to mainstream South-South cooperation as a cross-cutting theme in its work.

Promoting and supporting South-South cooperation has been an expressed priority for UNDP for many decades, most recently with the 2004-2007 Multi Year Funding Framework. The Framework explicitly states that South-South Cooperation would be a driver of development effectiveness in all areas of work. In 1974, the General Assembly established the Special Unit for South-South Cooperation within UNDP in order to spearhead support to South-South cooperation within UNDP and the UN system. The programmatic work of the Special Unit has been guided in recent years by a South-South Cooperation Framework that is approved by the Executive Board of UNDP. Prior to the approval of a fourth cooperation framework for South-South Cooperation in 2008, the Executive Board requested the Evaluation Office to conduct an independent forward-looking evaluation of results achieved.

This report presents the outcome of the evaluation, which looks at the effectiveness of the Third Cooperation Framework managed by the Special Unit, and also assesses the results achieved by the inclusion of South-South cooperation as a driver in UNDP programmatic work. The scope of the evaluation covers relevant UNDP-supported programmes at the country, regional and global level in all geographic regions from 1996 to the present. The analysis is based on evidence collected from case studies in seven countries (Barbados, Brazil, China, Guatemala, Mali, South Africa and Thailand), an in-depth desk review in

India, consultations with headquarters of UN system agencies in New York and Geneva, an electronic survey of UN country teams in all regions, consultations with Permanent Missions in New York, and is supplemented by a desk review of related evaluative material. Altogether, 248 stakeholders were interviewed and 149 responses from 51 UN country teams were analysed.

A key issue faced by the evaluation was the lack of an agreed definition of South-South cooperation within UNDP. In the absence of a common understanding, the evaluation uses the definition adopted by the General Assembly in 2003 describing South-South cooperation as a process by which two or more developing countries initiate and pursue development through the cooperative exchange of multi-dimensional knowledge, resources, skills and technical know-how through different types of cooperation.

The evaluation reaches four important conclusions. First, while the conceptual areas of the Third Cooperation Framework for South-South Cooperation were valid, the effectiveness of the framework was constrained by a mismatch among the mandate, resources and implementation strategy adopted by the Special Unit. Second, UNDP has not developed a robust and proactive corporate strategy to promote South-South cooperation. There is a lack of common understanding, no incentives and little systematic codification of experience. Third, at the country and regional levels, UNDP has been responsive to demand and a number of initiatives were undertaken. But the results of these initiatives were affected by the absence of a corporate strategy that commits capacity and resources and enables learning from experience. Fourth, the Special Unit and UNDP have not leveraged their particular and combined strengths and capacities to serve countries more effectively.

The evaluation recommends that the Special Unit pay particular attention to achieving more effective and sustainable results. While the areas of the Fourth Cooperation Framework may broadly remain the same, there needs to be a fundamental change in the implementation strategy. The strict criteria established by inter-governmental processes should be used in selecting initiatives under the cooperation framework and transparent and systematic consultations should precede implementation. The evaluation strongly recommends that the Special Unit work closely with appropriate UN system agency(s) in developing pilot initiatives so that the Special Unit can have an exit strategy after playing a catalytic role, and that government(s) concerned can continue to draw on UN expertise from a UN agency if so required.

The evaluation recommends that UNDP urgently develop a corporate strategy on South-South cooperation that builds on positive initiatives at the country and regional levels, addresses emerging issues, integrates all programme frameworks, and is underpinned by resources, incentives and accountability. And finally, the evaluation stresses the need for UNDP and the Special Unit to define clear collaborative arrangements to work more effectively in order to codify knowledge and leverage the UN development system in supporting South-South cooperation.

The insights provided by Executive Board members, governments, international partners, members of civil society and colleagues in the UN system enabled the team to collect and validate a rich set of perceptions and evidence on past performance and future directions for UNDP in South-South cooperation. I would particularly like to thank colleagues in the Special Unit, the Resident Representatives and their colleagues in the case study countries, and UNDP colleagues in New York for their unstinting collaboration during this evaluation.

This report is the result of the professional dedication of a number of people. The Evaluation Office acknowledges the contributions of the

independent evaluation team that was led by Talaat Abdel-Malek and included A.K. Shiva Kumar, William Tabb, Celina Souza, Peter Metcalf and S. Nanthikesan. Experts from the case study countries where case studies were conducted, Kamal M. Chenoy (India), Cecilia Skinner-Klee (Guatemala), and Humphrey Wattanga (South Africa), contributed to the evaluation.

The Evaluation Office invited leading experts to serve on an independent advisory panel for the evaluation. I would like to express our gratitude to Stephen Brown (Deputy Executive Director, International Trade Center, Geneva), Mary Chinery-Hesse (Vice-Chairman, National Planning Commission, Ghana), Jose Antonio-Ocampo (former Under Secretary General, UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs) and Sanjay Reddy (Professor, Barnard College, Columbia University) for their advice and suggestions which strengthened the report.

The evaluation was task managed in the Evaluation Office by S. Nanthikesan, Evaluation Advisor and Khaled Ehsan, Evaluation Advisor. Research support was provided by Maggie Kamel, Tega Shivute, Michelle Sy and Nayma Qayum. Michelle Sy handled administrative support and Anish Pradhan provided information technology and technical support to the electronic survey and the publication process. I would also like to express my appreciation to Alex Marshall, for his extensive editorial contribution and to Jeffrey Stern of Suazion, Inc., editor of this report.

As the report underlines, South-South cooperation is rapidly taking centre stage in development cooperation. We hope that this evaluation will enable UNDP to respond more systematically and effectively in supporting developing countries to use southern knowledge and solutions to enhance the well-being of their people.



Saraswathi Menon
Director, UNDP Evaluation Office

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ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
BAPA	Buenos Aires Plan of Action
BCPR	Bureau for Crisis Prevention and Recovery
BDP	Bureau for Development Policy
CPD	Country programme document
GCF	Global Cooperation Framework
GEF	Global Environment Facility
HDR	Human Development Report
HDRO	Human Development Report Office
HLC	High-Level Committee (on the Review of TCDC/SSC)
MDG	Millennium Development Goal
MYFF	Multi-Year Funding Framework
NEPAD	New Partnership for Africa's Development
NGO	Non-governmental organization
NHDR	National Human Development Report
SGP	Small Grants Programme
SMEs	Small and medium enterprises
TCDC	Technical Cooperation among Developing Countries
SURF	Subregional resource facility
UN	United Nations
UNCT	United Nations Country Team
UNDAF	United Nations Development Assistance Framework
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
WIDE	Web of Information for Development

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

I. INTRODUCTION

This report sets out the findings and recommendations of the evaluation of UNDP contribution to South-South cooperation. This evaluation focused on: the assessment of the Third Cooperation Framework for South-South Cooperation, managed by the Special Unit for South-South Cooperation; UNDP efforts in promoting and supporting South-South cooperation; and the effectiveness of the collaboration between UNDP and the Special Unit. The assessment is situated within relevant intergovernmental mandates for UNDP and the Special Unit, as well as the emerging realities of South-South cooperation. The scope of the study covers the period 1996 to 2007 and all geographic regions.

II. CONTEXT

Over the past 30 years, there has been a remarkable upsurge in South-South cooperation. Sustained economic growth since the late 1980s has led to an increasing number of developing countries becoming regional centres of economic dynamism. South-South trade has been growing and made up 26 percent of developing-country exports in 2004, and many developing countries have accumulated large financial surpluses. During the 1990s, South-South foreign direct investment flows grew faster than North-South flows. The number of large Southern transnational corporations grew from just 19 in 1990 to 58 by 2005.

Much of the growth in South-South cooperation is happening without the participation of the United Nations development system, providing a welcome indication of effective leadership and capacity in the South. Nevertheless, the changing international environment has increased demands on the United Nations system. While mutual cooperation between developing countries is growing, there is concurrent demand for

multilateral organizations to: support efforts to guide the flow of resources, in order to ensure that everyone benefits from South-South cooperation; draw attention to the problems and challenges faced by developing countries; and encourage mutual support. Given its universal presence and neutrality, member countries expect the United Nations system to mainstream South-South cooperation as a cross-cutting theme in its work. In addition, members expect the UN system to respond robustly to reports of slow progress in many developing countries towards the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and other internationally agreed upon development goals.

UNDP is expected to help build capacities in countries of the South in order to support the achievement of their development goals, including the MDGs. South-South cooperation is expected to be an integral part of UNDP work, given the stated UNDP positioning as a knowledge-based organization, its role in the exchange of development experience through its global network of country offices and its support to the Special Unit for South-South Cooperation.

RATIONALE AND OBJECTIVE

This evaluation was requested by the UNDP Executive Board and is part of the agenda of the UNDP Evaluation Office, approved by the Board in June 2006. The evaluation underpins the Administrator's substantive accountability to the Executive Board. Findings of the evaluation will provide substantive inputs to the Fourth Cooperation Framework for South-South Cooperation (2008–2010), to be presented to the Board in January 2008, and to the implementation of the UNDP strategic plan, 2008–2011.

The objective of this evaluation was to assess the UNDP contribution to South-South cooperation over the past decade and the performance of

the Third Cooperation Framework for South-South Cooperation. The evaluation sought to provide major ‘lessons learned’ by assessing what worked and why. As such, this report offers recommendations for strengthening the effectiveness of future programming efforts in South-South cooperation.

III. APPROACH AND METHODOLOGY

This evaluation addressed the organizational strategy of UNDP and its initiatives to promote South-South cooperation at the global, regional and country levels. At the same time, the evaluation assessed the implementation of the Third Cooperation Framework for South-South Cooperation, as well as the nature and extent of interaction between the Special Unit and UNDP. The evaluation did not cover the full mandate of the Special Unit for South-South Cooperation, detailed subsequently.

This evaluation addressed key issues, including:

- The nature and extent of support provided by the Special Unit and UNDP in promoting and expanding South-South cooperation;
- The ability of UNDP and the Special Unit to learn from experience in South-South cooperation, in order to strengthen and institutionalize support to such cooperation across all UNDP practice areas;
- The appropriateness, relevance, effectiveness and sustainability of UNDP efforts to meet varied and evolving demands, in order to strengthen and expand South-South cooperation; and
- UNDP preparedness to address emerging demands in South-South cooperation.

The evaluation gathered evidence through eight country case studies. The process included a desk study; a desk study of relevant secondary material; interviews with staff in Geneva and New York; and an electronic survey of United Nations units in programme countries. Given

wide variations in the practice of South-South cooperation and limited time and resources, random selection was not feasible. Adopting a purposive approach, Barbados, Brazil, China, Guatemala, Mali, South Africa and Thailand were selected to reflect varied experience in South-South cooperation, regional distribution and geographical constraints (e.g., Small Island Developing States and landlocked developing countries). An in-depth desk study was also conducted in India, and Brazil was chosen as the pilot study.

The evaluation consulted over 248 stakeholders in Geneva, New York and case study countries. In each case study country, stakeholders included the United Nations Country Team, government officials, bilateral donors, members of civil societies and UNDP country office staff. Other stakeholders included UNDP headquarters units, United Nations organizations in New York and Geneva, and permanent missions of the United Nations Member States.

The electronic survey was designed to gather essential information about South-South cooperation activities and perceptions. The survey was addressed to United Nations Resident Coordinators, who in turn forwarded it to other country team members. Responses were received from 149 members of United Nations Country Teams from 51 countries, including all Resident Representatives from these countries.

Secondary evidence was gathered from previous UNDP evaluations of the Second Global Cooperation Framework and four regional frameworks, including Africa, Arab States, Asia and the Pacific, and Latin America and the Caribbean.

IV. HISTORY AND MANDATE

In response to mounting pressure for a new economic order during the 1970s, and in support of the principle of collective self-reliance among developing countries, United Nations General Assembly resolution 3251 established the Special

Unit for Technical Cooperation among Developing Countries (TCDC) within UNDP. In 1978, following a conference on TCDC, the Buenos Aires Plan of Action proposed a set of guiding principles and an action plan for promoting and implementing TCDC, with specific recommendations for the United Nations development system.

General Assembly resolution 33/144 (subsequently elaborated by the High-Level Committee on South-South Cooperation and the UNDP Executive Board) charged the Special Unit with:

- Facilitating coordination of the promotional and other TCDC activities of the United Nations development system;
- Coordinating TCDC matters within UNDP;
- Carrying out research studies and analyses of TCDC issues and problems;
- Promoting wider use of the capacities of developing countries;
- Developing and strengthening the information referral system, now known as the Web of Information for Development (WIDE), and the inquiry service, and promoting their broader use through appropriate linkages with information systems in other organizations of the United Nations development system and in national institutions; and
- Mobilizing resources for TCDC.

The High-Level Committee on the Review of TCDC was established in 1980 as the highest policy and oversight body under and reporting to the General Assembly. In addition to its responsibilities as the global and UN system-wide advocate, catalyst and resource mobilizer of South-South cooperation, the Special Unit for South-South Cooperation was charged with being the substantive secretariat for the Committee.

The Executive Board of UNDP, in its decision 2004/32, stated that South-South cooperation should be considered a driver of development

effectiveness and be incorporated in the Second Multi-Year Funding Framework (2004–2007).

More recently, the Executive Board, in its decision 2007/32, reiterated that UNDP should promote South-South cooperation by stepping up efforts to seek South-South solutions in all its focus areas as a way of enhancing the exchange of best practices and support among developing countries, regardless of their levels of development. The decision also required the UNDP Administrator, in consultation with the Executive Board, to establish measurable targets for the Special Unit for South-South Cooperation. In addition, the decision emphasized that UNDP should take a human development-based approach to programming.

V. PROGRAMMATIC ACTIVITIES

Three cooperation frameworks approved by the Executive Board of UNDP have provided the structure for the work of the Special Unit since 1997. The three key elements of the Third Cooperation Framework for South-South Cooperation are: policy advocacy, dialogue and promotion; public-private partnerships; and sharing Southern development knowledge. Funding comes from three sources: UNDP regular ('core') resources; resources mobilized by the Special Unit; and funds managed by the Special Unit. In real terms, annual resources available to the Special Unit have declined over the past decade, though the nominal value has not changed. Regular resources available to the Special Unit have also declined.

UNDP pursues South-South cooperation in global, regional and country programmes, either as a modality to improve programme performance or with South-South cooperation as the programme goal. Global initiatives come under the global programme managed by the Bureau for Development Policy; regional programmes are managed by the regional bureaux; and country programmes are developed and implemented by country offices in close partnership with national governments.

Communities of practice, or 'knowledge networks', are linked to the global programme and are designed to position UNDP as a knowledge-based organization. Knowledge networks help those working in similar practice or thematic areas to share Southern experience and knowledge. The networks are continuing to grow and are widely used by members.

Regional programmes seek to address challenges in areas such as: regional public goods; trafficking; drugs; HIV/AIDS; disaster prevention and response; water supply and use; and environmental management. Regional programmes enable countries to advocate collectively for equitable and transparent trade regimes and other areas of common interest.

Responses to surveys and case studies show that it is common for country offices to seek solutions and expertise from developing countries with similar experience, often through knowledge networks or communities of practice, and, in some instances, through face-to-face exchanges. In such examples, South-South cooperation serves as a modality to identify best development practices.

Institutional links between the operations of UNDP and the Special Unit for South-South Cooperation have evolved over the years. Since 1997, three cooperation frameworks have formalized collaborative arrangements. The Second Cooperation Framework, for instance, sought to develop a strategy to mainstream South-South cooperation within UNDP, as part of the Framework's efforts to mainstream South-South cooperation in the United Nations system.

The Special Unit provides guidance for promoting South-South cooperation in UNDP. *Revised Guidelines for the Review of Policies and Procedures Concerning TCDC*, issued by the Special Unit in 1997, has been in use by United Nations organizations ever since. This evaluation noted that the Director of the Special Unit had previously been a member of the Executive Committee of UNDP, but was not a member of the Operations Group that replaced it.

UNDP commitments to support and promote South-South cooperation included:

- In the 1992–96 programme cycle, UNDP identified TCDC as one of its six priority programmes and allocated resources to the Special Unit's activities.
- In response to the request from the High-Level Committee for South-South Cooperation at its 10th session, UNDP allocated 0.5 percent (an estimated \$15 million) of overall programme resources to the Special Unit under the First Cooperation Framework for TCDC, 1997–1999.
- The UNDP Administrator announced in 1997 that, as a matter of corporate policy, TCDC would receive first consideration in UNDP programming and be mainstreamed in all UNDP programmes and projects. The Administrator also stated that support to TCDC would become one of the core responsibilities of UNDP Resident Representatives in the 1997–1999 programme cycle.
- The UNDP 2004–2007 Multi-Year Funding Framework recognized South-South cooperation as one of the six 'drivers' of development effectiveness, to be consciously integrated into UNDP programming.

VI. KEY FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This evaluation recognized that the effectiveness of UNDP programmes in promoting and supporting South-South cooperation depends upon: the priority each country places on South-South cooperation; the demand from programme countries to involve UNDP; and UNDP capacity to provide support. The governmental expert panel convened by the Administrator in 1989 identified the following constraints to realizing the full potential of TCDC in countries and the United Nations system: lack of awareness of potential, as well as lack of information on usefulness and applicability; lack of effective focal points; lack of policies and procedures; and

shortage of funds. This evaluation found that such constraints persist.

