

FINAL REPORT

Independent Terminal Evaluation of the China SSDC Project

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Acronyms and Abbreviations

BRICS	Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa
CICETE	China International Centre for Economic and Technical Exchanges
COMESA	Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa
CSSCN	China South-South Cooperation Network
DCM	Data Collection Methods
DQS	Data Quality Standards
ECDC	Economic Cooperation Between Developing Countries
FGDs	Focus Group Discussions
GMS	General Management Service
INSHP	International Network of Small Hydropower
KIIs	Key Informants Interviews
LDCs	Least Developed Countries
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
M & E	Monitoring and Evaluation
NEX	National Execution
NIM	National Implementation Modality
NPC	National Programme Coordinator
ODA	Official Development Assistance
PMO	Project Management Office
PSC	Project Steering Committee
PPP	Public Private Partnerships
R & D	Research and Development
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SMART	Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Realistic, Time-bound
SMEs	Small- and Medium-sized Enterprises
SU/SSC	Special Unit on South-South Cooperation
SSC	South-South Cooperation
SSDC	South-South Development Centre

TCDC	Technical Cooperation Between the Developing Countries
TOR	Terms of Reference
UN	United Nations
UNITC	United Nations International Trade Centre
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNIDO	United Nations Industrial Development Organization
UNOPS	United Nations Office for Project Services
UNOSSC	United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation

Executive Summary

This report presents the findings and conclusions of an end of project evaluation for the China South-South Development Centre Project, a project funded mainly by the Government of China through contributions to the United Nations Fund for South-South Cooperation (UNFSSC), with some small seed funding from the United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation (UNOSSC). The project under evaluation was initiated in 2009 after signing of the project document in 2008, as a partnership between UNOSSC (formerly UNDP SU/SSC) and the China International Centre for Economic and Technical Exchanges (CICETE), aiming to establish the South-South Development Centre (SSDC) to foster public-private partnerships and triangular cooperation from China, as well as developing Chinese expertise in SSC, bringing together Chinese experts, and sharing Chinese expertise and knowledge with other Southern countries. The original project design envisioned a five-year period for implementing the desired interventions, but the SSDC project board decided to extend the project for a further five years to December 2018.

The objective of this evaluation was to take stock of the effectiveness of the project activities, management practice, and implementation in general; to identify outcomes and lessons learned from the project; and to put forward recommendations for future programme development, systems development and strategic initiatives, including sharpening its focus in line with SDGs. The latter is a critical aspect of the evaluation given that both UNOSSC and CICETE are planning a new stage for the project.

The evaluation criteria include project relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact, sustainability, alignment with SSC principles as well as gender and environment. Evaluation questions were formulated around these criteria to serve as a guide for open-ended interviews with different stakeholders. The methodology of the evaluation contains several components: desk review of existing project documents, consultations with key UNOSSC and CICETE staff, individual and/or group interviews with key staff in the beneficiary organizations, and field visits/observations.

The SSDC project brings together resources from multiple fields and multiple industries in China, demonstrating practical training to the counterparts in partner countries, through implementation of small projects, with innovation and replicability remaining at the nucleus of the interventions. The project provided a good value for money, arose significant interest among the China South-South Cooperation Network (CSSCN), established by the CICETE, the UN agencies, and the private sector partners in promoting, among others, the principles of SSC, led in this instance, by the Government of China. It also contributed as a catalytic agent in building a solid ground towards a cohesive public-private sector collaboration and shared vision for increased capacity in the recipient countries through South-South cooperation, and common accountability in eventually aiming at broad development effectiveness results.

The small grants projects have met the needs of other developing countries and facilitated their access to acquire practical technology, knowledge and skills in areas where China's comparative advantage has been well demonstrated. Some of the small projects have multiple effects, such as on poverty alleviation, women's participation in development, and environmental protection, while improving the international cooperation capacity of participating institutions at home and abroad. The small grant projects also extended the scale of funds, representing a success in the intention of exploring the public-private-partnership (PPP) cooperation model, thus ensuring sustainability of the project.

Partnership building refers to the efforts at the different levels to incorporate both domestic and foreign partners including private sectors into SSC. SSDC organized a series of study tours in 20 countries to facilitate partnership building between China and other developing countries in general, and the member institutions and their counterparts in the different developing countries. These study tours helped explore opportunities for new markets and trade cooperation between China and other countries. It should be noted, however, that the intended outcomes, in terms of 'people to people' and 'institution to institution' contacts need better and substantive documentation.

Regarding the specific evaluation criteria, the evaluation team found that: (i) while the validity of the project design is sound and meaningful and the project has creatively undertaken tasks and delivered expected results, the project document, drafted ten years ago, does not clearly establish the causal linkages between the broad goal/outcomes and the immediate objectives of the project; (ii) the project is of great relevance and strategic fit in the context of SDGs, and it also complements the Chinese government's activities in engaging and promoting SSC; (iii) the project represents a good example of value for money in terms of economy, efficiency, effectiveness, and judicious use of resources; but more attention should be paid to important strategic activities such as advocacy, communication, knowledge management, M & E and organizational learning; (iv) the project demonstrates strong management arrangements with an effective and competent team of professionals, but its management could be enhanced through the presence of a small but dedicated advocacy and M & E team; (v) while it is a little early to gauge the impact of the SSDC project, the project, especially the small grants projects, has brought visible positive changes to SSC; (vi) the project has a prospect of achieving a high degree of sustainability from social, policy and economic dimensions; and (vii) though the project did not integrate specific focus on gender and environment, it has proactively pursued gender and environment aspects in undertaking activities.

The evaluation team also noted there are a number of lessons that can be learned from the implementation of the project, including: (i) building stronger relevance and linkages between some of the knowledge products and the policies and practices of the SSC on the ground; (ii) while acknowledging the maintenance of the China South-South Cooperation Network (CSSCN) as one of the most noteworthy undertaking of this catalytic project, it is recommended that the Network should be strengthened through a systematic selection process based on a mapping of demand and supply of activities, undertaken by research oriented specialized Network members, such as the Nankai University South-South Cooperation Study Centre, and extended beyond the Chinese institutions to include organizations outside of China. The research outcomes so far undertaken, however, have the potential to play the role of policy guidance to summarize

experiences and lessons in different sectors under the framework of South-South Cooperation.

For the design of the new phase project, the evaluation team puts forward the following recommendations. First, the design of next phase program, should comply with the UN guidelines to the extent appropriate, and must contain alongside the rationale, theory of change, and delineate against a logic model that establishes the casual linkage between the outcome and the immediate objectives of the project; secondly, the evaluation team found that the implementation capacity of CICETE was an asset that should continue to be leveraged during the new phase; thirdly, a Project Management Committee (PMC) can be introduced to strengthen monitoring and evaluation; fourthly, triangular cooperation dimension could be strengthened; fifthly, the existing website for the project and CSSCN needs to re-designed and frequently updated; sixthly, an integrated approach to knowledge management and organizational learning, combining advocacy, communication and M & E should be adopted; and lastly, the small grant project component needs to be retained, but be made more targeted based on a possible supply-and-demand mapping exercise.

1. Background and Project Description

This report documents the main findings and recommendations of an independent end of project evaluation of the China South-South Development Centre Project (SSDC Project), which was carried out during July 2018. The SSDC is primarily funded by the Government of China, through contributions to the United Nations Fund for South-South Cooperation (UNFSSC), with some small seed finding from the United Nations Office for South–South Cooperation (UNOSSC), the project is being implemented by the Secretariat of the South-South Development Centre (SSDC), established by the China International Centre for Economic and Technical Exchanges (CICETE).