UNDP and the Special Unit have amassed considerable experience in South-South cooperation and are well positioned to play a more active and effective role in supporting and promoting it. UNDP has expressed a strong commitment to South-South cooperation in its strategic plans. However, UNDP and the Special Unit have been unable to fully deliver on their mandate to promote and support South-South cooperation. The electronic survey showed that only 19 percent of responding United Nations Country Team members and 22 percent of responding Resident Representatives felt that the overall UNDP contribution to promote South-South cooperation over the past five years had been 'effective' or 'very effective'. The following discussion presents the conclusions of this study in understanding the performance of UNDP and the Special Unit in contributing to South-South cooperation.

A. CONCLUSIONS

Conclusion 1: The effectiveness of support under the Third Cooperation Framework for South-South Cooperation is constrained by the mismatch among the mandate, resources and implementation strategy of the Special Unit.

The mandate of the Special Unit for South-South Cooperation is extensive, not only relative to UNDP but in absolute terms. Evolving and expanding over time, the Special Unit functions to: act as secretariat to the High-Level Committee on South-South Cooperation; coordinate United Nations system-wide South-South cooperation efforts; mobilize resources and manage funds for South-South cooperation; and support South-South cooperation within the United Nations development system. The Special Unit has difficulty in managing all the activities needed under such a broad mandate with its 15 professional staff members and available fiscal resources of \$3.5 million per annum in regular resources and \$5.5 million per annum in other resources.

The three platforms of the Third Cooperation Framework for South-South Cooperation provide a useful conceptual tool for identifying areas of intervention: a platform to support policy dialogue, with emphasis on mainstreaming South-South cooperation as a driver of development effectiveness; a platform to help create an enabling environment for public-private partnership mechanisms for South-South business collaboration and technical exchange; and a platform to manage and share development knowledge. However, in developing initiatives, evidence indicates that the Special Unit paid insufficient attention to assessing and prioritizing demand from consultations with target countries. Consequently, the Special Unit's activities are too numerous and diffused, further constraining its resources and capacity and limiting its ability to respond to requests for support.

In 2003, the High-Level Committee and the General Assembly approved the Special Unit-developed *Revised Guidelines for the Review of Policies and Procedures Concerning South-South Cooperation* (document TCDC/13/3 of the High-Level Committee on the Review of TCDC), including a common results framework for the United Nations development system engaged in South-South cooperation. However, the Special Unit itself continues to report activities as results and has not produced a results framework that ties outputs and outcomes to clearly defined qualitative and quantitative indicators. Consequently, its reviews offer limited evaluative evidence and learning opportunities.

Conclusion 2: At the corporate level, UNDP has not developed a robust and proactive approach to South-South cooperation.

UNDP is mandated to support and promote South-South cooperation by hosting the Special Unit for South-South Cooperation and through all relevant UNDP-supported programmes.

UNDP does not have a clear strategic framework to leverage the Special Unit and other programmes to support South-South coopera-

tion. South-South cooperation was declared to be a driver of development effectiveness in the Second Multi-Year Funding Framework (2004–2007), and as a principle of development effectiveness in the UNDP Strategic Plan (2008–2011). Yet these plans did not articulate the UNDP strategic priorities, deliverables and modalities of engagement in South-South cooperation.

There are no clear strategies or institutional mechanisms to adequately respond to the dynamic changes occurring in South-South cooperation. Examples of such changes include the rapid expansion of interregional exchanges and trade, and massive trade surpluses in pivotal countries (countries that, by virtue of their capacities and experience in promoting South-South cooperation, are positioned to play a ‘lead’ role in the promotion and application of South-South cooperation) that result in new financing arrangements and opportunities to promote South-South cooperation. There is continuing demand from developing countries for support that would permit them to benefit from these opportunities.

In addition, UNDP has no clear partnership strategies to support or strengthen South-South cooperation within the United Nations development system or among countries of the South. Case studies show that other United Nations organizations are actively involved in South-South cooperation, yet in many countries, coordination of United Nations system-wide efforts to prioritize South-South cooperation in national development agendas remains *ad hoc* and inadequate.

The development context varies among the countries of the South. Some countries have taken a lead in South-South cooperation and do not require support from the United Nations system; others have requested UNDP support for their initiatives. Some countries have yet to fully recognize the potential of South-South cooperation and require encouragement to stimulate demand. Clear strategies to partner with govern-

ments to support and promote the demand for South-South cooperation are not fully in place, especially in pivotal countries.

UNDP, with its global presence, has yet to adopt a robust approach to supporting a two-way flow of knowledge and multi-dimensional experience among all the countries in the South.

Conclusion 3: UNDP is a responsive partner at the country level. However, its effectiveness in South-South cooperation is constrained by uneven recognition, inadequate resources and incentives, and an inability to systematize learning.

Though many UNDP initiatives currently underway have South-South elements, they are not corporately recognized as such. There is limited shared understanding of the concept of South-South cooperation across the organization, and inadequate recognition of the value added by South-South cooperation at the operational level.

UNDP has not provided adequate resources to mainstream South-South cooperation in its programming. While UNDP provides the regular (core) resources for the Special Unit, the organization has not been able to sustain the commitment (1997) to allocate 0.5 percent of its annual programme resources to the Special Unit (support is currently fixed at \$4.5 million).

Much of what UNDP is doing on South-South cooperation is the result of individual initiatives and leadership. There is a lack of clear incentives and guidance to integrate South-South cooperation in global, regional and country programmes.

The accountability and reporting systems of UNDP do not adequately reflect the priority of support for South-South cooperation.

UNDP does not conduct systematic analysis of the information contained in its knowledge networks. Such analysis might help to distil modalities of engagement in South-South cooperation, with a view to mapping demand areas, identifying capacity needs and codifying

the wide experience of UNDP. Similarly, UNDP has not built a body of evaluative evidence on its contribution to South-South cooperation, which would have enabled the organization to learn from its own experience.

Conclusion 4: UNDP and the Special Unit have not fully leveraged their collective strengths and capacities.

The Special Unit has convening power and specialized knowledge to facilitate interest and catalyze demand among partner countries. UNDP has a networked global presence, a mandate to coordinate at the country level and, in general, close interaction with programme country partners. Yet the Special Unit and UNDP have not fully leveraged each other's strengths.

There are no clear collaborative arrangements between the Special Unit and UNDP at different operational levels. The UNDP Strategic Plan, 2008–2011, does not reflect the areas of collaboration spelled out in the Third Cooperation Framework for South-South Cooperation. UNDP has not worked with the Special Unit to codify relevant experience emerging from the Unit's practice networks. In addition, the Special Unit has not leveraged the UNDP network of country offices to identify areas of focus or coordinate South-South cooperation efforts of the United Nations system at the country level.

B. RECOMMENDATIONS

The rapid evolution of South-South cooperation has opened a window of opportunity for developing countries to use such cooperation as a means towards achieving internationally agreed development goals, including the MDGs. The United Nations development system has an important partnership role. Within this partnership, UNDP must clearly define the contours of its engagement with South-South cooperation and revamp its institutional arrangements, including its relationship with the Special Unit.

This evaluation's recommendations address: the cooperation framework for South-South

cooperation and the role of the Special Unit; the responsibility, strategic approach and institutional arrangements of UNDP; and collaborative arrangements between UNDP and the Special Unit. These recommendations are intended to be mutually reinforcing and should be treated as a whole.

Recommendation 1: The Fourth Cooperation Framework for South-South Cooperation (managed by the Special Unit) should be shaped around three activity streams: knowledge sharing; policy development and advocacy; and catalyzing innovation. Initiatives in each of these streams should be time-bound and results-oriented.

The evaluation found that the thrust and the key elements of the Third Cooperation Framework for South-South Cooperation are still relevant, and that the Special Unit had achieved most of the outputs. However, the full potential of results has not been attained, due to the Special Unit's limited capacity and inadequate leveraging of the strengths of the United Nations development system. Specific recommendations made in this area do not envisage a fundamental change in the content of the Third Cooperation Framework, but rather enable the Special Unit to engage more closely with the United Nations system to increase the effectiveness of country support.

Knowledge sharing for South-South experience

The Special Unit should continue to serve as the repository of knowledge on South-South cooperation for the United Nations system and the international community. The Unit should systematically engage with governments and all United Nations organizations to distil good practices, identify proven solutions and expertise, and codify experience in a user-friendly interactive system accessible by the international development community at large.

The Special Unit should conduct research and analysis of key emerging trends in South-South cooperation. This exercise should gauge emerging needs by assessing the outcomes of the

deliberations of relevant intergovernmental fora, as well as by pooling and synthesizing the experience of United Nations system organizations.

Policy development and advocacy for South-South cooperation

The Special Unit should continue its advocacy efforts through intergovernmental fora, regional bodies and national-level stakeholders. The Special Unit should document outcomes from these efforts to influence the future practice of South-South cooperation.

The Special Unit should more effectively engage with all United Nations development organizations in order to mainstream South-South cooperation as a modality for development effectiveness. The Unit should establish a mechanism or mechanisms for systematic engagement with partners to address shared priorities and action plans. These could include updating the policy and procedural guidelines related to South-South cooperation and periodic consultations within the United Nations development system.

Catalyzing and innovating to meet emerging demands of South-South cooperation

The Special Unit should:

- Identify appropriate priorities for action in emerging areas of South-South cooperation by mapping demand through consultation with target countries and the United Nations system, supplemented by analysis;
- Develop a select portfolio of time-bound, results-oriented pilot initiatives to address critical issues in the areas identified, with the objective of defining effective South-South solutions that can be scaled up and/or replicated by countries with the support of the United Nations system as appropriate. This portfolio should be of a manageable size, and should be flexible enough to accommodate additional demands as they emerge. The Special Unit should undertake only a limited number of pilot activities at any given time;

- Support countries in developing policy frameworks to enable them to address opportunities and constraints in the expansion of South-South cooperation in areas such as public-private partnerships and civil society engagement; and
- Manage funds for South-South cooperation on behalf of countries of the South within an accountable and clearly defined results-oriented framework.

The Fourth Cooperation Framework for South-South Cooperation and its components should be built around clear outcomes that are linked to the mandate of the Special Unit. The results chain should logically link the outputs to outcomes.

Recommendation 2: In programming initiatives, the Special Unit should adopt strict criteria and leverage the capacities of UNDP and other relevant United Nations organizations to enhance the contribution of South-South cooperation to development effectiveness.

The evaluation found that the Special Unit is neither sufficiently using criteria established by intergovernmental fora nor adequately leveraging the global networked presence of UNDP and the specialized mandates of organizations of the United Nations development system. The recommendations of this evaluation envisage that the Special Unit will continue using its convening power and specialized knowledge to initiate pilot activities, and will expand its partnerships with relevant United Nations organizations.

The initiatives under the Fourth Cooperation Framework for South-South Cooperation should strictly adhere to criteria including:

- Strong demand from member countries (Buenos Aires Plan of Action);
- Defined impact on a large number of countries (*New Directions for Technical Cooperation among Developing Countries*, 1995); and
- A clear results framework, with a results chain linking outputs of initiatives to

outcomes sought by the cooperation framework (TCDC/13/3).

The Special Unit should partner with governments and relevant United Nations agencies in its pilot initiatives from the outset, with a view to mutual learning, codification and integration of the pilot experience into the programming of the respective government or organization.

The Special Unit should have a clear exit strategy for each pilot project. The government or partner organization should be prepared to scale up and replicate successful activities, and to provide feedback on programme experience and results to the knowledge base of the Special Unit.

Recommendation 3: UNDP should develop a corporate South-South cooperation strategy that: addresses emerging issues; draws on its own experience; integrates all of its programme frameworks; and is underpinned by resources, incentives and accountability.

UNDP has islands of success in South-South cooperation; however, these have not been integrated into the corporate approach. As such, this evaluation recommends prioritizing South-South cooperation in programming and taking steps towards institutionalizing South-South cooperation approaches, including:

- At the corporate level, UNDP should respond to the dynamic changes taking place in South-South cooperation, as well as to emerging priorities. In so doing, UNDP must consistently and fully reflect the human development mandate and the rights-based approach to development. UNDP should identify key partners and modalities of partnership in diverse contexts, including pivotal countries.
- UNDP should identify a clear set of deliverables on South-South cooperation for which it assumes responsibility. This should be done through an internal discussion with the Special Unit, as well as in consultation with partner countries and other United Nations system bodies.
- UNDP should develop a results framework for South-South cooperation initiatives in its strategic plan, with clear benchmarks and indicators to assess its contribution to South-South cooperation. To support this assessment, an effective monitoring and evaluation mechanism must be put in place to track performance of all related programming activity.
- UNDP should identify South-South cooperation priorities based on: its own programming experience at the country, regional and global levels; findings from the analysis of the Special Unit; and systematic consultations with programme countries. In particular, UNDP should mine the experience gained in supporting conflict prevention and recovery, disaster preparedness, climate change, trade and intra-South development cooperation.
- UNDP should: develop an approach to systematically link South-South considerations in practice areas and programming at the country, regional and global levels; proactively require all practice areas to have South-South concerns as an element; develop clear guidance material in the Results Management Guide based on TCDC/13/3; and ensure support to South-South cooperation at all levels of UNDP programming.
- UNDP should reflect the priority placed on South-South cooperation in allocating and tracking of resources, developing performance incentives, and implementing accountability and reporting systems.

Recommendation 4: UNDP and the Special Unit for South-South Cooperation should define clear collaboration arrangements.

This evaluation found that collaboration between UNDP and the Special Unit is not adequately institutionalized. UNDP needs to recognise that the Special Unit's mandate goes beyond the work of UNDP, and that the cooperation framework should support the full mandate. In this area, the evaluation's recommendations address roles and

responsibilities, resource allocation and joint efforts at codification and coordination.

- The Director of the Special Unit should be a member of the Operations Group. Clear collaborative arrangements between the Special Unit and the regional and practice bureaux of UNDP need to be established. Periodic reporting and discussion of the implementation of the Fourth Cooperation Framework for South-South Cooperation, as well as the results of collaboration with UNDP regional bureaux, corporate units and country offices, should take place in the Operations Group.
- UNDP should revisit its 1997 commitment to provide 0.5 percent of its total program-

ming resources to South-South cooperation and ensure that predictable and adequate resources are made available to both UNDP and the Special Unit, in order to fulfil the South-South cooperation mandate.

- UNDP should provide the Special Unit with a platform on which to engage with United Nations Country Teams with regard to South-South cooperation at the country level.
- UNDP and the Special Unit should work together to codify existing experience related to South-South cooperation by analysing trends, capacity needs and demands. This information should be made accessible to partners.

Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

“The thrust of international technical cooperation should be increasingly directed towards enhancing the capacities of developing countries to help themselves and each other. The use of the resources of the UNDP and other multilateral and bilateral agencies should reflect this change in emphasis.” – The Buenos Aires Plan of Action, 1978

“Building bridges across the South...has always been our objective since the inception of the South-South cooperation.... Our aim today must be to further strengthen and widen those bridges to reach our development objectives and influence the processes that shape the new international economic relations of the 21st century.” – Marrakech Declaration on South-South Cooperation, 2003

1.1 RATIONALE AND OBJECTIVES

South-South cooperation has been a priority for UNDP since the early 1970s. Requested by the UNDP Executive Board,¹ this evaluation is part of the UNDP Evaluation Office agenda, approved by the Board in June 2006. This evaluation supports the UNDP Administrator’s substantive accountability to the Executive Board. Findings will provide substantive inputs to the Fourth Cooperation Framework for South-South Cooperation (2008–2010), to be presented to the Board in January 2008,² and to the implementation of the UNDP Strategic Plan 2008–2011.³

The objective of the evaluation was to assess the UNDP contribution to South-South cooperation over the past decade and the performance of the Third Cooperation Framework for South-South Cooperation, managed by the Special Unit for South-South Cooperation (referred to in this document as ‘the Special Unit’). The evaluation aimed to provide major lessons learned through assessing what worked and why, as well as to offer

key recommendations for strengthening the effectiveness of future programming efforts in South-South cooperation.⁴ The intended audience for this evaluation report includes the UNDP Executive Board, senior management, the Special Unit, country offices, national governments and the international development community at large.

South-South cooperation is a process whereby two or more developing countries pursue their individual or collective development through cooperative exchange of knowledge, skills, resources and technical expertise. Ideally, developing countries themselves should initiate, organize and manage South-South cooperation activities, with their respective governments playing a lead role, and with the support and involvement of public and private institutions, non-governmental organizations and individuals. South-South cooperation is multidimensional in scope and can include all sectors and kinds of cooperation activities among developing countries,

1 Statement to the UNDP Executive Board by Zephirin Diabre, Associate Administrator, 17 June 2004, Item 5: Country Programmes and Related Matters, Geneva.

2 UNDP Evaluation Office, Terms of Reference: Evaluation of UNDP’s Contribution to South-South Cooperation. Evaluation Office. March 2007.

3 Statement to the UNDP/UNFPA Executive Board by Ad Melkert, Associate Administrator, 19 June 2007, Item 4: UNDP Strategic Plan, 2008–2011, New York.