1.1 Project Background and Context

South-South cooperation (SSC) has emerged as a vital element of the global development cooperation practice, which promises to assume even greater importance in the future. SSC, also known as the cooperation between developing countries, dates back to the 1950s when SSC largely focused on ‘Technical Cooperation Between the Developing Countries (TCDC)’. Subsequently, with the advent of Economic Cooperation Between Developing Countries (ECDC), SSC grew as an approach for international cooperation. In recent years, the scope of SSC has expanded well beyond technical cooperation and exchange of knowledge to include trade, investment, infrastructure and connectivity as well as coordination of policies and development strategies among developing countries. SSC has also become more visible in regional and global development discourse and initiatives.

As the world calls for a clearer definition of SSC due to its distinct features and diversified modalities, a UN working definition was developed and endorsed by the 19th High Level Committee on South-South Cooperation in 2016 to facilitate the work of the UN system. The definition formulated by the United Nations is as follows:

‘A process whereby two or more developing countries pursue their individual and/or shared national capacity development objectives through exchanges of knowledge, skills,

resources and technical know-how, and through regional and interregional collective actions, including partnerships involving Governments, regional organizations, civil society, academia and the private sector, for their individual and/or mutual benefit within and across regions. South-South Cooperation is not a substitute for, but rather a complement to, North-South Cooperation”.¹ Triangular cooperation involves Southern-driven partnerships between two or more developing countries supported by a developed country(ies)/or multilateral organization(s) to implement development cooperation programmes and projects.

UNOSSC, the official focal point for South-South Cooperation, established by the UN, proposes to focus its work under the strategic framework, 2018-2021, on three strategic outcomes targeting: (a) the advancement of policy choices for South-South and triangular cooperation and coordinated United Nations system support to such cooperation; (b) capacity development through the sharing of knowledge and experiences; and (c) the forging of strategic South-South and triangular partnerships to support demand-driven programmes.²

SSC is based on the premise that the wealth of knowledge and capacity in the South, when mobilized and shared, can enhance the effective participation of the developing countries in the global economy. SSC in nature, is different from the past traditional give-and-take modality (donor-recipient relations) with diversified and dynamic forms, such as trade, debt relief, technology transfer, knowledge-sharing, and so on. It is a significant complement to traditional North-South cooperation and one with a great deal of potential to strengthen technological and other capacities, in turn fostering human development.

¹ UN, “Framework of Operational Guidelines on UN Support to South-South and Triangular Cooperation; High Level Committee on SS Cooperation, New York, 2016. South-South Cooperation is also understood as East-East Cooperation in the CIS region and Europe. (Scaling Up SS Cooperation for Sustainable Development; BPPS, December 2016).

² Annual Session, June 2018. Strategic framework of the United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation, 2018-2021.

The following features distinguish South-South cooperation from North-South Cooperation:

First, on the conceptual and principle level, SSC is based on solidarity and guided by the principles of respect for national ownership. It seeks mutual benefits and is NOT a zero-sum game. Rather South-South partners believe mutual benefits can make partnership more lasting, reflecting common interest of developing countries.³

Secondly, in terms of cooperation modality, SSC encompasses elements of trade, investment, knowledge exchange, technology transfer and migration as well as direct financial and humanitarian assistance. It is not official development assistance (ODA), or a funding mechanism per se.

Lastly, but just as important, SSC is about a horizontal and inclusive relationship. It is not the traditional donor-recipient relations and should not evolve towards a relationship just between emerging economies and other developing countries. It is also inclusive, and naturally embraces the roles of civil society and private sector, and should be framed as government driven projects

Yet, the potential of South-South and triangular cooperation to contribute towards sustainable development and poverty eradication has not been fully leveraged. Knowledge gaps and uneven access to solutions and resources are major bottlenecks hindering progress and the full potential of South-South cooperation and its impact on sustainable development. The availability of information and quality of research on the scale and impact of South-South and triangular cooperation have not kept pace with the growing demand among Southern partners for peer learning to further improve results.

The history of collaboration between CICETE and the United Nations' activities in relation to SSC (such as through the erstwhile SU/SSC and TCDC modality) goes to almost forty years. CICETE, either independently or in conjunction with the United Nations had implemented some 1000 projects of various magnitude since its establishment, worth

³ UNDP Development Impact Group (2016) Scaling-up South-South Cooperation for Sustainable Development available from: http://www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/librarypage/development-impact/Scaling-Up_SSC_for_Sustainable_Development.html

more than USD 1 billion. China's history of assistance to developing countries, culminated in the recent creation of China Aid as the brand of the newly established State Agency for International Development Cooperation asserts China's long-standing commitment to SSC. This commitment has been articulated in various forum by the Chinese leaders, including the pledge by the President of China to create a USD 3 billion fund towards SSC. Thus, China has been an important player, both as a provider-partner to a recipient-partner of SSC.

China also has a unique China South-South Cooperation Network (CSSCN). CSSCN was established in 1995 with the support of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). At the time of SSDC's establishment, CSSCN members were already leading research institutions, training institutions and civil organizations in various technical fields, composed of nearly 30 centres of excellence in terms of applicable technologies (see Annex 5.4 for a full list). The SSDC project took advantage of the CSSCN platform and the associated technical expertise with its members to meet the needs of developing countries and to improve South-South cooperation capacities of the member institutions to promote trade and investment exchanges between China and developing countries.

1.2 Project description

The SSDC project was established in 2008 as a partnership between UNOSSC (then known as UNDP SU/SSC) and CICETE operating under the Ministry of Commerce. CICETE is designated as the implementation partner operating from Beijing, China. The SSDC project has aimed to develop a sustainable South-South promotion and development center to foster development cooperation between China and its Southern partner countries. It envisaged the establishment of an entity in China to act as a facility to consolidate all the potential resources in China for SSC promotion and complement the current government-led South-South cooperation efforts, which are primarily focused on bilateral cooperation between governments. At the same time, the SSDC is also providing a platform to facilitate South-South development cooperation activities, for example: (1) facilitate capacity building programmes and apprenticeships; (2) provide investment and trade consultancy services; (3) organize research and policy development

for SSC and development cooperation; (4) generate SSC knowledge and expertise; and (5) promote and facilitate exchanges and cooperation between developing countries. The overall mission of the SSDC is to promote successful SSC experience and practice, and build development capacity in the global South, especially for the least developed countries (LDCs). The SSDC was originally a five-year project running from November 2008 to December 2013. In 2013 the SSDC Project Board decided to extend the project for a further five years to December 2018.

The main focus of the SSDC project is to facilitate both bilateral and multilateral (including regional and sub-regional) cooperation between governments, academics, research institutions and private sectors of developing countries. At the national level, the SSDC undertakes the following activities:

- Building robust partnerships between national actors, including the private sector, to maximize the mobilization of Chinese resources for SSC;
- Establishing a databank of experts on SSC;
- Providing international exposure to Chinese small- and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) through participation in SSC activities; and
- Supporting triangular and PPP projects.

At the global level, the SSDC is mandated to promote the following:

- Sharing of information and experience with pivotal developing countries on national SSC policies; and
- Enhancing the capacities of developing countries.

The project, thus, intends to establish a consolidated network in China for: (i) promoting, advocating and facilitating SSC in pivotal countries and the developing world, (ii) support global SSC management and knowledge sharing, and (iii) programming SSC to advocate PPP and triangular cooperation in collaboration with member institutions of CSSCN. The SSDC was established in order to assign dedicated capacity to promote and facilitate SSC in China. It is also intended to serve as a model and reference point for other developing countries seeking to strengthen their South-South activities.

1.3 Project Management

The SSDC was established through a partnership between UNOSSC and CICETE. The management structure is built upon three tiers of active engagement, which have been structured to work synergistically together to maximize the global reach development impact of SSDC. The three tiers include Project Steering Committee (PSC), National Programme Coordinator (NPC), and Project Management Officer (PMO) (See Annex 5.5 for the Management Structure).

This is one of the key projects under the National Implementation Modality (NIM) since its inception, replacing the NEX modality. While the United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS) had played a role in the partial execution of the project until 2017, the role of UNOPS was not considered adding any special value to the project, as their role was limited to recruitment of four SSDC national staff and disbursing the rent and allied costs for the rental premises; against 12 % administrative costs. (5% GMS for UNDP and 7% AOS for UNOPS totalling USD 90,137).⁴ CICETE, as the implementing partner, provided support for SSDC in terms of policy guidance, work plan review, supervision of activity implementation, and financial management in accordance with the UN Project Management regulations.

SSDC, with its secretariat consisting of three staff situated in CICETE, is responsible for formulating and submitting work plans as well as SSDC activity plans, organizing SSDC activities, managing external liaison, writing and submitting annual reports, monthly reports and activity reports. CICETE and UNOSSC jointly review and approve the annual work plan. CICETE and UNOSSC also held steering committee meetings for five times. Participants for steering committees include representatives and consultants from SSDC's cooperative agencies. The meetings discussed policies related to South-South cooperation and project progresses and provided guidance to SSDC's tasks.

⁴ Signed Project document for UNOPS, June 2010

1.4 Mid-term Evaluation

A comprehensive evaluation of the SSDC project 2009 to 2013 was completed in 2014. This evaluation classified the activities undertaken by SSDC into 5 main areas:

1. Capacity and partnership building efforts.
2. Provision of small grants
3. Research and studies
4. Communications
5. Establishment and management of SSDC platform

The evaluation concluded that the project was successfully implemented and the SSDC has played an important role in China's SSC, funds were efficiently and effectively mobilized and judiciously spent; and the partnership strategy is particularly successful. The mid-term evaluation reported that the SSDC has achieved many concrete impacts in terms of policy advice, technical transfer, increase of employment, poverty reduction, and environmental protection. The evaluation also put forward 5 recommendations:

1. The SSDC platform should be enhanced. UNOSSC and CICETE should make greater efforts to get legal status for SSDC in China.
2. Encourage greater cooperation between SSDC partners – called “Excellence Centers” in the evaluation.
3. Expand the SSDC database. At the time of the evaluation, the SSDC had established a domestic expert database. The evaluation recommended setting up technology and project databases, to facilitate knowledge sharing and cooperation.
4. Establish a China South-South Cooperation Academy, under the umbrella of UNOSSC's Global South-South Cooperation Academy. The functions of the China South-South Cooperation Academy would be to:
 - a. Provide human resources and technological supports for domestic South-South cooperation practices in different fields.
 - b. Participate in the initiatives carried out by the Global South-South Cooperation Academy in the international context.

- c. Undertake policy study and research on domestic and international South-South cooperation.
 - d. Undertake training courses on South-South cooperation.
5. Establish a China South-South Cooperation Fund to provide reliable financial support for the sustainable development of the SSDC.

The recommendations of the mid-term evaluation were discussed at the 4th Steering Committee Meeting of the United Nations Global South-South Development Center on 19 May 2016. The meeting decided that while the evaluation was useful, as a first step towards an independent assessment of the project, some of the recommendations were not immediately taken up for implementation, especially those relating to the legal status of SSDC, and the establishment of the South-South Cooperation Academy.

1.5 Key stakeholders

The project has multiple stakeholders, both direct and indirect, primary and secondary. The primary stakeholders are the Government of China, represented by CICETE, and the United Nations, represented by UNOSSC.

The secondary stakeholders are member institutions of the CSSCN, the Chinese and international partners benefiting from the small grant projects, and the ultimate users of the technology and knowledge gained by the recipient countries and host institutions.

2. Evaluation Objectives and Methodology

2.1 Objectives and Scope of the Evaluation

UNOSSC's project management cycle includes evaluation as one of its key elements. The SSDC project was evaluated in 2013-14 focusing on the initial five years of its implementation. Coinciding with the ten years of SSDC implementation, UNOSSC

decided to commission a comprehensive external evaluation to identify successes, challenges, and lessons learned, that will potentially feed into the development of the next phase of SSDC. Thus, this evaluation exercise is being commissioned primarily for two broad reasons:

- To serve as an End of Project evaluation and the results and lessons learned can be utilized in future programme development, and strategies pertinent to South-South cooperation; and
- To take stock of the initiatives undertaken by the SSDC project for the capacity strengthening and systems development (research, grants, partnership building etc.) in line with the Evaluation of 2014. This specifically relates to the strategic issues, such as Steering Committee governance, best management practice, people to people development, and access to impact evidence for learning lessons from the past.

Thus, in effect, this evaluation can be treated as a terminal evaluation with the following objectives, as reflected in the TOR:

1. Assess the extent to which the planned outputs of the project were implemented and results achieved;
2. Assess the extent to which the project was implemented in line with the principles and objectives of South-South and triangular cooperation, including any unique “value adds” of using the South-South modality;
3. Assess the effectiveness and suitability of the chosen management mechanisms to achieve desired outputs and results;
4. Assess the extent to which recommendations made in the 2014 evaluation were implemented;
5. Identify innovative aspects of the project, challenges faced, and lessons learned; and
6. Provide strategic advice to UNOSSC, CICETE, and the SSDC team to enable planning for the next phase of the SSDC.

The Evaluation exercise was undertaken from the perspective of organizational accountability vis-à-vis the donor, learning lessons from the project as well as from the evidences generated by SSDC in course of its operations, and taking a forward looking approach towards future programmes, systems development and strategic initiatives, including sharpening its focus in line with SDGs.

2.2 Evaluation Criteria and Questions

The TOR proposes the following evaluation criteria: *project relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact, sustainability and alignment with SSC principles (TOR, May 2018)*. After reviewing the above proposed criteria, the evaluators, in consultation with UNOSSC included one additional criteria that focuses on cross cutting themes: gender and environment (criteria no. 7).

The evaluation criteria can be defined as follows:

- **Relevance** in terms of the extent to which the objectives of the project are consistent with beneficiary's requirement, country needs, global priorities and partners /donors' policies;
- **Effectiveness** in terms of achievement of intended results;
- **Efficiency** in terms of whether outputs achieved were reasonable for the resources spent;
- **Impact** in terms of positive and negative changes produced by the intervention, directly or indirectly, intended or unintended;
- **Sustainability** in terms of the probability that the benefits of the intervention will continue after the end of the project;
- **Gender and Environment** as cross-cutting issues were integrated throughout project's methodology, deliverables, including in the progress reports.

The criteria “alignment with SSC principles has been embedded under the relevance criteria, and an additional discussion on the project design has also been included in this report.

Questions were formulated as per the table given below. It must be noted here that the questions were used largely as a guide while the interviews were conducted on an open-ended fashion, thus allowing free and frank discussions with the stakeholders. Given the nature of the interactions and meetings organized, the interviews were conducted primarily as focused group discussions (FGDs), except in a few cases where key informants interviews (KIs) were conducted, including interviews by phone and skype.