4 UNDP Evaluation Office, Terms of Reference: Evaluation of UNDP’s Contribution to South-South Cooperation. Evaluation Office. March 2007.

whether bilateral or multilateral, subregional, regional or interregional. The challenge is to marshal innovative approaches, methods and techniques particularly appropriate to local needs.⁵

The 2003 Marrakech Declaration⁶ states that the objective of South-South cooperation is to build bridges across the South, and to “strengthen and widen those bridges to reach our development objectives and to be able to integrate into the world economy and influence the processes that shape the new international economic relations of the 21st century.... South-South cooperation is not an option but an imperative to complement North-South cooperation in order to contribute to the achievement of the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals.... No single country, even the most advanced among developing countries, has much hope of reaching individually expected growth and development and influencing the outcomes of the international agenda.” However, the Declaration says that collectively, the countries of the South can play a more effective role in achieving development objectives and shaping international relations.

The Buenos Aires Plan of Action (BAPA)⁷ provides guidelines for South-South cooperation. The thrust of South-South cooperation should be directed towards enhancing the capacities of developing countries, in order to help themselves and each other to enhance national and collective self-reliance. The measures must favour economically or geographically disadvantaged developing countries and aim to maximize the use of these countries’ capacities.

Adopted by the High-Level Committee for the Review of South-South Cooperation (HLC) and endorsed by the General Assembly in 1995, the *New Directions for Technical Cooperation among Developing Countries* report⁸ recognized the changing development context. The report highlighted increasing globalization, challenges resulting from liberalization, and the need to integrate technical and economic cooperation among developing countries. In addition, the report emphasized that South-South cooperation should focus on strategic initiatives that are likely to have a major impact on a large number of developing countries. Themes identified for strategic intervention included: trade and investment, debt, environment, poverty alleviation, production and employment, macro-economic policy coordination and aid management. The *Revised Guidelines for the Review of Policies and Procedures Concerning Technical Cooperation among Developing Countries* (TCDC/13/3)⁹ reiterated these areas and added education, health, transfer of technology and rural development to this list of shared priorities.

United Nations declarations and the spirit of BAPA assign primary responsibility to the developing countries for organizing, managing and financing South-South cooperation, in order to meet their development needs and attain self-reliance. The function of the United Nations system is largely supportive, and all its organizations should play a prominent role as catalysts and promoters.¹⁰

Over the past 30 years, there has been a remarkable upsurge in South-South cooperation. Sustained economic growth since the late 1980s has led to

5 High-Level Committee on the Review of Technical Cooperation among Developing Countries, 2003. *Revised Guidelines for the Review of Policies and Procedures Concerning Technical cooperation Among Developing Countries*. TCDC 13/3, 13th Session, 27-20 May 2003. New York.

6 The High-level Conference on South-South Cooperation, held in Marrakech, Morocco, 16-19 December 2003 adopted the Marrakech Declaration. http://www.un.org/special-rep/ohrrls/ohrrls/SouthSouth%20Marrakech_Declaration.htm

7 United Nations Conference on Technical Cooperation among Developing Countries, 30 August – 12 September, 1978, Buenos Aires, Argentina.

8 See http://tcdc.undp.org/knowledge_base/new_direction1.html.

9 High-Level Committee on the Review of Technical Cooperation among Developing Countries, 2003. *Revised Guidelines for the Review of Policies and Procedures Concerning Technical cooperation Among Developing Countries*. TCDC 13/3, 13th Session, 27-20 May 2003. New York.

10 Ibid.

an increasing number of developing countries becoming regional centres of economic dynamism. Many countries have become increasingly specialized in their manufacturing, trading and investment activities. This has dramatically reshaped the global economic landscape, creating new dynamics in trade, investment and development assistance flows both from and within economies in the South.¹¹ In short, an increasing number of countries have become both beneficiaries and benefactors in South-South exchanges.

Growing faster than trade between developing and developed countries, South-South trade made up 26 percent of developing countries' exports in 2004. In addition, many countries of the South have accumulated large financial surpluses. According to 2006 data, more than 50 percent of all foreign direct investment inflows to Botswana, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Lesotho, Malawi and Swaziland come from South African investors.¹² During the 1990s, South-South foreign direct investment flows grew faster than North-South flows. Large Southern transnational corporations grew from just 19 in 1990 to 58 by 2005.

Many cities, countries and regions in the South are emerging as new leaders in technology, research and development. Southern innovations are making their mark, for instance, on issues such as access to medicines and health, clean drinking water and sanitation, food and basic education. Low-income countries have also made great strides in a number of other areas, such as disaster prevention and relief, health, education and microfinance.

Regional and subregional economic communities are playing a valuable role in development in Africa and other regions. Leading examples and

drivers of this regional integration movement include: the Southern African Development Community, the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa, the Economic Community of West African States, the Economic Community for Central African States, the Community of the Sahel Saharan States, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, the Gulf Cooperation Council, the Andean Community, the Southern Cone Common Market and the Caribbean Community. Most technical cooperation among developing countries occurs within the framework of these regional and subregional agreements, which provide "the most meaningful approach and effective conduit for the South to face the challenges of globalisation."¹³

"Triangular cooperation"¹⁴ by developed countries has provided supplementary resources for South-South cooperation. It is important to note, however, that South-South cooperation support by Northern countries does not fulfil their previous commitments to increase official development assistance. As countries accumulate trade surpluses and foreign reserves, new funds and modes of development financing, such as the sovereign funds, continue to appear. An increasing number of developing countries are providing triangular support.

Despite growing solidarity among Southern countries, emerging trends in South-South cooperation have given rise to some concerns. For example, the economic benefits of foreign direct investment tend to be concentrated in a few countries. While the benefits of South-South cooperation as a whole are more widespread, they are not flowing adequately to the poorer and more disadvantaged nations of the South, which include the least-developed countries, landlocked

11 United Nations, 2007. *The State of South-South Cooperation*. Report by the Secretary General. A62/150.

12 Statement of Dr. Z.S.T. Skweyiya, South African Minister of Social Development to the United Nations General Assembly Informal Thematic Debate on Development, NY 27 November 2006.

13 Statement of Ambassador Mohamed Bennouna, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Morocco to the UN and Chair of the Group of 77 in 2003, *Journal of the Group of 77*, Volume 16, No. 3, December 2003.

14 Triangular cooperation is South-South cooperation among two or more developing countries supported financially by bilateral donors or international organizations.

developing countries and Small Island Developing States. Not enough progress is being made, for example, in mobilizing Southern support for reducing widespread human poverty and deprivation in poor countries, or in addressing pockets of poverty and discrimination in the better-off developing countries.

Much of the growth in South-South cooperation is happening without the participation of the United Nations system, providing a welcome indication of effective leadership and capacity in the South. Nevertheless, the changing international environment has increased demands on the United Nations system. While mutual cooperation between developing countries is growing, there is concurrent demand for multilateral organizations to support efforts to guide the flow of resources, in order to ensure that everyone benefits from South-South cooperation. Given its universal presence and neutrality, member countries expect the United Nations system to mainstream South-South cooperation as a cross-cutting theme in its work.¹⁵ In addition, members expect the UN system to respond robustly to reports of slow progress in many developing countries towards the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and other internationally agreed upon development goals.

UNDP is expected to help build capacities in countries of the South in order to support them in achieving their individual development goals and the MDGs. South-South cooperation is expected to be an integral part of UNDP work, given the stated UNDP positioning as a knowledge-based organization, its role in the exchange of development experience, through its global network of country offices and its support to the Special Unit.

Against such backdrop, this evaluation assessed the contributions to South-South cooperation by UNDP and the Special Unit it hosts.

1.2 SCOPE, APPROACH AND METHODOLOGY

This evaluation addressed UNDP organizational strategy and initiatives to promote South-South cooperation at the global, regional and country levels. In doing so, it assessed the performance of the Special Unit against the Third Cooperation Framework for South-South Cooperation, as well as the nature and extent of interaction between the Special Unit and UNDP. The evaluation did not cover the full mandate of the Special Unit, which is detailed subsequently.

The evaluated period of 1996 to the present was suggested by the *New Directions for Technical Cooperation among Developing Countries* report. Endorsed by the General Assembly and HLC in 1995, its implementation by the Special Unit for South-South cooperation began in 1996.

To assess UNDP contribution to South-South cooperation, the evaluation examined ongoing and emerging trends in global South-South cooperation, the role of the UN system and the main priorities, decisions and recommendations affecting the UN mandate for South-South cooperation.

Inquiries were designed to address the key issues, including:

- The nature and extent of support provided by the Special Unit and UNDP in promoting and expanding South-South cooperation;
- The ability of UNDP and the Special Unit to learn from experience in South-South cooperation, in order to strengthen and institutionalize support to South-South cooperation across all practice areas;
- The appropriateness, relevance, effectiveness and sustainability of UNDP efforts to meet the varied and evolving demand to strengthen and expand South-South cooperation; and
- UNDP preparedness to address emerging demands in South-South cooperation.

¹⁵ Such views were expressed by several member-countries during the Meeting of the High Level Committee on South-South cooperation, 29 May 2007, United Nations, New York.

The evaluation gathered evidence through eight country case studies. The process included including a desk study; interviews with staff in Geneva and New York; an electronic survey of United Nations Country Team (UNCT) in programme countries; and a desk study of relevant secondary evidence.

1.2.1 SELECTION OF CASE STUDY COUNTRIES

Extensive consideration was given to the selection of case study countries. Given wide variations in the practice of South-South cooperation and limited time and resources, random selection was not feasible. Adopting a purposive approach, countries were selected to reflect:

- varied experience in South-South cooperation;
- regional distribution; and
- geographical constraints, including Small Island Developing States and landlocked countries.

Based on such criteria, the evaluation selected Barbados, Brazil, China, Guatemala, Mali, South Africa and Thailand. An in-depth desk study was also conducted in India, and Brazil was chosen as the pilot study.

The evaluation assessed the contribution to South-South cooperation of the Special Unit and UNDP by examining:

- **Relevance:** Are efforts addressing the key priority areas identified by external claimholders at the national, regional and global level?
- **Appropriateness:** Are efforts creating synergies with other ongoing South-South cooperation efforts? Are efforts the most suitable for the context?
- **Effectiveness:** Are efforts making a difference? If so, what is their influence?
- **Sustainability:** Are UNDP-funded South-South cooperation initiatives sustainable? (This aspect was considered within the constraints of available data.)

Over 248 stakeholders were consulted in Geneva, New York and case study countries. In each case

study country, stakeholders included the UNCT, government officials, bilateral donors, members of civil societies and the UNDP country office staff. Other stakeholders included UNDP headquarters units, UN agencies in New York and Geneva and permanent missions of UN Member States.

The electronic survey was designed to gather essential information about South-South cooperation activities and perceptions. The survey was addressed to UN Resident Coordinators, who in turn forwarded it to other country team members. Responses were received from 149 members of UNCT from 51 countries, including all concerned Resident Representatives.

Secondary evidence was gathered from previous UNDP evaluations of the Second Global Cooperation Framework and four regional frameworks, including Africa, Arab States, Asia and the Pacific, and Latin America and the Caribbean.

There were some methodological constraints:

- There is a serious shortage of documentation on South-South cooperation initiatives and on assessments of their outcomes;
- Given the many partners and factors involved, it is difficult to assess UNDP contribution to development outcomes. It is even more difficult to make a definitive identification of value added by South-South cooperation to development outcomes, and more difficult still to identify value added to South-South cooperation by UNDP;
- Initiatives of UNDP and the Special Unit for South-South Cooperation do not have tracking or monitoring systems in place to provide reliable data. Moreover, costs associated with South-South cooperation initiatives are not recorded separately, ruling out the possibility of assessing efficiency;
- There are also limitations in relying on interviews as a source of evaluative information. Given staff turnover, it was not always possible to reach key stakeholders, making it difficult to assess past experiences. In many

instances, the evaluation team had to rely entirely on UNDP country offices to identify stakeholders and set up interviews. This limited the validity of the information collected; and

- Resources and time available imposed further constraints.

Chapter 2 presents the roles and responsibilities of UNDP units in promoting South-South cooperation, as well as the South-South cooperation initiatives undertaken by the Special Unit and UNDP. Chapter 3 outlines the evaluation findings and lessons learned. Chapter 4 presents the recommendations of the evaluation.

Chapter 2

UNDP AND SOUTH-SOUTH COOPERATION SINCE 1996

2.1 HISTORY

In response to mounting pressure for a new economic order during the 1970s, and in support of the principle of collective self-reliance among developing countries, United Nations General Assembly resolution 3251 of 4 December 1974 established a Special Unit for Technical Cooperation among Developing Countries (TCDC) within UNDP. In 1978, following a conference on TCDC, the Buenos Aires Plan of Action proposed a set of guiding principles and a plan of action for promoting and implementing TCDC, with specific recommendations for the United Nations development system.

The High-Level Committee on the Review of TCDC was established in 1980 as the highest policy and oversight body under and reporting to the General Assembly. In addition to its responsibilities as the global and UN system-wide advocate, catalyst and resource mobilizer of South-South cooperation, the Special Unit for South-South Cooperation¹⁶ was made the substantive secretariat for the HLC.

The 1995 report, *New Directions for Technical Cooperation among Developing Countries*, included a strategic orientation for TCDC. It focused on high priority areas, identifying 22 developing nations as ‘pivotal countries’ (now designated ‘prime movers’) for the promotion of regional and interregional TCDC, and stressing the need for

operational integration between technical and economic cooperation among developing countries. The report defined pivotal countries as “developing countries that, by virtue of their capacities and experience in promoting South-South cooperation, are positioned to play a ‘lead’ role in the promotion and application of TCDC, by sharing their capacities and experience with other developing countries in their region or in other regions.”¹⁷

The Marrakech Framework, adopted at the 2003 High-Level Conference on South-South Cooperation, invited the Special Unit to work with developing countries in order to formulate and help implement programmes—and invited UNDP to mainstream a South-South dimension in all its activities. The Framework also called for the strengthening of the Special Unit as a focal point for South-South cooperation within the UN system.

The *New Directions for Technical Cooperation among Developing Countries* report, Marrakech Framework, and subsequent General Assembly resolutions and HLC decisions point to emerging challenges and opportunities in South-South cooperation, as well as to the need for the UN system to address them.

2.2 MANDATE

Following the mandate emanating from BAPA Recommendation 34, UN General Assembly

16 The name was changed from Special Unit for TCDC to Special Unit for South-South Cooperation in 2003 by the HLC (HLC/TCDC 13/2).

17 See http://tedc1.undp.org/faqDetail.aspx?faq_id=6. The 22 pivotal countries are Brazil, Chile, China, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Egypt, Ghana, India, Indonesia, Malta, Malaysia, Mauritius, Mexico, Nigeria, Peru, the Republic of Korea, Senegal, Thailand, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia and Turkey.

resolution 33/144 of 19 December 1978 (subsequently elaborated by the HLC and the UNDP Executive Board), charged the Special Unit with:

- Coordinating the activities of UNDP in the field of South-South cooperation with those of the participating and executing agencies, as well as with regional commissions;
- Preparing modifications in the policies, rules and procedures of UNDP, in accordance with relevant decisions of the General Assembly and the UNDP Executive Board, in order to improve capacity to implement South-South cooperation initiatives and assist, at their request, other UN organs and organizations in this regard;
- Assisting governments to undertake South-South cooperation programmes and activities, in order to achieve the objectives of South-South cooperation;
- Developing new ideas, concepts and approaches for promoting technical cooperation among developing countries, and for this purpose, arranging for the necessary studies and analyses to be undertaken and submitted to the governments for consideration and approval in the HLC;
- Expanding, strengthening and promoting the efficient use of the Web of Information for Development (WIDE, previously known as INRES or information referral system) and establishing appropriate linkages with national and regional information systems and focal points;
- Generating financial and other support for South-South cooperation activities; and
- Servicing the HLC by preparing progress reports on the implementation of the Buenos Aires Plan of Action for HLC consideration.

This mandate of the Special Unit involves two sets of functions:

1. As the secretariat of the HLC; and
2. As the UNDP and UN system-wide organizer, mobilizer and coordinator of South-South cooperation.

The governing body of the Special Unit is the HLC, comprised of representatives of all countries participating in UNDP. The Special Unit has reported to HLC biennially since 1980. The Unit also reports to the Executive Board of UNDP and the General Assembly annually, preparing all substantive reports¹⁸ and providing support to the office of the chairman of the Group of 77 and China. In addition, the Special Unit coordinates the system of national South-South focal points and organizes the annual United Nations Day for South-South Cooperation (19 December).

Regular resources for the Special Unit are provided by UNDP (see discussion in section 2.3.1.1, Special Unit Resources and Capacity), and the Unit mobilizes additional resources to conduct its activities. It also manages funds allocated to carry out South-South cooperation, including the United Nations Fund for South-South Cooperation, the Perez-Guerrero Trust Fund of the Group of 77 and China, and the India-Brazil-South Africa Facility for Poverty and Hunger Alleviation.

BAPA and subsequent UN resolutions require that South-South cooperation focuses particularly on the needs of economically or geographically disadvantaged developing countries (Recommendation 28 of BAPA). These include, for example, the least developed countries, landlocked developing countries, Small Island Developing States and the entire region of Sub-Saharan Africa. Recent work has stressed private-sector development and business

¹⁸ These include the report of the Secretary-General on the State of South-South cooperation on 19 December of each year, as well as the report of the UNDP Administrator on the implementation of the South-South Cooperation Framework every three years.

collaboration for development. Further, the *New Directions* report emphasized the importance of economic cooperation in South-South cooperation and proposed that the Special Unit focus on strategic initiatives likely to have a major impact on a large number of target countries.