Table 1: Question matrix used for this evaluation

Criteria 1: Relevance		
Srl	Questions	Respondent(s)
1	What is your opinion about the continued relevance of this project with the SDGs, especially in relation to Goal 17: partnerships?	CICETE, UNOSSC managers
2.	To what extent, in your opinion, is the project as a whole in line with the SSC objectives (Buenos Aires Plan of Action 33/134)?	CICETE, University professors, external stakeholders
3.	How this project differs from China's other bilateral aid programmes, China Aid activities for example? What are the additional values?	CICETE, UNOSSC, project partners
4.	To what extent was the SSDC aligned with the priorities and policies of project beneficiaries and partners? Specifically, what is the added-value of the program activities to the different	CICETE, UNOSSC, project partners

	technical centres in China and their counterparts in Southern countries?	
5.	Can you cite some examples of a sub-project or projects which may NOT align with the SSC principles?	CICETE, UNOSSC, project partners
Criteria 2: Effectiveness		
1.	To what extent were the stated objectives of the project achieved, especially regarding mobilization of resources as well as coordination with and engagement of various partners?	CICETE, UNOSSC, project partners
2.	What were major factors influencing the successful achievement (or otherwise) of the stated objectives?	CICETE, UNOSSC, project partners
3.	Are there other alternatives for achieving the stated objectives? Both financially and technically?	CICETE, UNOSSC, project partners
4.	Given the involvement of a large number of project partners, areas and partner countries, how the project is ensuring consistence in achieving its stated objectives?	CICETE, UNOSSC, project partners
5.	What are some of the lessons for the design of next programme in this area?	CICETE, UNOSSC, project partners
6.	What are some of the project's milestone outputs/products?	CICETE, UNOSSC
7	How do you see the role of the Steering Committee and other forums? Any suggestions for the future?	CICETE, UNOSSC

Criteria 3: Efficiency		
1.	Were SSDC activities cost efficient, keeping in mind the objectives and principles of South-South cooperation?	CICETE, UNOSSC, project partners
2.	Were the chosen SSDC management modalities (NEX, small grants, UNOPS) efficient? What other modalities could have been chosen, and would these have resulted in greater efficiencies?	CICETE, UNOSSC, project partners
3.	For future, what changes would you suggest (if at all) to the implementation modality?	CICETE, UNOSSC, project partner
4.	Were the SSDC activities and objectives achieved on time? If there were time lags, what were the principle reasons for those? How can these be overcome in future?	CICETE, UNOSSC, project partners
5.	What is your opinion regarding the aspect of 'value for money' in relation to efficiency, economy and effectiveness?	CICETE, UNOSSC, project partners
Criteria 4: Impact		
1.	What are some of the outcomes as a result of the SSDC project?	CICETE, UNOSSC, project partners
2.	What contributions the SSDC project has made to partners and beneficiaries in addition to the limited funding support (in terms of transfer of knowledge, introduction of technology etc)?	CICETE, UNOSSC, project partners

3.	What are some of the broader contexts that may facilitate/hinder the impacts of the SSDC project?	CICETE, UNOSSC, project partners
4.	What can be done more to achieve satisfactory outcomes?	CICETE, UNOSSC, project partners
5.	What are the facilitating and/or impeding factors in the implementation process?	CICETE, UNOSSC, project partners
6.	Did the project contribute indirectly to 'people to people' and 'institution to institution' contact that were carried forward beyond the project life?	CICETE, UNOSSC, project partners
7.	To what extent were small grants projects demand-driven?	CICETE, UNOSSC, project partners
8.	To what extent were projects/programmes nationally owned?	CICETE, UNOSSC, project partners
9.	To what extent did project/programmes incorporate or facilitate mutual learning and exchange of knowledge between participants/beneficiaries?	CICETE, UNOSSC, project partners

Criteria 5: Sustainability

1.	Is the SSDC project sustainable? If so, how do we know it was successful? What are the major factors that effect the achievement or non-achievement of sustainability?	CICETE, UNOSSC, project partners
2.	What are needed in terms of program design to facilitate sustainability in future?	CICETE, UNOSSC, project partners

3	Was there any attempt from the project to conduct a tracer study or similar activities to assess if the results of the project were successfully carried out by the beneficiaries in terms of replicability, continuity and reforms?	CICETE, UNOSSC, project partners
Criteria 6: Alignment with South-South Principles		
1.	To what extent was the SSDC designed and implemented in line with principles of South-South cooperation?	CICETE, UNOSSC, project partners
2.	Was there any need felt for including elements of Triangular Cooperation in the project?	CICETE, UNOSSC, project partners
2.	How did alignment with the principles of South-South cooperation impact – positively or negatively – the achievement of SSDC goals and objectives?	CICETE, UNOSSC, project partners
Criteria 7: Gender and Environment		
1.	Was there any special consciously designed focus on gender? If so, cite some examples? Also, how did gender feature in the project as a whole?	CICETE, UNOSSC, project partners
2.	Was there any special consciously designed focus on environment? If so, cite some examples?	CICETE, UNOSSC, project partners

2.3 Evaluation Methodology

The evaluation was conducted by a team of two independent consultants (an International Team Leader and a National Team Member). In planning and implementing this evaluation, the evaluation team adhered to two guiding principles: triangulation and

stakeholder consultation and engagement. The evaluation team worked closely with the UNOSSC Knowledge and Programmes Analyst, who was an integral part of the activities, supporting the entire process along with the team from SSDC. This helped to build consensus around the evaluation's scope and process, along with the resolution of critical issues along the way.

The Evaluation Framework below describes the data sources and data collection methods used for gathering and analysis. Conclusions were based on triangulation of evidence from different data collection methods and both primary and secondary data sources. The evaluation was undertaken using mixed method approach in order to collect quantitative and qualitative data from secondary and primary sources.

2.3.1 Data Collection Methods (DCM)

Four methods of data collection were employed to conduct the evaluation:

- **Desk Review** of secondary information - project documentation, together with the initial project document, progress reports, technical assessments and reports, project work plan, relevant reports/policy papers, Steering Committee minutes; mid-term evaluation reports; small grants project reports; knowledge products and publications such as *Review of UN's Assistance to China in 30 Years*, *China's South-South Cooperation Development Strategy Report: Trade Relations between China and Other Developing Countries (2013)*; *China's South-South Cooperation Development Strategy Report: Investment Relations between China and Other Developing Countries (2014)*; *China's South-South Cooperation Development Strategy Report: China's Foreign Aid to Developing Countries*; and *China's South-South Cooperation Development Strategy Report: Trade and Investment Relations between China and Africa Developing Countries (2015)*.
- **Individual and/or group interviews (KII)** with selected key informants from the project, project partners, CICETE, and strategic level officials from the partner organizations, beneficiaries and other stakeholders.

- **Focus group discussions (FGD)** with partner representatives, people trained by the project, policy makers, network members, overseas beneficiaries from the small grants projects, and UNOSSC officials.
- **Field visit/Observations** to project beneficiaries and partners.

2.3.2 Data analysis

The Evaluation Team employed a range of complementary methodologies including use of a range of data sources and analytical approaches. Wherever feasible, data have been triangulated to improve data reliability. By combining multiple methods, the evaluators attempted to overcome the weaknesses, intrinsic biases, and problems that arise from single method.

During the data-gathering phase, key informant interviews, document reviews and site visits led to the identification of specific findings. These findings /observations were triangulated or cross-checked with each other to arrive at a consensus. Data triangulation analysis started during and to some extent at the end of the evaluation analysis phase and involved consolidation of evaluative evidence and identification of key preliminary findings. During the evaluation process, feedback from the stakeholder groups was compared to determine areas of agreement as well as areas of divergence.