General Assembly resolution 60/212 (2005)¹⁹ invited the HLC and the UNDP Executive Board to consider measures to further strengthen the Special Unit within the UNDP. Positioning the Unit as a separate entity and a focal point for South-South cooperation in the UN system was intended to enable it to carry out its full responsibilities, in particular through mobilization of resources for the advancement of South-South cooperation.

The UNDP Executive Board decision presented in E/2004/35 (2004) stated that South-South cooperation was to be considered a driver of development effectiveness and was to be incorporated in the multi-year funding framework.²⁰

More recently, the Executive Board, in its decision 2007/32 (2007),²¹ reiterated that UNDP should promote South-South cooperation by stepping up efforts to seek South-South solutions in all its focus areas as a way to enhance exchange of best practices and support among developing countries, regardless of their levels of development. It also required the UNDP Administrator, in consultation with the Executive Board, to establish measurable targets for the Special Unit for South-South Cooperation. Finally, the decision emphasized that UNDP should take a human development-based approach to its South-South cooperation programming.

2.3 PROGRAMMATIC ACTIVITIES

2.3.1 SPECIAL UNIT FOR SOUTH-SOUTH COOPERATION

Since 1997, three cooperation frameworks approved by the UNDP Executive Board have provided the framework for the work of the Special Unit. The Unit reported that the Third Cooperation Framework was prepared in consultation with UNDP units and country offices, organizations of the UN system, member states, development partners and business executives. To the extent possible, the framework incorporated the views expressed by members of the UNDP Executive Board.²² Progress on implementation of the framework is presented to the Executive Board annually and reported to the HLC biennially.

The First Cooperation Framework for TCDC (1997–1999) was based primarily on the analysis and recommendations contained in the 1995 report, *New Directions for Technical Cooperation among Developing Countries*. The programme focused on:

- Support for sustainable human development through TCDC, covering poverty eradication; environment; production and employment; and trade, investment and macroeconomic management; and
- The promotion of TCDC, including policy formulation and coordination; capacity enhancement for the management of TCDC; and information and support services.

The Second Cooperation Framework for Technical Cooperation (2001–2003) had two strategic focuses:

19 Resolution adopted by the General Assembly during its 60th session (December 2005) on South-South cooperation: www.un.org/Depts/dhl/resguide/r60.htm.

20 United Nations Economic and Social Council, 2004. Executive Board of the UNDP/UNFPA, Report of the Executive Board on its work during 2004, ECOSOC Official Records, Supplement #15, E/2004/35, September 2004.

21 www.ppccc.com/execbrd/word/SSC15L5.doc, 5 October, 2007.

22 Third Cooperation Framework for South-South Cooperation (2005–2007), First Regular Session, 20–28 January 2005, New York.

1. Mobilizing global support for South-South cooperation; and
2. Acting as a catalyst for the development of innovative models of South-South technical cooperation for partnering, resource mobilization and mainstreaming.

The Third Cooperation Framework for South-South Cooperation (2005–2007) accordingly identified three policy and operational support platforms as the main building blocks of South-South cooperation. These include:

- **Policy dialogue and promotion:** A platform to support policy dialogue and follow-up to major intergovernmental conferences, with particular emphasis on mainstreaming South-South cooperation as a driver of development effectiveness;
- **Fostering public-private partnerships:** A platform to help create an enabling environment and public-private partnership mechanisms for sustained intra-South business collaboration and technology exchanges; and
- **Southern development knowledge exchange:** A platform to support a more robust information system for managing and sharing development knowledge throughout the South.

Special Unit support to HLC, Group of 77 and China, as well as resource mobilization, is listed under Platform 1. Table 2.1 summarizes the number of projects and resource distribution

among the three platforms. It should be noted that 11 of the 29 projects under the third platform have budgets of under \$200,000 for the three-year period.

The strategy for implementing the Third Cooperation Framework involves six elements:

1. Establish three flagship programmes to accelerate South-South cooperation;
2. Assist countries to develop policies and mobilize global support for South-South cooperation;
3. Strengthen collaboration with other UNDP bureaux and units, country offices, and regional centres;
4. Strengthen partnerships with governments, civil society and the private sector, as well as with the UN development system to generate more impact;
5. Establish intraregional and interregional mechanisms to ensure the smooth implementation of the South-South programme; and
6. Remodel and expand the capacity of WIDE to provide an online venue enabling partners and other users to interact and exchange knowledge and information.²³

Three major programmes, each representing a respective operational platform, have been initiated. The Special Unit is working towards the creation of a global South development forum to bring together governments, private

Table 2.1. Distribution of Special Unit Projects under the Third Cooperation Framework

	Number of Projects	Total Resources (US\$ Millions)
Platform 1	14	14.4
Platform 2	9	12.8
Platform 3	29	15.8

Source: Special Unit for South-South Cooperation, UNDP

²³ Third Cooperation Framework for South-South Cooperation, 2005–2007; presented to the Executive Board, First Regular Session, January 2005, DP/CF/SSC/3/Rev.1/.

sectors and civil societies of developing countries working on South-South cooperation. To promote public-private partnerships, Special Unit launched Technonet Africa in 2004. The flagship programme for the third platform is the upgrade of the WIDE network, a medium for knowledge sharing and exchange of experience.

To assist intergovernmental bodies in developing policies on South-South cooperation, the Special Unit has:

- Monitored progress on the implementation of the Buenos Aires Plan of Action on TCDC and the *New Directions* strategy for TCDC;
- Conducted related research and prepared reports, submitted biennially to the High-Level Committee for South-South Cooperation; and
- Published the development journal *Cooperation South* (produced through 2005) and other publications including *Sharing Innovative Experiences*.

To assist countries in developing policies and mobilizing global support for South-South cooperation, the Special Unit collaborated with country offices in order to provide advisory services to countries such as Tunisia and Egypt. The Unit also conducted needs assessment studies in 15 countries of the Economic Community of West African States, five members of the East African Community and 16 members of the Caribbean Community to strengthen South-South focal point networks in the three subregions.

To advance policy dialogue, the Special Unit focused on the issue of remittances. It co-sponsored a ministerial conference on the development impact of remittances in least-developed countries to create a supportive environment for safe and cost-effective mechanisms for transfer of remittances. The Special Unit, with the Bureau for Development Policy (BDP) and the Rockefeller Foundation,

organized the first UNDP roundtable on remittances in 2006 as an input to the high-level dialogue on migration and remittances held in September 2006 in New York.

To improve collaboration with other UNDP bureaux, units, country offices and regional centres, the Special Unit has: posted two advisors in the UNDP Regional Centres in Bangkok and Johannesburg; jointly held roundtables on remittances; jointly with UNDP Brazil, initiated a creative economy and technology transfer programme in Brazil; and consulted with relevant bureaux to identify appropriate partners for regional initiatives. The UN Day for South-South Cooperation on 19 December was an opportunity for networking with UNDP and other agencies in the UN system.

To strengthen partnerships with governments, civil society and the private sector, as well as with organizations of the UN system, the Special Unit developed the South-South Global Asset and Technology Exchange System, the purpose of which is to transfer technology among developing countries and mobilize resources for under-funded development and infrastructure projects. In the longer term, the Special Unit will be working towards a Global South Development Forum. The *Creative Economy Report 2007* will be produced in collaboration with the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization and the World Intellectual Property Organization.

To establish intra- and interregional mechanisms to implement the South-South programme, the Special Unit used the Africa Rice Initiative to link West African countries to information on new rice varieties. The Unit also oversaw the global facility for disaster risk management at the community level, implemented by the Regional Centre in Bangkok.

A major initiative under the second platform of the Third Cooperation Framework is Technonet

Table 2.2. Resources for the Special Unit (US\$ Millions)

	1997–2001 ^a		2001–2003 ^b		2004–2007 ^c	
	Core	Non-Core	Core	Non-Core	Core	Non-Core
Total	15.0	10.0	7.4	9.7	14.6	13.3
Per annum	5.0	3.3	3.7	4.9	4.9	4.4

Sources: a. UNDP, 1999. *20 Years of South-South Partnership Building, An Assessment of Technical Cooperation among Developing Countries (TCDC)*, 1978–1998. Special Unit for TCDC. July; b. Rahman, S., 2003. *Evaluation Report on the Second Cooperation Framework of TCDC (2001–2003)*. Abacus International Management, LLC. 10 March; c. UNDP, 2007 *Report on the Implementation of the Third Cooperation Framework for South-South Cooperation (2005–2007)*. Report of the Administrator to the UNDP Executive Board, Annual Session, 2007.

Africa,²⁴ which promotes small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in partnership with Technonet Asia, an Asian network with a 30-year history in promoting SMEs. Launched in 2004 in Johannesburg, South Africa, the project has an allocation of \$4.3 million, or over 14 percent of the Special Unit's total resources. It is active in seven pilot countries, including Cameroon, Ghana, Mozambique, Nigeria, South Africa, Tanzania and Uganda.

Thus far, outputs have included: inputs to policy frameworks to establish SME development banks; studies on the SME environment in Africa; setting up networks of participants; a symposium on SME financing; a study tour and training session for African policymakers and business leaders to Malaysia, Thailand and Vietnam on how to start and manage an SME bank; and training of trainers on entrepreneurship development, in partnership with Japan International Cooperation Agency.

Among concrete outputs are: a clearer understanding of the SME environment among policy-makers in Africa; training of trainers in South Africa; and action by governments in pilot countries on policy and institutional reforms and financial discipline.

The Special Unit launched a new version of the WIDE network in December 2006. This benefited from knowledge sharing and exchanges of experience at a WIDE roster users' workshop

sponsored by UNDP. In addition, training sessions on the use of WIDE were held in the Regional Centres of Bangkok and Sri Lanka. Partners built forty rosters using the updated roster platform.

2.3.1.1 Special Unit Resources and Capacity

Table 2.2 shows the Special Unit funding allocated from UNDP regular (core) resources, as well as resources mobilized by the Special Unit under the three cooperation frameworks. Annual resources available to the Special Unit have declined in real terms over the past decade, though the nominal value has not changed. Regular (core) resources available to the Special Unit have also declined. As UNDP resources declined in the late 1990s and early 2000s, there was a policy shift regarding the allocation of 0.5 percent of UNDP programme resources to the Special Unit. To ensure predictability, the Executive Board fixed support for the Special Unit at \$3.5 million for the programming period 2003–2007 (Decision 2002/1), raised to \$4.5 million under the current UNDP Strategic Plan (2008–2011).

Managing funds and cost-sharing provides nearly half of the funds available to UNDP (\$13.4 million for the cycle), of which contributions from developing countries to tsunami relief efforts are \$3.5 million.

The Special Unit budget is comparable to that of the Human Development Report Office

²⁴ Report on the Implementation of the Third Cooperation Framework for South-South Cooperation (2005–2007). Annual Session 2007, 11–22 June 2007, New York, DP/2007/30.

Table 2.3. Summary of Resources Managed by the Special Unit for South-South Cooperation, 2005–2007

Source	Amount (thousands US\$)
Regular	14,586
United Nations Fund for South-South Cooperation - China	1,700
Developing-country contributions for tsunami recovery and reconstruction	3,510
India-Brazil-South Africa Facility for Poverty and Hunger Alleviation	3,056
Perez-Guerrero Trust Fund	977
Cost-sharing - Japan	3,101
Cost sharing - South Africa	945
Total	27,875

Source: *Report on the Implementation of the Third Cooperation Framework for South-South Cooperation (2005–2007)*, Report of the Administrator, presented to the UNDP Executive Board, Annual Session, 2007 June, DP 2007/30

Table 2.4. Special Unit Staffing

	Number of People				
	Director	Professional (P and L)	SSA	General Service	Total
1998	3 ^a	7 ^a	12	7	29
2007	4 ^b	7	14 ^c	4	29

Sources: Sources: 1998 data from *South-South Partnership Building, An Assessment of Technical Cooperation among Developing Countries (TCDC)*, 1978–1998 (UNDP Special Unit for TCDC, July 1999); 2007 data from the Special Unit

Notes: a. Director, Deputy Director, Senior Advisor on Resource Mobilization; b. Additional L6 (Executive Secretary to the Office of the Chairman of the G-77); c. Combined professional and general service category

(\$8.6 million in 2006), which is responsible for producing an annual Human Development Report and providing technical support to countries for production of National Human Development Reports.

Since 1998, the total number of Special Unit staff has remained unchanged (see Table 2.4).

2.3.2 UNDP

To support and promote South-South cooperation, UNDP has made commitments including:

- In the 1992–1996 programme cycle, UNDP identified TCDC as one of its six priority programmes and allocated special programme resources to Special Unit activities;
- In response to the HLC request made during its 10th session, UNDP allocated 0.5 percent of overall programme resources (estimated at \$15 million) to the Special Unit under the 1997–1999 cooperation framework (see the section on UNDP Resources and Capacity);

- The UNDP Administrator also announced that, as a matter of corporate policy, TCDC would receive first consideration in UNDP programming. In addition, TCDC would be mainstreamed into all UNDP programmes and projects, and support to TCDC would become one of the core responsibilities of UNDP Resident Representatives in the 1997–1999 programme cycle;²⁵ and
- The UNDP 2004–2007 Multi-Year Funding Framework (MYFF) recognized South-South cooperation as one of the six drivers of development effectiveness to be consciously integrated into UNDP programming.

UNDP pursues South-South cooperation in global, regional and country programmes. Global initiatives come under the global programme managed by BDP. In countries, regional initiatives are part of UNDP regional programmes and are designed and implemented by the regional service centres with oversight from the regional bureaux. In programme countries, UNDP responds to needs reflected in the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) since 2002, and its efforts are guided by the country programme document (CPD, known previously as the country cooperation framework). In the decentralized architecture of UNDP, country offices are primarily responsible for developing and implementing CPDs in close partnership with the national government. Regular resources are allocated through regional bureaux, which exercise oversight mainly on the processes involved and with limited substantive engagement.²⁶

2.3.2.1 Global Programme

The global programme increases opportunities for South-South cooperation, building on: economic advances; institutional, human and technological

capacities; and Southern partnerships. It is expected to function in liaison with the Special Unit through the Third Cooperation Framework.

An explicit objective of the global programme is “to enable developing countries to benefit from an interregional knowledge exchange and south-based experiences and learning under the priority goals of the MYFF and ensure that development assistance, advice, programme design and capacity-building efforts draw on global best practices and expertise.”²⁷ The global programme provides:

- Consultancy services to country offices;
- Targeted global projects and partnerships addressing key development issues in multiple regions and leveraging incremental non-core resources; and
- Communities of practice or knowledge sharing networks, which are managed by BDP.

An example of the South-South cooperation element in this programme is the International Poverty Centre at Brasilia. The Centre is a partner of the Institute for Applied Economic Research, which carries out policy research for the Brazilian Government. The Centre “works to promote South-South cooperation on applied poverty research and specializes in analyzing poverty and inequality in offering research-based policy recommendations and solutions.”²⁸

Communities of practice or knowledge networks are linked to the global programme and are designed to position UNDP as a knowledge-based organization.²⁹ Knowledge networks help those working in similar practice or thematic areas to share experience and knowledge with each other. They combine electronic with face-

25 Ibid.

26 UNDP, 2007. *Evaluation of Results-Based Management at UNDP*. Evaluation Office.

27 UNDP, 2006, Annual Report: UNDP Global Programme, Bureau for Development Policy.

28 Annual Report of the UNDP Global Programme, BDP, 2006. According to the report, the Centre works with South African social policy specialists and research institutes, Chinese poverty specialists and policy makers in Mexico and Turkey.

29 Since the adoption of the first MYFF in 1999 and subsequent to the approval of the Global Cooperation Framework II, UNDP instituted the concept of ‘practices’ to enable it to provide required quality, substantive support to programme countries.

to-face communications among group members. UNDP has 22 global networks, which link UNDP offices in 166 countries.³⁰ Some operate sub-networks, and most of the regional service centres operate several regional networks.³¹ Some are open to the public, while others are restricted to UNDP staff.

Under BDP management, the global programme has supported subregional resource facilities (SURFs), which became operational in 1999 under the 2001 change process (introduced in 1997). Nine SURFs were established³² to provide policy advice and support services to country offices in transforming UNDP to a networked knowledge organization. Regional centres were established in Bangkok, Bratislava, Colombo and Johannesburg in 1997, and beginning in 2003, SURFs were integrated with the regional programmes into regional service centres.³³ Thematic specialists supported by the global programme work alongside colleagues from regional programmes. This arrangement maximizes the synergies of knowledge sharing and provides a formal structure for interregional exchanges of knowledge.

National Human Development Reports (NHDRs) provide an example of UNDP support that systematically harnesses South-South exchanges in routine programme activities. UNDP country offices have produced over 550 national and subnational HDRs in 130 countries, with cooperation of the host government and civil society organizations. Efforts have also been expended to integrate and use the experience of NHDRs around the globe.

The UNDP Human Development Report Office (HDRO) initiated the first national reports in 1992, and a number of countries produced NHDRs with little or no guidance from HDRO. HDR-Net was created in 1999 to pool the expertise of individuals and national teams. In 2000, a special unit in HDRO set up a Web forum to provide guidance and set quality standards. Efforts were made to institutionalize mining HDR-Net for best practices, lessons learned and summaries of network discussions, as well as for peer reviews to assure quality and incentives in the form of annual awards for outstanding reports and innovations.