2.4 Stakeholder Involvement, Quality Control and Conflict of Interest

Following matrix shows the strategies taken by the evaluators with regard to the stakeholders' engagement, quality assurance and conflict of interest:

Table 2: Stakeholder involvement, quality control and conflict of interest

Issues	Status

Stakeholders involvement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Equal, meaningful and unbiased opportunities provided to all participating in the evaluation process. • Partners and key stakeholders were involved at key stages of the evaluation and were consulted throughout the evaluation process. • At the end of the field mission, internal meetings were organized to validate preliminary findings, conclusions and recommendations.
Quality Control	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The team adhered to the requirements of the UN system evaluation norms and standards and Data Quality Standards (DQS) for Evaluation. • DQS assesses evaluations completed for the agency using seven quality assessment criteria, addressing issues such as the structure and clarity of reporting, design and methodology, and findings and analysis. • The team attempted to ensure that the evaluation met the expectations associated with these criteria. Upon receipt of written comments from the UNOSSC Team about the draft evaluation report, the evaluators will incorporate required information and will fine tune overall evaluation criteria. • After making the necessary changes, the final evaluation report will be submitted.
Conflict of Interest	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The team has no known or potential conflicts of interest that would affect their judgment or ability to provide a credible and independent evaluation.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The team is independent and has no prior involvement with the programming-setting, or design of the SSDC project.
Ethical Approach	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The ethical approach by which the evaluation was guided are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - committed to produce an evaluation of developmental and practical value - committed to avoid harm to participants - committed to respect cultural norms and values - committed to an inclusive approach ensuring access/participation of women - ensuring participation of respondents free from external pressure - committed to confidentiality and anonymity of participants

2.5 Evaluation Limitations

Similar to any evaluation exercise, this mission has also some typical limitations. Following are some of those issues that were considered by the evaluation team by way of mitigating the risks.

This evaluation is based on a few assumptions. Potential risks/challenges were identified during this process and potential mitigation measures were considered to overcome those. The table below sets out these assumptions and risks, as well as their mitigation strategy:

Table 3: Evaluation limitations

Assumptions	Risk	Likelihood (high/med/ low)	Mitigation Strategy
Full range of project related documents is available and is of quality to enable the Evaluators to assess based on - design, relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, impact, and sustainability etc.	Inadequate knowledge & information for the evaluation team that might mislead the analysis	M	Documents provided by the project office and UNOSSC are generally adequate and comprehensive.
The evaluation is able to interview a range of key stakeholders – UNOSSC, CICETE, Network partners, and beneficiaries, trainers	Selection bias of respondents	M	The respondents were selected in close consultation with UNOSSC and CICETE

Key stakeholders give their consent to be interviewed and are willing to discuss sensitive evaluation issues	Halo bias	H	To mitigate limitation, the evaluation team at the outset provided respondents with confidentiality & anonymity guarantees, conducted interviews in a manner that made respondents comfortable. Initial rapport through ice breaking techniques was adopted between the interviewer and the respondent.
Given the remoteness of most of the partner organizations (beneficiaries from the small grants programme) and absence of the trainers in most cases, as well as lack of response to the questions sent,	Inadequate information & data gathered thus hindering the findings and analyses	H	The evaluation team covered was not able to get response from a number of overseas stakeholders who were contacted by email. Given the time limitations, follow up was not adequately done.

the full comprehensive nature of the evaluation may be affected.			
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The Team Leader consulted the UNOSSC focal point for the evaluation on a regular basis at the outset of the project prior to the formal field visits to China, conducted a number of skype interviews and regularly consulted the National Consultant in developing the methodology and the evaluation questionnaire. This has been a participatory activity involving the consultants, core project staff, UNOSSC focal point, and other stakeholders in this process for carrying out this evaluation. The Team Leader led the process, developed detailed methodologies, and tools for this evaluation and remained accountable for the delivery of the evaluation results as per the contract in close collaboration with the National Consultant. The consultants captured relevant data and information from primary and secondary sources, analyzed these and formulated the evaluation report when the core team shall have involvement through consultation process and discussion in preparing the evaluation report.

The Team Leader along with the National Consultant reviewed and analyzed the data collected through desk reviews and field exercise. These data and information were compiled in line with the evaluation results, in close consultation with the UNOSSC focal point. Necessary reporting formats, tables, graphs and diagrams were developed, and also obtained from SSDC office to make presentation on data analysis and findings, as were appropriate. The report, based on the various tools used for the evaluation thus provides a comprehensive picture of the constraints and challenges related to the key result areas.

3. Evaluation Findings

3.1 Project Progress

In accordance with the SSDC mandate, majority of the SSDC networks members are engaged in research, documentation and advocacy for SSC as an innovative and impact-oriented development option, and to promote policies, actions and programmes that enable developing countries worldwide to attain their potential to foster inclusive development. This section highlights the project progress and a number of such initiatives supported by SSDC members which are either completed or are currently ongoing.

3.1.1 Knowledge management

The project has established and maintained an Expert Data Bank, identified and documented best practices and lessons, as well as promoted international dialogue and policy development. For example, the *Review of UN's Assistance to China in 30 Years* report showcases the achievement of projects through case analysis, highlight the management model and shares successful experiences, proposes new perspectives and approaches, and further advocates China's SSC development strategy. The series of books on China Development Report on South-South Cooperation outline trade, investment and development relations between China and other developing countries, reflecting views of Chinese academics in response to international concerns about a number of key issues regarding trade, investment and development relations between China and the South, such as environmental impacts, neo-colonialism and the Chinese development model.

The evaluation team, however, notes that these knowledge documents are limited to academic environment, and potentially can serve policy outcomes of the Government of China in terms of its trade, investment and development partnerships with the external world, especially Africa, a strong and new partner region for China. Future activities in research and knowledge area should focus on 'easy to understand' advocacy and

communication materials, based on small scale operational research and focused on advocacy and visibility campaigns.