The regional bureaux and the NHDR Unit now hold joint periodic regional and global workshops and training courses for NHDR teams to exchange information among and within regions. A two-way interaction between user groups and headquarters has produced effective guidance to maximize quality and impact. NHDRs are in demand around the globe and would be produced with or without support from headquarters; however, by enabling countries to share and learn from each other's experiences, UNDP global support has improved the quality, outreach and impact of national reports over time.³⁴ The modality of South-South cooperation has improved both national capacities and UNDP effectiveness.

2.3.2.2 Regional Programmes

UNDP regional programmes provide a platform to share best practices and draw attention to innovation and good practices. They often use

30 **Practice networks:** governance, environment, HIV/AIDS, poverty reduction, crisis prevention and recovery; **management family networks:** finance, procurement, human resources, management, project management; **other networks:** capacity development, communications, UN coordination practice, evaluation, gender, harmonized approach to cash transfers (HACT), human development report networks (HDR-Net), MDG-Net, information and communications technologies (ICTs) for development, evaluation, human rights, local governance and the Small Enterprise and Finance Network (SemFinNet). Source: UNDP Web site; see http://practices.undp.org/ks/docs/Global%20Networks%20Brochure_Nov.doc

31 It is estimated that there are over 300 electronic networks in UNDP; however, most of these are organized informally, without a paid facilitator.

32 The nine SURFs included three in Africa (Addis Ababa, Dakar and Pretoria), two in Asia (Bangkok and Kathmandu), two in Latin America and the Caribbean region (Panama and Port of Spain) and one each in the Arab States (Beirut) and Europe (Bratislava).

33 The Bratislava Centre was already functioning as an integrated Regional Service Centre since 1997.

34 Sources: Evaluation of National Human Development Reports (UNDP, 2007), NHDR Web site and interviews with NHDR Unit.

the region's intellectual and technical resources for: research; training; extending cross-country partnerships and networking; and specific country support.

As in the global programme, regional programmes aim to address public goods and challenges, as well as to minimize negative and encourage positive spillovers across borders, in areas such as: trafficking; drugs; HIV/AIDS; disaster prevention and response; water supply and use; and environmental management. The regional programmes also enable countries to advocate collectively for equitable, transparent trade regimes and other areas of common interest.

The regional programme for Europe and the CIS emphasizes a subregional approach, focusing on development challenges and opportunities specific to smaller groupings of countries within the region. In Central Asia, UNDP focuses on sustainable trans-boundary water management. It also partners with the European Union in a trans-border early warning system in the Ferghana Valley in Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan, in tackling cross-border trafficking in women and children, and supports democratic governance. Programming in the Caucasus countries promotes joint management of shared water and other resources. To help overcome the lingering consequences of the Chernobyl nuclear disaster, the regional programme also provides support to local communities and governments.

UNDP supports the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD), a regional effort that started in 2004. This support has helped: fund 20 studies for about \$560,000; create a roster of 3,000 African experts for recruitment of staff and consultants; revamp the NEPAD Web site; and prepare the four-year strategic plan for NEPAD.

UNDP also supports subregional institutions in pursuing South-South cooperation. A notable

example of such a partnership is UNDP support to the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN). This partnership dates back to the inception of ASEAN in 1967. In the early 1970s, UNDP supported the first economic cooperation efforts of ASEAN by sponsoring an in-depth study lasting two years and involving 41 international experts. This effort resulted in the Kansu Report (1972), which provided the basis for subsequent cooperation of ASEAN in industrial development, agriculture and forestry, transport, finance, monetary and insurance services. In addition, the UNDP financial commitment to ASEAN subregional programmes grew from \$700,000 in the second cycle (1977–1981) to \$12.7 million in the fourth cycle (1987–1991), promoting regional cooperation in a wide range of areas, from trade and industry to finance and banking. Currently, the \$1.45 million ASEAN-UNDP partnership facility focuses on the policy issues related to regional economic integration, with a focus on minimizing the short-term adjustment costs in Cambodia, Lao PDR, Myanmar and Vietnam.

2.3.2.3 Country Programmes

At the country level, UNDP programmes address national priorities and are developed and implemented by country offices in close partnership with national governments. Responses to surveys and case studies show that it is common for country offices to seek solutions and expertise from countries with similar experience, often through knowledge networks or communities of practice and in some instances, through face-to-face exchanges. In these examples, South-South cooperation is a modality to identify best development practices.³⁵

Countries may seek UNDP expertise to set up systems, institutions, policies or procedures. For instance, according to the Web site of the Brazilian cooperation agency ABC, "The UNDP country office was an important partner for the

35 Rare exceptions exist. For instance, in the case study of Barbados it became clear that the country programme itself is based on South-South cooperation, as it involves 10 island states in the Caribbean.

establishment of ABC by supporting the formation and technical capacity of its staff and building capacity for management and information to follow projects.”³⁶ A recent example can be found in Egypt, where the Special Unit and the country office, with the Government of Egypt, explored ways in which the country could expand its South-South cooperation.

In other instances, countries have sought UNDP assistance to reach out to other developing countries, as demonstrated by the case studies of China and Thailand. However, electronic surveys also highlight that countries sometimes wish to pursue South-South cooperation by themselves, without assistance from UNDP or the United Nations system.

Thailand provides an example of UNDP responding to a request from a pivotal country to support South-South cooperation. The 2007–2011 UNDAF for Thailand has been renamed the United Nations Partnership Framework (UNPAF) to reflect the commitment of the Government of Thailand to enhancing its global partnership for development, in accordance with the eighth MDG. The UN system is committed to a UNPAF outcome whereby Thailand will expand its South-South cooperation engagements by 2011 and deliver technical and financial support to other countries in Asia and beyond through:

- Increased policy dialogue, technical cooperation and sharing of experiences between Thailand and selected countries in Asia, Africa and Latin America;
- More effective aid coordination and delivery; and
- Enhanced Thai contribution to the global aid effectiveness agenda.

The UNDP country partnership in Thailand has identified the Thailand International Partnership for Development as one of four thematic areas. Accordingly, UNDP supports Thailand in:

- Disseminating knowledge about Thailand’s development experience beyond its borders;
- Encouraging policy dialogue on new modalities and opportunities for Thailand’s development cooperation with countries in the region and beyond, focusing especially on post-conflict countries such as Afghanistan, Sri Lanka and Timor Leste, and African nations in the areas of HIV/AIDS and SMEs.

The Special Unit and UNDP also work with civil society organizations in advancing South-South cooperation. According to the electronic survey, 37 percent of country offices reported supporting South-South cooperation through non-governmental organizations. A UNDP initiative that deals directly with non-governmental organizations is the Global Environment Facility (GEF) Small Grants Programme (SGP). SGP supports non-governmental and community-based organizations in 95 developing countries towards environmental conservation while generating sustainable livelihoods. More than 7,000 grants have been awarded through SGP, averaging around \$20,000 each. While UNDP does not regard SGP as South-South cooperation, the programme has stimulated considerable exchange of experience among grassroots organizations in developing countries.

2.3.2.4 UNDP Resources and Capacity

With the exception of the resources allocated to the Special Unit, it is not possible to track the resources allocated to South-South cooperation in UNDP, because there is no separate budget line for South-South cooperation. Country offices are expected to use TRAC-1 resources³⁷

36 Cited in Brazil Case Study, p. 9. Recently, the Supreme Court of Brazil ruled against UNDP hiring practices in supporting ABC. Now ABC pursues South-South cooperation without the assistance of UNDP Brazil.

37 Targets for Resource Allocation from the Core (TRAC) scheme earmarks 55 percent of UNDP core resources for country programmes and projects. Countries are given access to this common pool (referred to as TRAC 1) through three tiers of funding. The first tier (30 percent), designated as TRAC 1.1.1, is immediately assigned to countries. The second tier (20 percent), or TRAC 1.1.2, is assigned by region, for subsequent assignment to countries on the basis of merit. The third tier (6.6 percent), TRAC 1.1.3, is for countries in special development situations, such as those designated as least developed, or those undergoing natural disasters or economic/political crises. (source: UNDP Web site: <http://www.undp.org/cpr/disred/english/wedo/wedo.htm>)

or to mobilize resources through cost-sharing with third parties or host governments. The annual expenditure of the global programme in 2006 was \$26 million, about 10–20 percent of BDP expenditure and nearly 50 percent of its workload.³⁸ The combined expenditure under the five regional programmes was \$100 million.³⁹

2.3.3 WORKING TOGETHER

The mandate of the Special Unit includes coordinating South-South cooperation matters within UNDP. It also requires the Special Unit to work with UNDP country offices, regional centres and headquarters, as well as to contribute to UNDP discussions and decision-making processes related to South-South cooperation. UNDP has the responsibility to: strengthen the Special Unit to help it promote and mainstream South-South cooperation in UNDP programmes; orient UNDP activities to support South-South cooperation; and ensure adequate funding of the Special Unit.

Institutional links complementing the operations of UNDP and the Special Unit for South-South Cooperation have evolved over the years. The three cooperation frameworks since 1997 formalized collaborative arrangements. The Second Cooperation Framework, for instance, proposed to develop a strategy to mainstream South-South cooperation within UNDP as part of its efforts to mainstream South-South cooperation in the UN system. Specific guidelines were to be developed for integrating South-South cooperation systematically into UNDAF, country and regional cooperation frameworks, as well as into the Strategic Results Framework. The Special Unit was to play a key role in devising a methodology that would capture the results of country and regional support to South-South cooperation that were to be reflected in the results-oriented annual reports. Qualitative and quantitative parameters were to be developed for the purpose. The third cooperation framework proposed that

the Special Unit would work in internally matrixed arrangements with UNDP country offices, regional service centres and headquarter units to mainstream South-South cooperation in UNDP. One of its proposals was to develop oversight instruments consisting of clear guidelines on how to mainstream South-South cooperation in UNDP, including the country cooperation frameworks, common country assessments, UNDAF and the UNDP global programme. Other proposals included developing monitoring and evaluation tools, and educational and training instruments.

This evaluation noted that the director of the Special Unit was previously a member of the senior management team of UNDP, but is not a member of the operations group that replaced it.

The Special Unit also provides guidelines to promote South-South cooperation in UNDP. The document *Technical Cooperation among Developing Countries* was prepared by the Special Unit in 1978 for inclusion in the *UNDP Programming Manual. Guidelines for the Review of Policies and Procedures Concerning TCDC* was first issued by the Special Unit in 1997 and has since been in use by UN organizations, serving as a guide on South-South cooperation. This document was updated (TCDC/13/3) and finally endorsed by the High-Level Committee on South-South Cooperation and the General Assembly in 2003. In addition, the Special Unit has recently provided inputs to the UNDP 2008–2011 Strategic Plan on South-South cooperation.

There are a number of examples of joint activities by the Special Unit and UNDP. For example, the Special Unit collaborated with BDP to organize the first roundtable on remittances in 2006. WIDE, the flagship initiative under the Third Cooperation Framework, was recently revamped in collaboration with BDP and UNDP regional service centres. As part of this process, WIDE

38 UNDP, 2006. *Global Programme Annual Report*. Bureau for Development Policy.

39 Data from ATLAS snapshot and evaluations of the regional cooperation frameworks for Asia, Africa and Latin America.

was linked to UNDP and other UN networks and, importantly, made available to institutions outside the system through roster managers. The Special Unit also consults with the regional bureau when identifying appropriate partners for regional initiatives. The role of the Special Unit in reviewing new country programme documents is another opportunity to institutionalize collaboration. As part of their oversight functions each year, the five regional bureaux review approxi-

mately 25 new country programme documents before the documents are submitted to the Executive Board for approval. During the review, the bureaux invite relevant headquarters units to join project appraisal committees, providing the Special Unit with an opportunity to comment on South-South cooperation aspects. Participation of the Special Unit in these committees is *ad hoc*; not all regional bureaux regularly invite and receive inputs from the Special Unit.

Chapter 3

KEY FINDINGS

The evaluation recognizes that UNDP programmes' effectiveness in promoting and supporting South-South cooperation depends upon: the priority each country places on South-South cooperation; the demand from programme countries to involve UNDP; and UNDP capacity to provide support. The governmental expert panel convened by the UNDP Administrator in 1989 (HLC decision 6/4) identified impediments to realizing the full potential of TCDC in countries and the UN system. These included: lack of awareness of its potential, usefulness and applicability; lack of effective focal points; lack of policies and procedures; and shortage of funds. The evaluation finds that these impediments persist in UNDP and the Special Unit.

The Special Unit and UNDP have undertaken a number of initiatives in South-South cooperation in the mandated areas of: sensitization and advocacy; promoting South-South cooperation in developing countries; developing and supporting knowledge platforms; coordination within the UN system; and resource mobilization. However, the electronic survey showed that only 19 percent of UNCT members and 22 percent of UNDP Resident Representatives felt that the overall contribution of UNDP to South-South cooperation over the past five years had been effective or very effective.

The remainder of this chapter sets out the findings of this evaluation in a number of facets of South-South cooperation.

UNDP is well positioned to promote South-South cooperation.

UNDP—with a presence in 166 countries, non-partisan status, a vast store of development

knowledge, and ability to bring partners together—is well positioned to mobilize multi-lateral support for least-developed countries, Small Island Developing States and landlocked developing countries.

Given its mandate and role in coordinating UN system-wide development activities in each country, UNDP is well situated to work closely with other UN agencies and countries of the North in pursuit of South-South cooperation. The possibility of undertaking both effective advocacy and dissemination of experiences and lessons learned places UNDP in a unique position to promote South-South cooperation.

UNDP has substantial experience with South-South cooperation; however, shared understanding is limited.

UNDP has accumulated a wealth of relevant experience in the course of helping countries address development challenges. For example, the evaluation of the GEF SGP administered by UNDP shows considerable exchange of experience among developing countries. For instance, the Pakistan SGP influenced other SGPs around the world: SGP steering committees from Iran, Malaysia and India visited Pakistan, and the national coordinator of the Pakistan SGP led inception missions to Iran and Ethiopia.⁴⁰ UNDP knowledge networks and SURFs, now regional service centres, have provided useful platforms for interested countries to draw appropriate development practices, policies and approaches from the experience of others.

Yet UNDP often does not label—or even explicitly recognize—these activities as South-South cooperation. In UNDP Barbados, for example,

40 GEF, 2007 'Evaluation of GEF Small Grants Programme, Pakistan Case Study'.

knowledge sharing was heavily focused on South-South cooperation; however, it was not recognized as such. Responses to the electronic survey and case studies show that many UNDP country offices use the knowledge networks to seek South-based expertise and solutions to development challenges but do not think of them as South-South cooperation.

UNDP staff do not share an understanding of what South-South cooperation means or its implications for effective UNDP development support to countries. This is confirmed by interviews with stakeholders. Outside the Special Unit, many UNDP managers were not clear on what South-South cooperation meant. Some senior staff members of UNDP held the view that South-South cooperation was primarily about UNDP using consultants from the South. During the evaluation team's missions, most meetings with UNDP and the UN country team would begin by someone asking the evaluation team to define South-South cooperation and explain what it meant. In addition, many UNDP officials in headquarters, regional or country offices were not aware of the value that South-South cooperation added to the organization's work.

3.1 APPROACHES TO PROMOTE SOUTH-SOUTH COOPERATION

UNDP gives South-South cooperation organizational priority but inadequate support.

MYFF II made South-South cooperation one of the drivers of development effectiveness. Country offices are required to report annually on activities related to South-South cooperation in their results-oriented annual reports. However, this evaluation found that this high organizational priority has not translated into prioritizing South-South cooperation in UNDP programmes. MYFF II did not articulate UNDP deliverables or modalities of engagement in South-South

cooperation. Many headquarters units pointed out that there was no clear operational definition of a *driver*. In contrast, when a priority was expressed as a *service line* in the MYFF, investments were made in guidance, capacity development and tracking performance. This had consequences for UNDP operational support to South-South cooperation.

The evaluation team found no guidance material available to country offices to operationalize South-South cooperation. The UNDP *Results Management Guide* (previously known as the *User Guide* or the *Programming Manual*) lists South-South cooperation as a core value, yet offers no guidance on how to operationalize it.⁴¹ The only guidance available is the *Revised Guidelines* (TCDC/13/3). While these guidelines helped clarify the principles and provided useful indicators for UN system-wide efforts on South-South cooperation, this evaluation found the document to be of limited relevance to country offices' programming needs.

Individual initiatives, not institutional direction, drive UNDP efforts.

The individual initiatives of Resident Representatives or bureau directors, rather than systematic organizational policies and guidance, determine the extent to which UNDP programming reflects commitment to South-South cooperation—whether learning from and strengthening ongoing South-South cooperation activities or promoting demand for South-South cooperation in developing countries. An informal South-South cooperation network of 18 UN Resident Coordinators and their respective focal points in Asia, Africa, the Arab region and Latin America was recently created by initiatives of committed Resident Coordinators. The network shares information and complements each office's South-South cooperation capabilities. However, this is not an organization-wide phenomenon.⁴² Ten of the 23 draft country programme documents

41 This Results Management Guide became effective in January 2006. There were many different versions prior to this date, and even this version was being updated at the time of this evaluation.