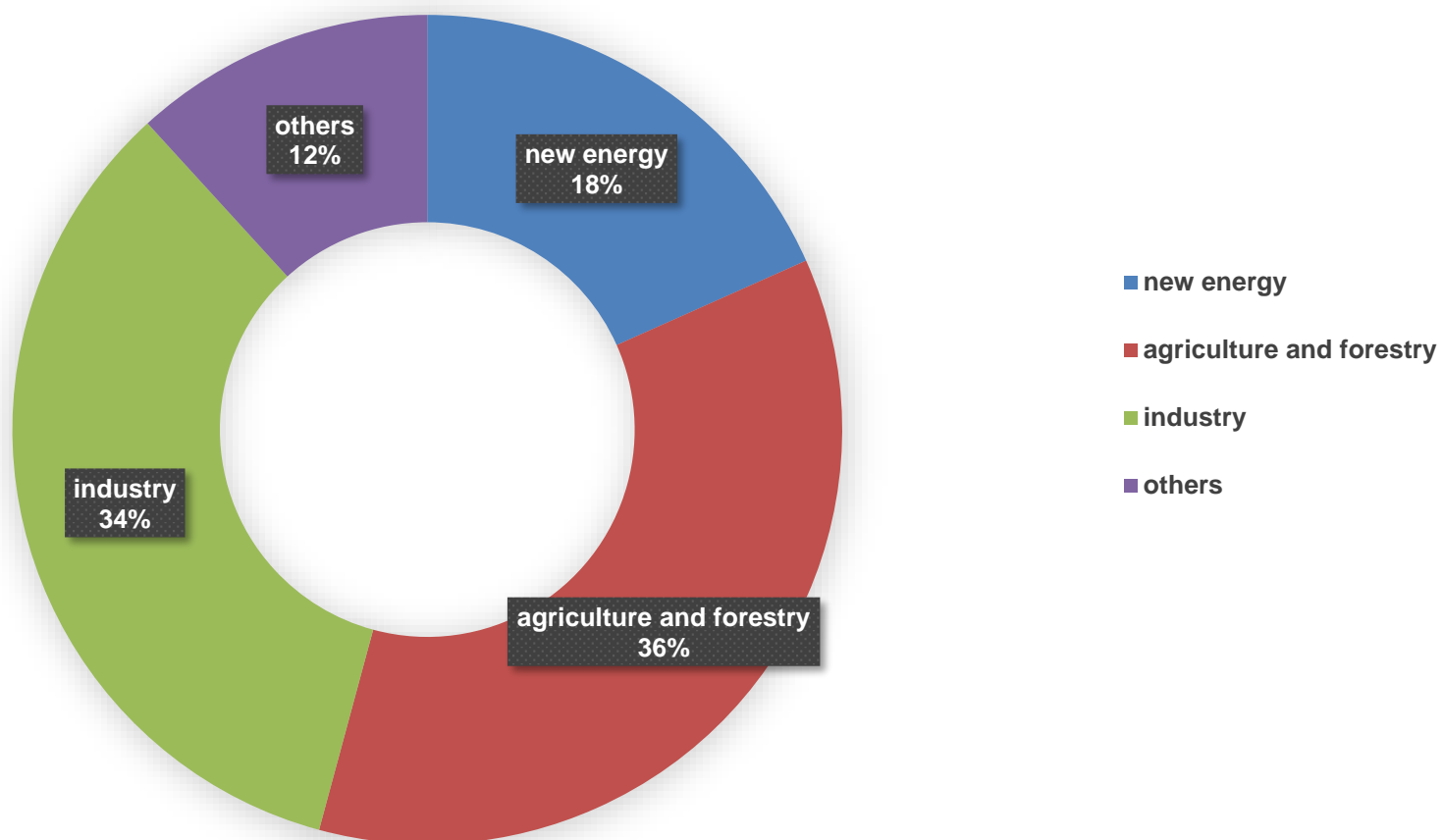
The Study Centre for South-South Cooperation at the Nankai University is a member of the network established by the SSDC project which is involved in some strategic academic research, specifically focusing on trade relations between China and African nations. These publications, while having high academic value, and if properly used can generate some policy outcomes, may have somewhat limited use to the general stakeholders in terms of their operational relevance to the work of SSDC project. As discussed in other sections of the report, the integrated approach to Advocacy, Communication, M&E and Knowledge Management for learning can greatly benefit from the work of the Nankai University's South-South Cooperation Study Centre, as complementary undertakings of a possible new phase, if they are entrusted to focus on, inter alia:

- developing knowledge management products;
- undertaking small operational research;
- documenting lessons learned from various interventions;
- documenting case studies;
- undertaking a mapping exercise to delineate demand and supply (capacity gaps of countries, including China, and capacity supply of the network members);
- researching on international good and weak practices on South-South cooperation; and
- researching and documenting possible innovations in South-South cooperation practices towards achieving SDGs.

3.1.2 Small Grants Projects

The project has undertaken 19 small grants projects in total, with 15 completed and 4 on-going to be completed by end of 2018 (Annex 5.6 provides a list of the Small Grants Projects), in cooperation with CSSCN member institutions. Some of the representational projects covering a range of sectors are briefly described below:

Small Grant Expenditure by Sector



Affordable Housing Technology for Developing Countries

This small grant project provided diverse housing systems and building components tailored to the demands of various countries such as Bahrain, Morocco and Sudan through feasibility studies, technological transfer, on-site training as well as demonstrations. The project, implemented by the China International Centre for Materials Technology Promotion also helped build a local training centre, known as the International Smart Building Centre in Bahrain to facilitate technical transfer and local training, act as a hub of demonstration and training for surrounding countries, and thus ensure sustainability.

Technology Transfer Package for Commissioning as Environmental Friendly Pesticide Formulation Plant exemplary in Sudan

Sudan had no pesticide manufacturing plant for agriculture and public health and pesticide is often imported from abroad which are often high toxic agrochemicals using old, unsafe pesticide formulations of varying toxicity to control pests, diseases and weeds. This small project, implemented by the Nantong Pesticide Formulation Development Centre (NPFC) helped establish a pesticide formulation plant based on environmentally friendly bio-pesticides and their water-base formulation technologies and produce products that could replace old polluting pesticide formulations in the market based on persistent organic pollutants and organic solvents, and therefore promote the national development of green crop protection industry in Sudan. It thus brought benefits to environmental protection, food safety and human health while increasing agricultural productivity. Key activities included training of Sudanese staff, research and development of three CS formulations as well as carrying out tests.

Building Efficiency and R & D and Application of Energy Efficient Walling Systems Tailored for Viet Nam and Cambodia

Viet Nam and Cambodia face a common challenge, i.e., lack of heat-insulation walling systems despite their location in tropical and semi-tropical climate zones. The project, implemented by the International Centre for Materials Technology Promotion, trained Vietnamese and Cambodian engineers on experimental preparation and industrial manufacturing technologies based on foamed concrete, conducted joint research and development, provided on-site guidance, formulated new standard for light-weight

materials in Viet Nam, and promoted establishment of foamed concrete production line in Cambodia. Local residents, building material organizations, researchers, and entrepreneurs benefited from the project.

Exchange and Cooperation of Technology and Management of High Value-added vegetables

The level of vegetable technology and management in Kenya are very low and inferior. This small grant project, implemented by the Promotion Association for Mountain-River-Lake Regional Sustainable Development of Jiangxi Province (MRLSD) sent Chinese technical experts to carry out on-spot investigation in Suba district of Victoria Lake, put forward suitable technical solution for the locals to cultivate high yield, superior quality vegetable varieties, and developed high efficient ecological vegetable production model. The project also helped farmers and agricultural technicians to learn some latest and efficient agricultural planting technologies by training and technical guidance. The project contributed to technical improvement of vegetable cultivation in Victoria Lake Basin, and also contributed to the establishment of sustainable agricultural communities in Kenya.

Sino-Kenya Small Scale Demonstration Project on Solar PV System and Solar Water Heating System

Solar energy resource is abundant in Kenya, but the solar products are rare in the market. Development and promotion of solar technology and products thus becomes one of the solutions to solve the problem. This small project, implemented by the Gansu Natural Energy Research Institute, promoted the application of solar technologies in Kenya through research and design of appropriate small scale solar PV system and solar water heating system as well as provision of 100 sets of solar cookers, 100 sets of in-home solar water heating system and 60 sets of in-home solar PV system as demonstrations.

Promoting Africa's Broadcast Television Dubbing Skills

As an important part of the broadcast television industry, dubbing is not only important for the excellent programs of Africa, but also necessary for the promotion of the whole industry of TV industry in Africa. The United Republic of Tanzania, with the rapid development of cultural industry, is having increasing demands for the translation of

dubbing. This small project, implemented by China-Africa Business Council, has greatly improved the level of dubbing and recording technology in the United Republic of Tanzania and developed professional voice actors and sound recording artists through training and seminars.

Promoting Prefabricated Housing in Liberia

Housing shortage is increased by about 4 million sets per year in Africa. Liberia, as one of the least developed countries, is short of local construction materials and manufacturing level is low. Most of the building materials depend on imports. This small project implemented by China-Africa Business Council and partners in Liberia provided technical training and guidance of the technology of rapid fabricated and low-cost housing through dispatching skilled technical works from China to Liberia. The project transferred China's new building material and construction technology to Liberia, improved technical level and income capability of local workers, promoted the speed and comfort of local buildings and saved construction costs, and thus greatly improved housing conditions in Liberia.