42 Letter to the Administrator from the Resident Coordinator of Egypt, facts verified by the team.

submitted for approval by the Executive Board in 2006 did not refer to South-South cooperation as an area to promote and encourage. Of the 24 countries in the region serviced by the Bureau of Latin America and the Caribbean, 11 did not report any activity under South-South cooperation in their 2005 results-oriented annual reports.

When national priorities are made clear, country offices respond. For example, 20 of 22 UNDP offices in pivotal countries have explicit or implicit commitment to South-South cooperation activities in their current country programmes. The Mali case study found that, while country offices respond to requests for South-South cooperation, it remains a low priority in country programmes due to a lack of an explicit cooperation objective and assigned resources. In the absence of clear directives, making South-South cooperation an explicit objective of the UNDAF or CPD depends upon the enthusiasm of a particular Resident Representative. The evaluation finds the UNDP approach is reactive rather than proactive, *ad hoc* rather than systemic.

Electronic survey results reinforce this view, indicating that 35 percent of UNDP respondents felt that the mandate for South-South cooperation was only “somewhat explicit.” Eight percent thought that South-South cooperation was not an explicit mandate, and 71 percent of UNCT respondents stated that promotion of South-South cooperation was not a UNDAF objective.

Cooperation frameworks for South-South cooperation have well-defined strategies, but the approach is largely supply-driven.

The cooperation frameworks clearly demonstrate that the Special Unit has developed a vision and strategy to promote South-South cooperation. The three platforms of the Third Cooperation Framework provide a useful basis for the strategic orientation of South-South cooperation initiatives. This framework builds on the previous two, in order to provide much-needed continuity for

the existing programmes. Yet many stakeholders shared the concern of the Director of the Special Unit regarding the “urgent need” to consolidate “numerous aspirations into a manageable agenda.”⁴³ The Special Unit handled 21 projects starting in 2005 under the Third Cooperation Framework (2005–2007), of which only five have been completed. Most of the projects are small, with budgets between \$100,000 and \$300,000.

In conformity with the Special Unit’s mandate, the Third Cooperation Framework emphasizes that the interests of least-developed countries, landlocked developing countries and Small Island Developing States should be an area of special focus. The programme profile of the Special Unit clearly indicates that its activities were concentrated in the poorer regions and around the African region. However, there was no evidence of systematic efforts to identify the collective demands of the target countries, as mandated by the *New Directions for Technical Cooperation among Developing Countries*. Needs assessments—such as the needs assessment for the SMEs in Africa or the consequences of implementing regional treaties in Economic community of West African states, East African Community and Caribbean Community countries—were conducted on an *ad hoc* basis, without clear rationale for prioritizing the choices.

The results-based approach to South-South cooperation is weak.

UNDP has been unable to build a credible body of evaluative evidence on its contribution to South-South cooperation. During country missions, the evaluation team found no inventories, tracking or monitoring of South-South cooperation efforts or evaluations of these activities. In the electronic survey, for instance, 90 percent of UNDP Resident Representatives reported that in the past five years, their country offices had not conducted an evaluation of South-South cooperation. The evaluation found that, while activities were reported in the results oriented annual reports,

43 Director of Special Unit for South-South Cooperation, 2005:2.

outcomes were not. The evaluation did not find any monitoring or evaluation tools to assess outcomes related to South-South cooperation made available to UNDP country offices. Regular information on South-South cooperation was not required at any level, nor were managers at any level held accountable for South-South cooperation. The absence of systematic documentation within UNDP makes it difficult to assess its contribution. To that extent, UNDP management has very limited ability to assess progress, take corrective action or devise future strategies. This, once again, reflects the low corporate priority for South-South cooperation in UNDP.

To illustrate key South-South cooperation activities and how to evaluate them, TCDC/13/13 provides a useful set of indicators to be used by the UN development system (presented in Annex 5).⁴⁴ Yet reports by the Special Unit to the Executive Board on the implementation of the cooperation frameworks⁴⁵ continue to present results in the form of activities, rather than using these indicators.

The evaluation finds that there is very limited and certainly inadequate documented evidence to make general statements about UNDP contribution to strengthening capacity. There are a few examples in which South-South cooperation has been more than inputs-driven and has strengthened institutions and capacities at the subregional, national and local levels. One recent evaluation points to the contribution of the UN Inter-Agency Project on Human Trafficking in the Greater Mekong Sub-Region.⁴⁶ Started in 2000, this project was part of the regional programme and aimed to reduce the severity and harm associated with human trafficking in the

subregion. It succeeded in establishing a Coordinated Mekong Ministerial Initiative against Trafficking in the Greater Mekong Sub-Region, consisting of the Governments of Cambodia, China, Lao PDR, Myanmar, Thailand and Vietnam. In addition, the project catalyzed anti-trafficking policies and activities at subregional and national levels. Visits or other forms of exchanges with ASEAN neighbours supported by UNDP have influenced reforms and innovative programmes in Lao PDR. These include the formation of the National Commission for the Advancement of Women, based on visits to the national committees in the Philippines and Vietnam.⁴⁷ The GEF SGP and NHDRs also provide good examples of strengthening local capacities.

Implementation strategy favours technical over social considerations.

This evaluation finds that implementation strategies of the Special Unit have focused on the technical aspects of initiatives and ignored the social consequences. In identifying or designing initiatives, the evaluation found no evidence to indicate that UNDP uses either a rights-based approach, as mandated by the UN, or the sustainable human development approach, which is the mandate of UNDP itself. For instance, while promoting public-private partnership was found to be a very necessary and useful step in promoting South-South cooperation, neither the cooperation framework nor the publications of the Special Unit on this subject reveal how corporate social responsibility is addressed by initiatives under this platform.

The evaluation found no clear articulation in the Special Unit or UNDP of the goals and strategies for promoting public-private partnerships. There

44 High-Level Committee on the Review of Technical Cooperation among Developing Countries, 2003. *Revised Guidelines for the Review of Policies and Procedures Concerning Technical cooperation Among Developing Countries*. TCDC 13/3, 13th Session, 27–20 May 2003. New York.

45 See for example, UNDP, 2007, *Report on the Implementation of the Third Cooperation Framework for South-South Cooperation (2005–2007)*, Report of the Administrator, Annual Session 2007, 11–22 June. New York.

46 UNDP, 2007. *Evaluation of Second Regional Cooperation Framework for Asia and the Pacific 2002–2006*. Evaluation Office.

47 UNDP, 2007. *Assessment of Development Results: Evaluation of UNDP's Contribution to Lao PDR*. Evaluation Office.

was even greater ambiguity on the promotion of public-private partnerships through South-South cooperation. For instance, many export promotion programmes are seen as South-South cooperation, but without adequate attention to ensuring that beneficiaries adhere to corporate social responsibility and imperatives of human development. For instance, UNDP India supported the Confederation of Indian Industries (CII) financially and administratively from 2001 to 2003. This collaboration facilitated business deals and economic linkages between CII members and other countries in the South. The India desk study showed that such collaboration ended because of inadequate planning. Stakeholder interviews in other case study countries confirm that country-level efforts on public-private partnerships are often *ad hoc*.

Strategies to mainstream South-South cooperation and create awareness met with limited results.

Mainstreaming South-South cooperation as a driver of development effectiveness within UNDP and across the UN system is one of the key elements of the Third Cooperation Framework. The Special Unit contributed to strengthening global advocacy for South-South cooperation through its function as the secretariat of the HLC and made substantive contributions in order to articulate the HLC position in promoting South-South cooperation (e.g., documenting global progress in implementing the BAPA every two years for the HLC, preparing the new direction strategy for South-South cooperation). The Special Unit also provided technical assistance in facilitating dialogue in the follow-up to the recommendations of the first South Summit held in 2000, the 2003 Marrakech High-Level Conference on South-South Cooperation and the Second South

Summit of 2005. However, advocacy for mainstreaming South-South cooperation within UNDP and the UN system was not effective. The results of the six activities included in the Third Cooperation Framework under Platform 1 to mainstream South-South cooperation are presented in Table 3.1.

This evaluation finds that UNDP follow-up and outreach efforts related to South-South cooperation are weak. For example, the Macroeconomic Policies and Poverty Reduction Programme aimed to build capacity for regional policy analysis and advocate links between growth, employment and poverty reduction using research, training and advocacy. The resulting thirty studies and knowledge products benefited from South-South exchanges. The programme suffered from weak dissemination, lack of advocacy and follow-up.⁴⁸ As the Bangladesh experience highlights, when dissemination is actively pursued, studies are well received and reports are influential with policymakers.⁴⁹

3.2 MAKING THE MOST OF STRENGTHS AND INSTITUTIONAL CAPACITY TO PROMOTE SOUTH-SOUTH COOPERATION

UNDP has not fully utilized its knowledge base to support South-South cooperation.

Knowledge networks are continuing to grow and are widely used by members. There were 28,997 subscribers to major networks in February 2007, compared with 8,916 in 2003.⁵⁰ The evaluation of the Second Global Cooperation Framework reported that the number of referrals increased from 753 to 1,992 from January 2000 to July 2003.⁵¹ During the same time period, the number of best-practice event participants per six-month period increased from 184 to 1,139.⁵²

48 UNDP, 2007. *Evaluation of Second Regional Cooperation Framework for Asia and the Pacific 2002–2006*. Evaluation Office.

49 Ibid.

50 *Knowledge Networks* Web site, UNDP: http://practices.undp.org/ks/docs/Global%20Networks%20Brochure_Nov.doc.

51 UNDP, 2004. *Evaluation of the Second Global Cooperation Framework*, Evaluation Office.

52 Ibid.

Table 3.1. Effectiveness of the Activities of the Special Unit to Mainstream South-South Cooperation in UNDP

Commitments for activities for mainstreaming South-South cooperation under the Third Cooperation Framework	Effectiveness
Prepare programming instruments that include methodologies and information on various models of South-South programmes, such as triangular cooperation and the steps taken in organizing a capacity and needs matching exercise.	None of the UNDP case study country offices were aware of such programming instruments.
Prepare oversight instruments consisting of clear guidelines on how to include South-South cooperation in key programming documents in the UN system.	Partially achieved: revised guidelines were produced in 2003 and included pilot indicators to be used in reporting on progress and results achieved by the UN system. However, the <i>UNDP Results Management Guide</i> makes no reference to this document, and indicators are not used by any UNDP programming documents, including CPDs or the results-oriented annual reports.
Prepare monitoring and evaluation tools such as those used to ensure transparency and accountability in keeping with the MYFF.	There is no record of any evaluation tool being developed and shared with case study countries or UNDP Evaluation Office.
Educational and training instruments, including training manuals and course for integration into the UNDP Virtual Development Academy.	No reference to South-South cooperation either as a course, or as an element of the seven integrated practices areas listed on the Web page.
Disseminate promotional materials, including videos, brochures and booklets, at various events, including meetings, workshops and conferences, by the staff of the Special Unit.	No records are available to ascertain the effectiveness of this mode of dissemination.

Most of these networks are directly relevant to South-South cooperation. The same evaluation noted the example of UNDP Sri Lanka, which requested information on the types of services UNDP had offered to presidential offices of different countries and received 12 responses within 48 hours.

However, this evaluation finds that UNDP is losing an opportunity to capitalize on its strengths. While knowledge networks and communities of practice provide an enabling environment for South-South information exchange, in practice they are limited to improving particular programmes or projects. UNDP does not use them to engage with South-South cooperation in a systemic way,

in order to: analyze and understand the structural needs behind the queries posted; map demand across sectors, practice areas and regions; identify gaps in capacities and emerging trends in South-South cooperation; codify this knowledge base and experience within a South-South cooperation framework; or feed results back into the organization to allow for development of better strategies.

Regional service centres, country offices and most knowledge networks do not profile priorities for supply and demand of South-South cooperation in host countries, subregions or regions.

There are instances of good practice in building on an existing knowledge base of South-South

cooperation. Technonet Africa is one example. As discussed in Chapter 2, Technonet Africa used Technonet Asia's 30 years of experience in promoting small and medium-sized enterprises. While there is no information on specific outputs and outcomes, there are indications that activities under this initiative were well received, for example, by participants in the training of trainers for entrepreneurship development, as well as in a workshop on SME policy and institutions (South Africa case study). Participants attributed the quality of these training exercises to the expertise of the trainers, who had gained their experience in Technonet Asia.

However, as WIDE illustrates, positive experience is not the rule. As noted in Chapter 2, WIDE, the flagship initiative of the Third Cooperation Framework, was recently revamped in collaboration with UNDP regional service centres and BDP. It is now linked to UNDP and other UN networks and, importantly, opened to institutions outside the system through roster managers. WIDE is now linked to 40 rosters of experts within the UN system and reported 1,342 referrals in 2006.⁵³ However, case studies show that government officials and stakeholders were not aware of the changes made to WIDE. The Special Unit has not followed up to discover how the rosters are being used, or to analyse the knowledge networks under WIDE, in order to codify experience and feedback for participating agencies and countries.

UNDP has not sufficiently leveraged the strengths of the UN system to promote South-South cooperation.

Consultations with Geneva-based UN organizations pointed out that relationships between UNDP and other UN agencies were not based on explicit coordination mechanisms or agreement on collaborative efforts. Some agencies pointed out that, after shifting from being a funding agency to being an implementation agency, UNDP had extended its operations to areas such

organizations consider within their own mandates, particularly those of trade and investment. At times, this created tension instead of facilitating coordination.

Responses from the electronic survey point to a similarly *ad hoc* nature of coordination of South-South cooperation interventions at the country level. Among UNCT respondents, 65 percent said that South-South cooperation coordination takes the form of *ad hoc* meetings, and 73 percent of UNDP respondents concurred. Only 21 percent of UNCT respondents reported that there were regular consultations.

The UNDAF mechanism offers the possibility for greater coordination and coherence. However, 76 percent of survey respondents in UNDP noted that promotion of South-South cooperation was not a UNDAF objective in their country.

The Special Unit has joint initiatives; however, similar to the UN Day for South-South Cooperation, these initiatives do not lead to sustained links that bring out synergies. Only a few, such as the remittances workshop referred to in Chapter 2, include a follow-up action resulting in sustained relationships. The Special Unit initiated the revitalization of the focal point network, beginning with 15 Economic Community of West African States countries. However, many UNCTs reported that progress had been held back by the poor coordination of South-South cooperation efforts and the low visibility of the Special Unit with local governments. Interviews with stakeholders confirm the observation that, in many countries, the focal point system for South-South cooperation is not strong enough to provide vibrant leadership.

Systematic collaboration between the Special Unit and UNDP is inadequate.

Achieving the goals of the third cooperation framework requires close collaboration between the Special Unit and UNDP. The universal

53 Brewster, M., 2007. *Internal Evaluation of the Implementation Activities Supported under the Third Cooperation Framework by the Special Unit for South-South Cooperation*. International Development Consulting, Inc. New York. April.

presence of UNDP offers a platform for the Special Unit to promote and advocate for South-South cooperation at the country level, while close ties between the Special Unit and programme countries provide a valuable asset to leverage country support in order to address sensitive trans-boundary issues through South-South exchanges. However, with the exception of financial transactions, there is no systematic collaboration between the Special Unit and UNDP. While useful collaborative efforts exist, collaborative efforts as a whole were found to be inadequate and ineffective in key areas of mutual support, such as: UN system-wide coordination of South-South cooperation activities; initiatives to mainstream South-South cooperation within UNDP and at the country level; and strengthening the effectiveness of knowledge networks in promoting South-South cooperation.

Case studies show that the Special Unit has not adequately leveraged UNDP strengths in promoting South-South cooperation at the country level, or in coordinating South-South cooperation efforts with UNCTs. Of responding UNCT members, 94 percent reported that they were either not familiar (57 percent) or only somewhat familiar (37 percent) with the role and function of the Special Unit.

This evaluation finds that participation of the Special Unit in programme advisory committees at headquarters is not institutionalized. Some regional bureaux invite and receive inputs from the Special Unit on a regular basis, while others do not.

The recent move to post regional advisers of the Special Unit in regional service centres is a step towards stronger joint action to promote South-South cooperation. However, the results are mixed. Thus far, the regional adviser's presence has produced the intended results in Thailand, but not in Johannesburg.

This evaluation concurs with the recent internal review that, "Beyond initial consultation, there does not appear to be great interaction between UNDP units." UNDP country offices offered mostly "logistical or administrative support, and South-South cooperation was not a main thrust of these activities."⁵⁴

3.3 INCENTIVE STRUCTURES AND RESOURCES TO PROMOTE SOUTH-SOUTH COOPERATION

The evaluation found no system for rewarding best practices in mainstreaming South-South cooperation. Lack of internal incentives and direction has prevented UNDP from making better use of its resources and assets. The organization has not mined its knowledge and experience to analyze either sectoral demands for South-South cooperation or emerging trends. The visited country offices were not active in profiling demand for South-South cooperation in their countries. The evaluation found a noticeable disconnect between the *ad hoc* manner in which country offices and knowledge networks were accumulating experience and the stated corporate priority of integrating promotion and advocacy of South-South cooperation in UNDP programming.

The case studies point out that mainstreaming South-South cooperation has been slow, because UNDP has not earmarked resources for relevant country-level programming. UNDP stakeholders in case study countries felt that South-South cooperation was unlikely to get attention, until a new line item was created in the budget. They pointed to significant resource constraints in UNDP programmes to promote South-South cooperation. Stakeholders in Brazil also noted that the International Poverty Centre at Brasilia had to circumscribe its activities considerably as a result of inadequate funding.⁵⁵

⁵⁴ Ibid.

⁵⁵ Brazil case study.

Special Unit has consistently mobilized non-core resources, yet the total resources available remain inadequate to cover the wide scope of activities.

As resources declined, UNDP, the sole provider of regular resources for the Special Unit, was unable to maintain the support level promised in 1997, or 0.5 percent of total programme resources. Support was, therefore, fixed at \$3.5 million for 2003–2005 and raised to \$4.5 million under the current UNDP Strategic Plan (2008–2011). The Special Unit has consistently mobilized non-core resources. However, with 15 regular professional staff and less than \$9 million available annually, the Special Unit is expected to: serve as the secretariat for the HLC; support the Office of the Chairman of the Group of 77 and China; manage the trust funds related to South-South cooperation; promote and coordinate South-South cooperation activities within the UN system; and promote South-South cooperation at the country level.

Previous evaluations⁵⁶ echoed the statement made on behalf of G77 and China that observed that, “The pattern of cooperation had unfortunately not been commensurate with the comprehensive nature of the commitments contained in the various declarations and other documents for South-South cooperation, as well as with the existing capabilities and capacities in the South. The inadequate financial resources allocated in support of South-South cooperation programmes continue to constitute a serious obstacle to their promotion and effectiveness.”⁵⁷ In this regard, the South Fund for Development and Humanitarian Assistance, created at the Second South Summit in Doha in 2005, was a welcome sign of commitment to South-South cooperation. Notwithstanding, the Special Unit’s human and financial resources remain inadequate to assist target countries.

3.4 PREPAREDNESS TO MEET EMERGING CHALLENGES

The preceding discussions clearly show that South-South cooperation is not seen as a priority in many country programmes, and that UNDP has not been able to fully leverage its position to promote South-South cooperation in the past. It is also evident that the Special Unit and UNDP do not have systematic mechanisms to identify the needs of target countries. One of the historical imperatives of South-South cooperation is the attempt at levelling the playing field through cooperation among countries of the South. As noted earlier, the North-South gap may be diminishing in a number of areas and at an aggregate level. However, current trends also point to growing inequalities in the South. As BAPA recommended, one of the most significant priorities for UNDP is to fulfil its mandate of strengthening geographically and economically marginalized countries. This includes: improving these countries’ capacity to formulate strategic responses to the imperatives of the new order; enhancing their effectiveness in negotiating the emerging order; and sharpening their competitiveness within it. This evaluation finds that neither the MYFF nor the cooperation frameworks have incorporated transparent consultative processes to identify the needs of target countries in a systematic manner.

Analysis of past evaluations, network discussions, case studies and survey responses indicates that the areas that are becoming increasingly important to UNDP involvement in South-South cooperation include conflict prevention and recovery, disaster preparedness, climate change, trade and intra-South development cooperation.

As South-South cooperation evolves, it may embody a wide range of development approaches, not all of which will enhance people’s choices or promote human development, which is the mandate of UNDP. This evaluation did not find sufficient

56 UNDP, 1999. *20 Years of South-South Partnership Building, An Assessment of Technical Cooperation among Developing Countries (TCDC), 1978–1998*. Special Unit for TCDC. July.

57 Excerpted from the statement on behalf of the Group of 77 and China by Ambassador Mohamed Bennouna, Permanent Representative of the Kingdom of Morocco to the United Nations and Chairman of the Group of 77 before the 13th Session of the HLC (May 2003).

emphasis on these aspects in policy documents such as the Third Cooperation Framework, or sufficient evidence that UNDP designs and implements its South-South cooperation efforts based on a human development approach.

The UNDP role in middle-income countries is yet to be defined.

Although critical for its current and future strategic position in South-South cooperation, UNDP has yet to evolve a corporate strategy for its engagement in middle-income countries. Instances of strategic initiatives to engage in such partnerships to promote South-South cooperation are available, as illustrated by the Chapter 2 examples of China, Egypt and Thailand. However, as shown by the case studies of Brazil and Guatemala, such partnerships are not the rule. A number of Assessments of Development Results (evaluations of UNDP performance at the country level) have pointed out that UNDP has not developed context-appropriate approaches for engaging in middle-income countries.

In the Latin American model, UNDP mainly carries out administrative functions such as procurement for governmental bodies. As shown by the Brazil and Guatemala case studies, this dependence may have weakened the UNDP position to advocate South-South cooperation in the long term. South-South cooperation is a much more politically complex issue than the

traditional UNDP development engagement with countries. The electronic survey responses show that countries do not always find it necessary to involve UNDP or the UN system in their South-South cooperation efforts. However, interviews with member states point to a number of instances in which UNDP has lost opportunities to further South-South cooperation, because it did not have a clear strategy or vision to pursue such cooperation, particularly in middle-income countries.

Horizontal links across regions are inadequate to strengthen interregional South-South cooperation.

Increasingly, South-South cooperation is taking place not only within but also across regions. This evaluation finds that inadequate institutional horizontal links among country offices—where most of South-South cooperation happens—limit the ability of the organization to initiate and facilitate inter-regional South-South exchanges. Knowledge networks links UNDP country offices across regions. The current system of line oversight links country offices to specific regional bureaux, with limited cross-regional contact. In addition, the case studies found uneven communication between regional service centres and country offices, which further limits capitalizing on intraregional opportunities. For example, UNDP South Africa was unaware of the work of the regional centre, while in Thailand there were systematic links between the two.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

UNDP and the Special Unit have considerable experience in South-South cooperation and are well positioned to play a more active and effective role in supporting and promoting it. There is recognition that all countries from the South can benefit from South-South cooperation. UNDP has expressed a strong commitment to South-South cooperation in its strategic plans. However, UNDP and the Special Unit have been unable to fully deliver on their mandate to promote and support South-South cooperation.

4.1 CONCLUSIONS

I. The effectiveness of support under the Third Cooperation Framework for South-South Cooperation is constrained by the mismatch among the mandate, resources and implementation strategy of the Special Unit.

The mandate of the Special Unit for South-South Cooperation is extensive, not only relative to UNDP but in absolute terms. Evolving and expanding over time, the Special Unit functions to: act as the secretariat to the High-Level Committee on the Review of South-South Cooperation; coordinate UN system-wide South-South cooperation efforts; mobilize resources and manages funds for South-South cooperation; and support South-South cooperation within the UN development system. The Special Unit has difficulty in managing all the activities needed under such a broad mandate with its available resources (core \$3.5 million, non-core \$5.5 million per annum) and 15 professional staff members.

The three platforms of the Third Cooperation Framework for South-South Cooperation provide a useful conceptual tool to identify areas of

interventions—a platform to support policy dialogue, with emphasis on mainstreaming South-South cooperation as a driver of development effectiveness; a platform to help create an enabling environment for public-private partnership mechanisms for South-South business collaboration and technical exchange, and a platform to manage and share development knowledge. However, in developing initiatives, evidence indicates that the Special Unit paid insufficient attention to assessing and prioritizing demand from consultations with target countries. Consequently, the Special Unit's activities are too numerous and diffused, further constraining its resources and capacity and limiting its ability to respond to requests for support.

The Special Unit developed *Revised Guidelines for the Review of Policies and Procedures Concerning South-South Cooperation* (document TCDC/13/3 of the High-level Committee on the Review of TCDC) including a common results framework for the UN development system engaged in South-South cooperation. This document was approved by the High-level Committee on the Review of South-South Cooperation and the General Assembly in 2003. However, the Special Unit itself continues to report activities as results and has not produced a results framework that ties outputs and outcomes to clearly defined qualitative and quantitative indicators. Consequently, its reviews offer limited evaluative evidence and learning opportunities.

II. UNDP has not developed a robust and proactive approach to South-South cooperation at the corporate level.

UNDP is mandated to support and promote South-South cooperation by hosting the Special

Unit and through all relevant UNDP-supported programmes.

UNDP does not have a clear strategic framework to leverage the Special Unit and other programmes to support South-South cooperation. South-South cooperation was declared to be a driver of development effectiveness in MYFF II and a principle of development effectiveness in the UNDP Strategic Plan. Yet these plans did not articulate UNDP strategic priorities, deliverables and modalities of engagement in South-South cooperation.

There are no clear strategies and institutional mechanisms to adequately respond to the dynamic changes occurring in South-South cooperation. Examples of such changes include the rapid expansion of interregional exchanges and trade, massive trade surpluses in pivotal countries that result in new financing arrangements and opportunities to promote South-South cooperation. There is continuing demand from disadvantaged countries for support that would permit them to benefit from these opportunities.

In addition, UNDP has no clear partnership strategies to support or strengthen South-South cooperation within the UN development system or among countries of the South. Case studies show that other UN agencies are actively involved in South-South cooperation, yet in many countries coordination of UN system-wide efforts to prioritize South-South cooperation in national development agenda remains *ad hoc* and inadequate.

The development context varies among the countries of the South. Some countries have taken the lead in South-South cooperation and do not require support from the UN system; others have requested UNDP support for their initiatives. Some countries have yet to fully recognize the potential of South-South cooperation and require encouragement to stimulate demand. Clear strategies to partner with governments to support and promote the demand for South-South cooperation are not fully in place, especially in pivotal countries.

With its global presence, UNDP has yet to adopt a robust approach to support a two-way flow of knowledge and multi-dimensional experience among all countries in the South.

III. UNDP is a responsive partner at the country level: however, its effectiveness is constrained by uneven recognition, inadequate resources and incentives and inability to systematize learning.

Though many UNDP initiatives currently under way have South-South elements, they are not corporately recognized as such. There is limited shared understanding of the concept of South-South cooperation across the organization, and inadequate recognition of the value added by South-South cooperation at the operational level.

UNDP has not provided adequate resources to mainstream South-South cooperation in its programming. While UNDP provides the regular (core) resources for the Special Unit, the organization has not been able to sustain the commitment (1997) to allocate 0.5 percent of its annual programme resources to the Special Unit (support is currently fixed at \$4.5 million).

Much of what UNDP is doing on South-South cooperation is the result of individual initiatives and leadership. There is a lack of clear incentives and guidance to integrate South-South cooperation in global, regional and country programmes.

The accountability and reporting systems of UNDP do not adequately reflect the priority of support for South-South cooperation.

UNDP does not conduct systematic analysis of the information on its knowledge networks. Such analysis might help to distil modalities of engagement in South-South cooperation with an eye towards mapping demand areas, identifying capacity needs, and codifying the wide experience of UNDP. Similarly, UNDP has not built a body of evaluative evidence on its contribution to South-South cooperation, which would have enabled the organization to learn from its experience.

IV. UNDP and the Special Unit have not fully leveraged their collective strengths and capacities.

The Special Unit has convening power and specialized knowledge to facilitate interest and catalyze demand among partner countries. UNDP has a networked global presence, a mandate to coordinate at the country level, and in general, has close interaction with programme country partners. Yet the Special Unit and UNDP have not fully leveraged each other's strengths.

There are no clear collaborative arrangements between the Special Unit and UNDP at different operational levels. The UNDP Strategic Plan, 2008-2011 does not reflect the areas of collaboration spelled out in the Third Cooperation Framework for South-South Cooperation. UNDP has not worked with the Special Unit to codify relevant experience emerging from the practice networks. In addition, the Special Unit has not leveraged the UNDP network of country offices to identify areas of focus or coordinate South-South cooperation efforts of the UN system at the country level.

4.2 RECOMMENDATIONS

The rapid evolution of South-South cooperation has opened a window of opportunity for developing countries to use such cooperation as a means towards achieving internationally agreed development goals, including the MDGs. The United Nations development system has an important partnership role. Within this partnership, UNDP must clearly define the contours of its engagement with South-South cooperation and revamp its institutional arrangements, including its relationship with the Special Unit.

The following recommendations cover the cooperation framework for South-South cooperation and the Special Unit's role; the responsibility, strategic approach and institutional arrangements of UNDP; and collaborative arrangements between UNDP and the Special Unit. These recommendations are intended to be mutually reinforcing and should be treated as a whole.

I. The Fourth Cooperation Framework for South-South Cooperation (managed by the Special Unit) should be shaped around three activity streams: knowledge sharing; policy development and advocacy; and catalyzing innovation. Initiatives in each of these streams should be time-bound and results-oriented.

The evaluation found that the thrust and the key elements of the Third Cooperation Framework for South-South Cooperation are still relevant, and that the Special Unit achieved most of the outputs. However, the full potential of results has not been attained, due to the Special Unit's limited capacity and inadequate leveraging of the strengths of the United Nations development system. Specific recommendations made in this area do not envisage a fundamental change in the content of the Third Cooperation Framework, but rather enable the Special Unit to engage more closely with organizations of the UN system to increase the effectiveness of support to countries.

Knowledge sharing for South-South experience

- The Special Unit should continue to serve as the repository of knowledge on South-South cooperation for the UN system and the international community. The Unit should systematically engage with governments and all UN agencies to distil good practices, identify proven solutions and expertise, and codify experience in a user-friendly interactive system accessible by the international development community at large.
- The Special Unit should conduct research and analysis of key emerging trends in South-South cooperation. This exercise should gauge emerging needs by assessing the outcomes of the deliberations of relevant intergovernmental fora, as well as by pooling and synthesizing the experience of organizations of the United Nations system.

Policy development and advocacy for South-South cooperation

- The Special Unit should continue its advocacy efforts through intergovernmental

fora, regional bodies and national-level stakeholders. The Special Unit should document outcomes from these efforts to influence the future practice of South-South cooperation.

- The Special Unit should more effectively engage with all UN development agencies, in order to mainstream South-South cooperation as a modality for development effectiveness. The Unit should establish a mechanism or mechanisms for systematic engagement with agencies to address shared priorities and action plans. These could include updating the policy and procedural guidelines related to South-South cooperation and periodic consultations within the United Nations development system.

Catalyzing and innovating to meet emerging demands of South-South cooperation

The Special Unit should:

- Identify appropriate priorities for action in emerging areas of South-South cooperation by mapping demand through consultation with target countries and the UN system, supplemented by analysis;
- Develop a select portfolio of time-bound, results-oriented pilot initiatives to address critical issues in the areas identified, with the objective of defining effective South-South solutions that can be scaled up and/or replicated by countries with the support of the UN system as appropriate. This portfolio should be of a manageable size, and should be flexible enough to accommodate additional demands as they emerge. The Special Unit should undertake only a limited number of pilot activities at a given time;
- Support countries in developing policy frameworks to enable them to address opportunities and constraints in the expansion of South-South cooperation in areas such as public-private partnerships and civil society engagement; and

- Manage funds for South-South cooperation on behalf of countries of the South within an accountable and clearly defined results-oriented framework.

The Fourth Cooperation Framework for South-South Cooperation and its components should be built around clear outcomes that are linked to the mandate of the Special Unit. The results chain should logically link outputs to outcomes.

II. In programming initiatives, the Special Unit should adopt strict criteria and leverage the capacities of UNDP and other relevant United Nations organizations to enhance the contribution of South-South cooperation to development effectiveness.

The evaluation found that the Special Unit is not sufficiently using criteria established by intergovernmental fora; nor is it adequately leveraging the global networked presence of UNDP and the specialized mandates of the organizations of the United Nations development system. The recommendations of this evaluation envisage that the Special Unit will continue using its convening power and specialized knowledge to initiate pilot activities and will expand its partnerships with relevant United Nations agencies.

- The initiatives under the Fourth Cooperation Framework for South-South Cooperation should strictly adhere to criteria including:
 - Strong demand from member countries (BAPA);
 - Defined impact on a large number of countries (*New Directions for Technical Cooperation among Developing Countries*, 1995); and
 - Clear results framework, with a results chain linking outputs of initiatives to outcomes sought by the cooperation framework (TCDC 13/3).
- In its pilot initiatives, the Special Unit should partner with governments and relevant United Nations agencies from the outset, with a view to mutual learning, codification, and integration of the pilot experience in the respective government's or agency's programming.

- The Special Unit should have a clear exit strategy for each pilot project. The government or partner agency should be prepared to scale up and replicate successful activities, and to provide feedback on programme experience and results to the knowledge base of the Special Unit.

III. UNDP should develop a corporate South-South cooperation strategy that: addresses emerging issues; draws on its own experience; integrates all of its programme frameworks, and is underpinned by resources, incentives and accountability.

UNDP has islands of success in South-South cooperation; however, these have not been integrated into the corporate approach. As such, this evaluation recommends prioritizing South-South cooperation in programming and taking steps towards institutionalizing South-South cooperation approaches.