Promoting Industrial Construction Technologies in Ethiopia

Ethiopia's industry has a weak foundation and its construction level is lagging behind. With the increasing demand for modern industrial construction technology, the proportion of supply and demand in construction is out of balance. Supply of construction technologies and professionals cannot meet the demands of the building market. This small project, implemented by the China-Africa Business Council, aimed to improve the level of industrial construction, especially the lightweight wooden architecture technology, and create more job opportunities in Ethiopia through demonstrations, training of local workers and promotion.

In general, the small grants projects target on fundamental living demands in developing countries, integrate both domestic and developing partners into the projects, and mobilize more additional resources.

3.1.3 Capacity Building, Communications and Advocacy

Capacity building in this project refers to all those activities aiming at improving the capacity of SSDC and its partners, primarily member institutions of CSSCN and stakeholders from other developing countries for economic and human development. Most of these activities are taking the form of technical workshops, international forums and exhibitions.

Study visits and expos, and information forums

The SSDC project promoted China's South-South cooperation policies, information and experience in other developing countries to enhance their ability through dialogue, training and capacity building. SSDC facilitated 10 delegations visiting more than 30 government departments and relevant agencies of South-South cooperation of developing countries and hosted more than 20 South-South cooperation training courses/seminars attended by representatives from developing countries. The project also facilitated participation in 9 Global South-South Development Expos and other international conferences hosted by UNOSSC, such as the first-ever Arab States Regional South-South Development Expo in the Qatari capital of Doha, the South-South Cooperation Exhibition in Asia-Pacific and large-scale international and domestic exhibitions held in China, such as the China International Fair for Investment and Trade 2018 in Xiamen, Shanghai Global City Information Forum and so on, promoting China's South-South cooperation projects and experiences during these conferences.

Workshops and Seminars

During the project period, SSDC convened and supported a number of international technical workshops covering topics such as climate change, solar energy, wind energy, dairy technology, edible mushroom, oceanic development, comic and animation industry, information and communication technology, and regional development. These activities were proposed by the partners under the CSSCN. The project also held annual SSC Network Meetings to strengthen the unique domestic network on SSC.

The workshops and seminars have been indeed good examples of networking beyond the Chinese borders, and an effective move towards advocacy and inclusive

knowledge sharing between China and its partner developing countries. However, here again, there have been limited attempts in documenting lessons learned from these activities, as well as articulating outcomes and follow up strategies emanating from the Network Meetings that could be disseminated among the relevant stakeholders. Although SSDC/CICETE has in place reports from these meetings, all in Chinese language, in future these could be summarized in English as well for the partner countries and organizations, as well as UNOSSC to learn from the lessons, evaluate outcomes from the various initiatives, and develop follow up strategies to overcome any barriers, as may be needed. The Network Meeting served as a useful interactive platform for the member institutions to share their experiences in various fields, i.e. foreign aid, international cooperation, resource mobilization issues, as well as challenges in the implementation process.

Publications

South-South Cooperation Updates is a quarterly journal published bilingually from September 2008. It highlights pressing social and economic topics in both Chinese and English and provides information and perspectives on shifting economic landscapes and SSC for a variety of stakeholders. It also works as a timely channel to disseminate the outcomes and achievements of the project. By June 2018, a total number of 33 issues of *South-South Cooperation Updates* were published and they were distributed to members of CSSCN and Chinese embassies in developing countries.

A special issue focusing on China's South-South Cooperation Achievement was also compiled. It contains 20 successful case studies conducted by member institutions of the CSSCN, facilitated by SSDC, that intend to showcase the achievement of China's SSC across various sectors. It also provides an example for a new model to combine both bilateral and multilateral SSC together. A documentary film titled 'The China's South-South Cooperation in 30 Years' was developed to highlight the outcomes of UN-China collaboration on SSC in past 30 years.

While these attempts are good examples of advocacy, learning and knowledge creation, there remains a gap in ascertaining to what extent these publications have indeed created understanding and awareness building among the range of Chinese institutions, beyond the current CSSCN members, and potential recipient countries outside of China, possibly in countries and regions where China SSC was not operationalized. These publications should also find a place in the website of the project.

Website

The website of the *China South-South Cooperation Network* (www.ecdc.net.cn) was set up by CICETE in 2008 and co-supported by UNDP, UNIDO, and SSDC. It was meant to be a unique national website specialized in SSC and to be used as important platform of communication by SSDC.

The Chinese version of the website has been updated periodically, while the English version needs to be updated alongside regularly also. The website, at this stage, is restricted to registered users, whereas this should have been an open and easy to navigate website. In future, attention could be given to user friendly navigation support that can provide information on project outcomes, expert database on SSC, and services for stakeholders in South-South trade and investment. In the possible new phase, a new website with a new branding of the project, including SSDC, such as www.ssd.com.cn could be created for easy accessibility and use by relevant stakeholders, including policy makers, academics and private sector entrepreneurs.

3.2 Key Results of SSDC

Umbrella-type model in multi-level platform, covering broad areas and providing resources

Contrary to traditional projects focusing on a particular technical area, the project model of SSDC brings together resources from multiple fields and multiple industries, which not only serves as a multi-level platform, but also has practical training as well as implementation of small projects, largely characterized by the principle of ‘challenge fund’, with innovation and replicability remaining at the nucleus of the interventions.

UNOSSC and the CICETE provided a publicity platform, financial support and policy guidance for the project, responding to the needs of other developing countries.

Small project model, visible results

The project invested more than 25 per cent of the funds in small projects. From the perspective of other developing countries, through the cooperation in small projects, their needs have been met and access to practical technology and some hardware facilities was acquired. Some of the projects have multiple effects, such as on poverty alleviation, women's participation in development, and environmental protection. The implementation process has also improved the international cooperation capacity of participating institutions at home and abroad. The small projects expanded the scale of funds -- with parallel funds exceeding the core funds by 1.6 times which is also an attempt of the PPP cooperation model, thus ensuring sustainability of the project. The landing of small projects in other developing countries brings the demonstration effect to their countries and even in other neighbouring countries. SSDC also looks to find a competent enterprise or an external partner through small projects in order to invest at equal matched funding, as a general precondition of support. This can be singled out as the most effective and inspiring intervention of the SSDC project.

From the perspective of the member institutions of the CSSCN, the implementation process of small projects enhanced their knowledge, experience, technology and international cooperation capabilities by selecting the most suitable experience and technology for the target country based on actual conditions. The flexibility and timeliness of small projects enabled the capability of the CSSCN institutions were adequately matched with the demands of the foreign parties, laying a foundation of trust for future cooperation.

In short, the implementation of small projects has largely achieved the goal of cooperating and co-building with other developing countries and obtaining mutual benefit and win-win results.

Partnership Building

Partnership building refers to the efforts at the different levels to incorporate both domestic and foreign partners including private sectors into SSC. SSDC organized a series of study tours in 20 countries to facilitate partnership building between China and other developing countries in general, and the member institutions and their counterparts in the different developing countries. These study tours explored opportunities for new markets and trade cooperation between China and other countries. On the other hand, the intended outcomes, in terms of 'people to people' and 'institution to institution' contacts were seriously pursued by CICETE, even beyond the length of the study tours or small grants implementation. CICETE has confirmed that back to office reports and mission reports were available for every study tour to document outcomes, summarize experiences, and propose findings for potential cooperation. In future, it would be useful if summarized versions of these reports are also prepared in English.

From the evidence gathered during this evaluation, it appears that the project provided a good value for money, arose significant interest among the Network members, UN and the Government of China, and the private sector partners in moving forward the key agenda of SSC, led in this instance, by the Government of China. It also contributed as a catalytic agent in building a solid ground towards a cohesive public-private sector collaboration and shared vision for increased capacity in the recipient countries through south-south cooperation, and common accountability in eventually aiming at broad development effectiveness results.