- At the corporate level, UNDP should respond to dynamic changes and emerging priorities in South-South cooperation, as well as to emerging priorities. In doing so, UNDP must consistently and fully reflect the human development mandate and the rights-based approach to development. UNDP should identify key partners to work with and modalities of partnership in diverse contexts, including pivotal countries.
- UNDP should identify a clear set of deliverables on South-South cooperation, for which it assumes responsibility. This should be done through an internal discussion with the Special Unit, as well as in consultation with partner countries and other UN system bodies.
- UNDP should develop a results framework for South-South cooperation initiatives in its strategic plan, with clear benchmarks and indicators to assess its contribution to South-South cooperation. To support this assessment, UNDP must put in place an effective monitoring and evaluation mechanism of all related programming activity.
- UNDP should identify South-South cooperation priorities through: findings from the analyses of the Special Unit; UNDP programming experience at the country, regional and global level; and systematic consultations with programme countries. In particular, UNDP should mine experience gained in supporting conflict prevention and recovery; disaster preparedness; climate change; trade, and intra-South development cooperation.
- UNDP should: develop a systematic approach to link South-South considerations in practice areas and programming at the country, regional and global levels; proactively require all practice areas to have South-South concerns as an element; and develop clear guidance material in the *Results Management Guide* based on the TCDC/13/3 and ensure support to South-South cooperation at all levels of UNDP programming.
- UNDP should reflect the priority placed on South-South cooperation in allocating and tracking of resources, developing performance incentives, and implementing accountability and reporting systems.

IV. UNDP and the Special Unit for South-South Cooperation should define clear collaboration arrangements between the Special Unit and UNDP.

This evaluation found that collaboration between UNDP and the Special Unit is not adequately institutionalized. UNDP must recognize that the mandate of the Special Unit goes beyond the work of UNDP and that the cooperation framework should support the full mandate. In this area, the following recommendations address roles and responsibilities, resource allocation and joint efforts at codification and coordination.

- The Director of the Special Unit should be a member of the Operations Group. Clear collaborative arrangements between the Special Unit and the regional and practice bureaux of UNDP need to be established. Periodic reporting and discussion of the

implementation of the Fourth Cooperation Framework for South-South Cooperation, as well as the results of collaboration with the regional bureaux, corporate units, and country offices, should take place at the Operations Group.

- UNDP should revisit its 1997 commitment to provide 0.5 percent of its total programming resources to South-South cooperation and ensure that predictable and adequate resources are made available to both UNDP

and the Special Unit in order to fulfil the South-South cooperation mandate.

- UNDP should provide the Special Unit with a platform to engage with United Nations Country Teams with regard to South-South cooperation at the country level.
- UNDP and the Special Unit should work together to codify existing experience related to South-South cooperation by analysing trends, capacity needs and demands. This information should be made accessible to partners.

Annex 1

TERMS OF REFERENCE

EVALUATION OF SOUTH-SOUTH COOPERATION AT UNDP

CONTEXT

This evaluation was requested by the Executive Board of UNDP¹ and is part of the evaluation agenda of the UNDP Evaluation Office that was approved by the Board on June 2006.

South-South cooperation is defined by UNDP as “a broad framework for collaboration among countries of the South, in the political, economic, social, environmental and technical domains. Involving three or more developing countries, South-South cooperation takes place on bilateral, regional, subregional and inter-regional bases.”² UNDP has promoted South-South cooperation as a global initiative since 1978 to reduce the dependence of developing countries on markets of developed countries and enhance the bargaining power of developing and least developed countries at the international level.³ South-South cooperation also helps developing countries share knowledge and experiences to meet common challenges such as high population pressure, poverty, hunger, disease, environmental deterioration, conflict and natural disasters, and helps deal with cross-border issues such as environmental protection and HIV/AIDS.

The Special Unit (SU) for South-South cooperation hosted by UNDP serves as the full secretariat of High-Level Committee (HLC) and is responsible to coordinate and implement all General Assembly-mandated responsibilities and functions, including the following: UN system-wide South-South policy coordinator; partnerships facilitator; service provider; and resource mobilizer.⁴ It prepares all substantive reports,⁵ manages the United Nations Fund for South-South Cooperation and the Perez-Guerrero Trust Fund of the Group of 77 and China, the India-Brazil-South Africa Facility for Poverty and Hunger Alleviation and implements key operational programmes funded by UNDP.⁶

The Third Cooperation Framework (2005-2007) presents the three key objectives of the SU/South-South cooperation: (i) support issues of common concern within Southern countries and in multilateral settings to accelerate development through South-South approaches to development; (ii) promote self-sustaining mechanisms and platforms rather than *ad hoc* forums and conferences; and (iii) transform the Special Unit into a South-South knowledge management centre, complementing and linking with global knowledge

1 Statement to the Executive Board by Zephirin Diabre, Associate Administrator, 17 June 2004, Item 5: Country Programmes and related matters, 14-25 June 2004, Geneva.

2 Source: http://tcdc1.undp.org/faqDetail.aspx?faq_id=1.

3 The Special Unit for Technical cooperation among Developing Countries (TCDC) was set up within UNDP in 1974, endorsed by the UN General Assembly, on the review of TCDC, which has recently been subsumed under South-South cooperation. With the growing integration of TCDC and Economic cooperation among Developing Countries (ECDC), both the HLC and the UN General Assembly have recommended a broader focus on South-South cooperation.

4 <http://tcdc1.undp.org/index.aspx>.

5 These include the report of the Secretary-General on the State of South-South cooperation celebrated on 19 December each year as well as the report of the UNDP Administrator on the implementation of cooperation framework for South-South cooperation every three years.

6 See http://tcdc1.undp.org/faqDetail.aspx?faq_id=6 for a brief history of South-South cooperation.

systems of the UNDP and other UN organizations, developing countries and donor organizations.

The Fourth Cooperation Framework is to be presented to the Executive Board of UNDP. It is necessary at this point to take stock of the experiences of the SU/South-South Cooperation and UNDP in order to strengthen their future effectiveness.

OBJECTIVES

The objective of the evaluation is to assess UNDP's contribution to South-South cooperation over the past decade. In doing so, the evaluation will also address the performance of the Special Unit for South-South Cooperation. The evaluation aims to provide major lessons learned through assessing what worked and why; and offer key recommendations for strengthening the effectiveness of future programming efforts in South-South cooperation.

EVALUATION ISSUES

The evaluation will address the following key issues:

1. The nature and extent of support among the Special Unit and UNDP in promoting and expanding South-South cooperation;
2. The ability of UNDP (including the Special Unit) to learn from its experience in South-South cooperation to strengthen and institutionalize its support to South-South cooperation across all practice areas;
3. The appropriateness, relevance, effectiveness and sustainability of UNDP efforts to meet the varied and evolving demand to strengthen and expand South-South cooperation;
4. UNDP's preparedness to address emerging demands in South-South cooperation.

SCOPE

It will cover the period 1996-present. This 'cut-off' period is suggested because of the "new directions" policy endorsed by the GA/HLC in

1995, and its implementation by the SU/South-South Cooperation from the subsequent year.

The evaluation will address UNDP's organizational strategy and initiatives to promote South-South cooperation at the global, regional and country levels. In doing so, it will assess the performance of the Special Unit against the Third Cooperation Framework as well as the nature and extent of interaction between the Special Unit and UNDP.

The support by the Special Unit to other UN agencies and the High-Level Committee for the Review of South-South Cooperation is beyond the scope of this evaluation.

In assessing UNDP's role—i.e., the impact of the programme frameworks, institutional as well as substantive issues will be addressed, taking due note of the interests and roles of Southern stakeholders. The following issues will be included in the scope:

- a. Policies of the South-South cooperation agenda, assessing the influence of different stakeholders and collaborating institutions on UNDP's mandate as a 'service provider', as well as linkages to UN system-wide mechanisms for supporting South-South cooperation;
- b. Programme performance results: South-South cooperation's contribution to outputs, outcomes and impacts since 1996;
- c. Partnerships for capacity development: Since South-South cooperation is based on partnerships at the regional and global levels, an assessment should be made of the benefits from the partnerships with UNDP;
- d. SU/South-South Cooperation organizational and resource mobilization strategies, including an assessment of the role of relevant UNDP bureaux/units in support of the SU/South-South Cooperation, and vice versa;
- e. Quality assurance: The extent to which SU/South-South Cooperation mechanisms have been established to track and assess results in

a timely manner through a monitoring and evaluation system; and

- f. Ownership/sustainability: Factors influencing the motivation for specific development interventions supported by Southern institutions, the role and level of engagement of partners, the value-added from UNDP's collaboration and results achieved.

APPROACH

The evaluation will adopt a case study approach. In-depth studies will be conducted in select countries selected through purposive sampling. The case studies will involve field visits and or desk studies, electronic surveys and consultations at the headquarters.

TASKS AND DELIVERABLES

The evaluation is expected to provide major lessons learned and key recommendations, that are both feasible and realistic, for improving UNDP's future programme on South-South cooperation.

The final evaluation products will consist of the following:

- A report on *Evaluation of UNDP Role and Contribution in South-South Cooperation*, not exceeding fifty pages (excluding bibliography and annexes) with a detailed Executive Summary with recommendations that should not exceed 6-7 pages, to be submitted to the Evaluation Office by 30 July 2007 for formal review and approval.

- The evaluation report should include the results of case studies, key findings and forward-looking recommendations for the Special Unit for South-South Cooperation and UNDP's future role in South-South cooperation, taking into account the objectives and scope of these terms of reference.
- A summarized analysis and evaluation of the results of survey questionnaires to all relevant countries/stakeholders, as an annex to the evaluation report.

REVIEW PROCESS

The evaluation findings will be reviewed by the stakeholders for factual accuracy, errors of interpretation and omission of key evidence. The report will be reviewed by the Evaluation Office for quality. In addition, an independent advisory panel consisting of international experts on development and evaluation will review the report for rigor of methodology quality and use of evidence, and soundness of analysis.

FOLLOW UP AND LEARNING

The evaluation report and recommendations will be shared within the organization through a variety of means. It will be presented to the September 2007 session of the Executive Board. The report will be shared in advance with the senior management of UNDP for management response. The report will be posted on the UNDP corporate and EO websites for public access.

Annex 2

PEOPLE CONSULTED

UN SYSTEM, NEW YORK

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Ghanshyam, Ruchi, Minister, Mission of India

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Diallo, Yaya Alpha, , Conseil National de la Société Civile

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H.E., Ambassadeur de Cuba, Mali

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Annex 3

REFERENCES

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Annex 4

SURVEY QUESTIONS AND RESPONSES

EVALUATION OF SOUTH-SOUTH COOPERATION AT UNDP

Oct 02, 2007 12:52 PM PST

Please respond to the following questions as specifically and candidly as you can in this brief questionnaire. Individual responses will be kept strictly confidential.

1. Please indicate whether the respondent is:		
From UNDP	51	34%
From UN	30	20%
From Funds and Programme	22	15%
From UN Specialized Agencies	46	31%
<i>Total</i>	<i>149</i>	<i>100%</i>
2. How explicit is South-South cooperation in your organization's mandate?		
Explicit	63	43%
Somewhat explicit	55	37%
Not explicit	30	20%
<i>Total</i>	<i>148</i>	<i>100%</i>
3. To what extent has your country adopted South-South cooperation as part of its development strategy?		
Assigned top priority	41	28%
Assigned moderate priority	61	42%
Not a significant priority	44	30%
<i>Total</i>	<i>146</i>	<i>100%</i>
4. Is the promotion of South-South cooperation a UNDAF objective in your country?		
Yes	39	29%
No	97	71%
<i>Total</i>	<i>136</i>	<i>100%</i>
5. Is South-South cooperation part of your ongoing programme of cooperation with the national government?		
Yes	91	62%
No	56	38%
<i>Total</i>	<i>147</i>	<i>100%</i>

6. If yes, what is the nature of South-South cooperation that your organization supports? (Tick as many as relevant.)

Regional	60	71%
Intra- or subregional	48	56%
NGO-to-NGO	21	25%
Government-to-government	62	73%
Private-public sector partnerships	25	29%
Triangular	21	25%

7. Have there been significant changes in the priority assigned to South-South cooperation by your organization in your country over the last 5 years?

Yes	60	43%
No	79	57%
Total	139	100%

8. If yes, how is the change reflected?

Top number is the count of respondents selecting the option. Bottom % is percent of the total respondents selecting the option.	Substantial increase	Increase	No change	Decrease
Allocation of financial resources	7 12%	31 53%	20 34%	0 0%
Number of initiatives or programmes	12 19%	44 70%	6 10%	1 2%
Networks	12 20%	40 66%	9 15%	0 0%
Quality of exchange and cooperation	7 12%	44 73%	9 15%	0 0%

9. How would you rate UNDP's contribution over the past 5 years to the promotion of South-South cooperation in your country along the following dimensions:

Top number is the count of respondents selecting the option. Bottom % is percent of the total respondents selecting the option.	Not at all effective	2	3	4	Extremely effective
Advocacy	16 14%	33 29%	46 40%	19 17%	1 1%
Policy advice and support	15 13%	36 31%	41 35%	23 20%	1 1%
Promoting public-private partnerships	21 19%	42 39%	31 28%	12 11%	3 3%
Exchanging knowledge	16 14%	24 21%	38 33%	25 22%	13 11%
Others (specify)	8 21%	13 34%	10 26%	7 18%	0 0%
Overall Effectiveness	16 15%	31 29%	42 39%	17 16%	2 2%

10. How familiar are you with the role and functioning of the Special Unit of UNDP for South-South cooperation?

Extremely familiar	8	5%
Somewhat familiar	55	37%
Not familiar	84	57%
Total	147	100%

11. If familiar, then how effective has the Special Unit been in mainstreaming the idea of South-South cooperation: Effectiveness in mainstreaming South-South cooperation within

Top number is the count of respondents selecting the option. Bottom % is percent of the total respondents selecting the option.	Not at all effective	2	3	4	Extremely effective
The country	18 33%	17 31%	16 30%	3 6%	0 0%
UNDP	4 7%	19 35%	20 36%	11 20%	1 2%
Other UN Agencies	8 16%	24 48%	12 24%	6 12%	0 0%

12. What are the modalities of South-South cooperation coordination that occurs among UN organizations in your country? Tick as many as relevant

Joint programmes	28	24%
Regular consultations	25	21%
Ad hoc meetings and events	77	65%
Others (specify)	7	6%
None	29	25%

13. Looking ahead, how do you assess the future importance of South-South cooperation in your host country?

Will grow rapidly in importance	54	39%
Will grow modestly in importance	57	41%
Will remain at current level of significance	27	19%
Will decline in importance	2	1%
Total	140	100%

14. Has your organization conducted any evaluations of South-South cooperation in your country in the past 5 years?

Yes	7	5%
No	135	95%
Total	142	100%

15. If yes, how many? Could you please send separately copies of such evaluation?

1 to 3	7	78%
4 to 6	2	22%
More than 6	0	0%
Total	9	100%

16. Does your organization have a designated Focal Point on South-South cooperation?

Yes	44	31%
No	96	69%
<i>Total</i>	<i>140</i>	<i>100%</i>

17. If you would like, please use this space to share your views on how the UNDP can further promote South-South cooperation.

50 Responses

18. Identify key South-South cooperation initiatives undertaken in your country in recent years

47 Responses

19. Provide an assessment of why initiatives have been successful and less successful.

37 Responses

20. Offer your realistic assessment of the future prospects for South-South cooperation initiatives and the reasoning behind your judgement.

46 Responses

Annex 5

INDICATORS

To facilitate better understanding of what constitutes key South-South cooperation activities and how to evaluate them, the following set of indicators were adapted from the *Revised Guidelines for the Review of Policies and Procedures Concerning Technical Cooperation among Developing Countries*; High Level Committee on the review of TCDC among developing countries, Thirteenth Session, 27–30 May 2003.

1. NORMATIVE INDICATORS

- 1.1 South-South cooperation adopted as a corporate policy and priority of the United Nations organization, as reflected in their programming and operations manuals.
- 1.2 Extent to which South-South cooperation modalities have been integrated either as a strategy or distinct element of the UNDAF and country, regional or global programmes.
- 1.3 Specific units or individuals designated as focal points.
- 1.4 Advocacy and promotion for South-South cooperation undertaken.
- 1.5 Funding for South-South cooperation systemized under regular/programme budgets (actual or estimated resources allocated for South-South cooperation purposes).

2. OPERATIONAL RESULTS INDICATORS

- 2.1 Extent of support, under South-South cooperation arrangements, to developing countries in their followup to major global conferences (as applicable) and the ensuing results.
- 2.2 Forums/events facilitated for the furtherance of South-South policy dialogue, intellectual exchanges, trade/investment promotion, capacities/needs matching, business-to-business fairs, etc. (specify topics, sectors, participating

countries and entities and, to the extent possible, their results).

- 2.3 Types and numbers of South-South networks (including information networks) or centres of excellence supported and the ensuing results (specify sector and participating countries and institutions).
- 2.4 Major regional, subregional and interregional South-South cooperation schemes supported and the ensuing results.
- 2.5 South-South cooperation activities involved the private sector and NGOs.
- 2.6 Concrete South-South transfer/exchange of technologies, expertise and skills as a result of the concerned agency's direct intervention (types, sectors, numbers of exports, etc.).

3. INNOVATIVE APPROACHES TO SOUTH-SOUTH COOPERATION

- 3.1 Development of innovative approaches that have substantially expanded South-South cooperation (especially in terms of intra-South cooperation in trade, investment and finance, industry and enterprise development, agriculture and food security, environment and energy, health and population, information and communication).
- 3.2 Successful practices identified, compiled and disseminated for possible replication (to the extent possible, specify experiences replicated).
- 3.3 Innovative approaches to mobilizing resources for South-South cooperation (including from developing-country governments, donors under triangular arrangements, and other sources).
- 3.4 Innovative approaches to broadening partnerships for South-South cooperation, especially with the private sector and NGOs.