3.3 Responses to the Evaluation Criteria

The evaluation findings, as below, are organized according to the evaluation criteria stipulated in the TOR: (a) relevance and strategic fit, (b) effectiveness, (c) efficiency of resources, (d) impact, (e) sustainability; and (f) cross-cutting issues, i.e., gender and environment. The evaluation also includes a discussion on the validity of the project design, as a prelude to the discussions on the criteria set by the evaluation TOR.

3.3.1 Validity of the project design

The fundamental premise of the project, (i.e., establishing a consolidated network in China; promoting, advocating for, and facilitating South-South cooperation in the developing world) is sound and meaningful, as well as clearly linked with the contemporary focus of the Chinese government's development cooperation agenda. However, the design, notwithstanding the rationale articulated in the project document, does not clearly establish the causal linkage between the broad goal/outcomes and the immediate objectives of the project. The logic model could be SMART⁵ to avoid any ambiguity among the implementing partners in determining the project targets and results, in the interest of regular project monitoring and evaluation, such as this exercise.

- The Project document signed by the Government of China, represented by CICETE, and UNOSSC paints a strong case for the project interventions toward government of China's priority, in support of establishing and operationalizing the SSDC. However, the logic model presented in the project document falls short in specifying the development goal(s) of the project, immediate objective(s) and thus articulating the causal relationship between the objectives, outputs and eventual outcomes. The outcomes specified in the project document are fairly broad and lack specificity in terms of measurable indicators and time frame. The standard UNDP Logical Framework is absent in the project document, and so is the Results Framework that can be evaluated against qualitative and quantitative outputs.
- Despite the above weaknesses in the design, the project creatively undertook tasks, delivering expected results based on the rationale and intent articulated in the project document. The project team resorted to a robust, yet flexible approach, while remaining mindful of the broad intent of the project and thus continued to develop the annual work plans and implementation strategies within the fundamental framework of the project. For future, it would be appropriate to articulate the immediate objectives in a SMART manner, and

⁵S=Specific; M=Measurable; A=Attainable/Assignable; R= Realistic; T= Time Bound

specify the targets against each of the components, both in terms of qualitative and quantitative outputs and outcomes.

3.3.2 Relevance and strategic fit

SSDC programme objective is in line with the principles of South-South cooperation based on solidarity and guided by the principles of respect for national ownership, mutual benefits for lasting inclusive partnership reflecting on common interest of developing countries encompassing elements of trade, investment, knowledge exchange, technology transfer and migration as well as direct financial and humanitarian assistance.

- The SSDC creates an institutional and operational framework for South-South activities, which are incorporated into partnerships with various relevant organizations and stakeholders. The programmatic functions of the Centre are in line with the erstwhile Millennium Development Goals, during when the project was conceived, contributing to mutually beneficial partnerships as well as regional cooperation and integration.
- The SSDC now has found increased relevance in the context of Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) across all the goals, especially Goal 17- 'Revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development'. The SDGs stress the importance of South-South cooperation in implementing the 2030 agenda. Goal 17 particularly places emphasis on the critical role of South-South and triangular cooperation in achieving this ambitious development agenda. It also set targets for South-South and triangular cooperation that target both technology in which all countries have committed to achieve. In the outcome document of the United Nations 'Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable development', Member States called for enhanced South-South and triangular cooperation on access to science, technology, innovation and knowledge sharing. Furthermore, the SDGs recognize South-South and triangular cooperation as an effective means to enhance the capacity of developing countries in implementing the SDGs. Last but not least, the Paris

Agreement on Climate Change also emphasized the importance of South-South and triangular cooperation in tackling climate change.

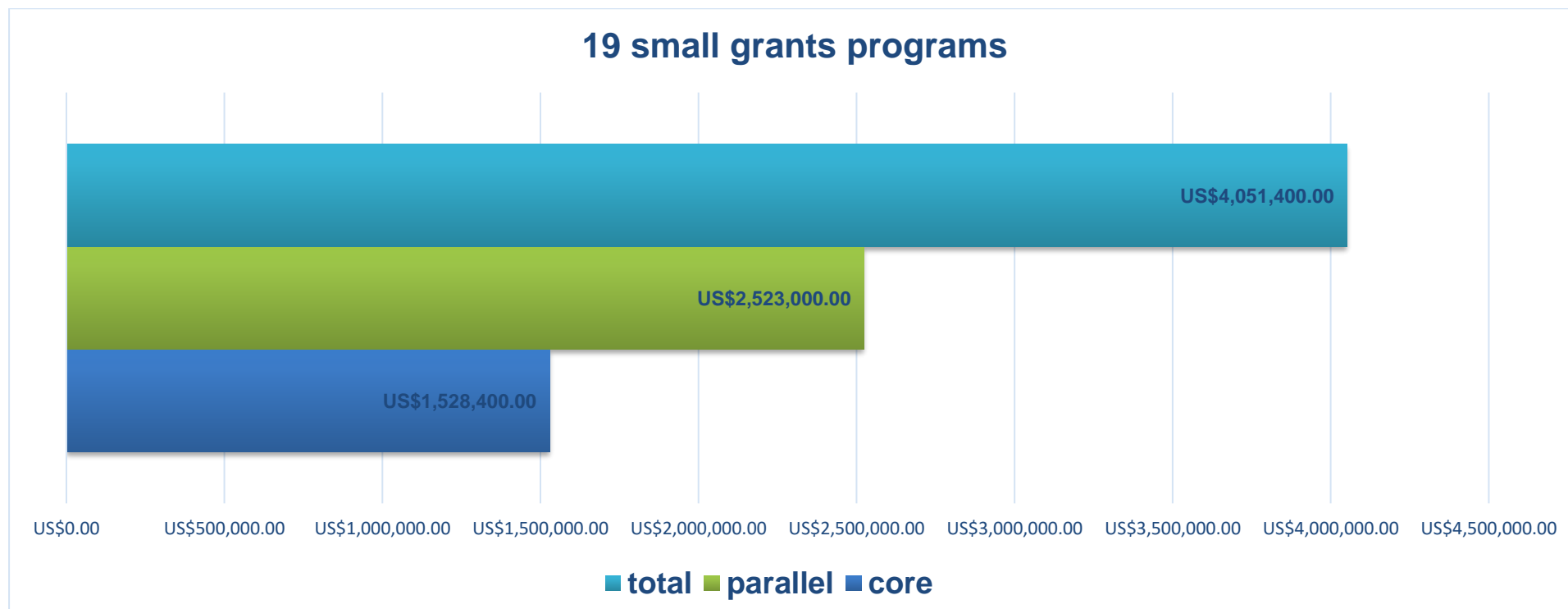
- SSDC also complements the Chinese government's activities of promoting and engaging SSC. It brings together the efforts of the United Nations and the Government of China to promote SSC and support the engagement of a broad base of stakeholders in South-South activities. The overall mission of SSDC is to promote successful South-South cooperation experiences and practices and build development capacity in the global South.
- SSDC was in alignment with SSC principles. For example, the small grant projects were demand-driven, requested by partners and were aligned with national priorities. The SSDC project through the small grants satisfied the needs of many of the developing countries in terms of access to practical technology and capacity building, resulting in multiple effects such as poverty alleviation, women's participation in development, climate change, and environmental protection. These are the key focus areas of SSC. Moreover, small grant interventions under the SSDC project enhanced the knowledge, experience, technology and international cooperation capabilities of the member institutions of CSSCN, confirming the relevance of the project with the principles of SSC. The Strategic Framework of UNOSSC calls for enhancing the institutional capacities for SSC, including through the provision of knowledge products to inform evidence-based policy choices and programmes.

3.3.3 Efficiency

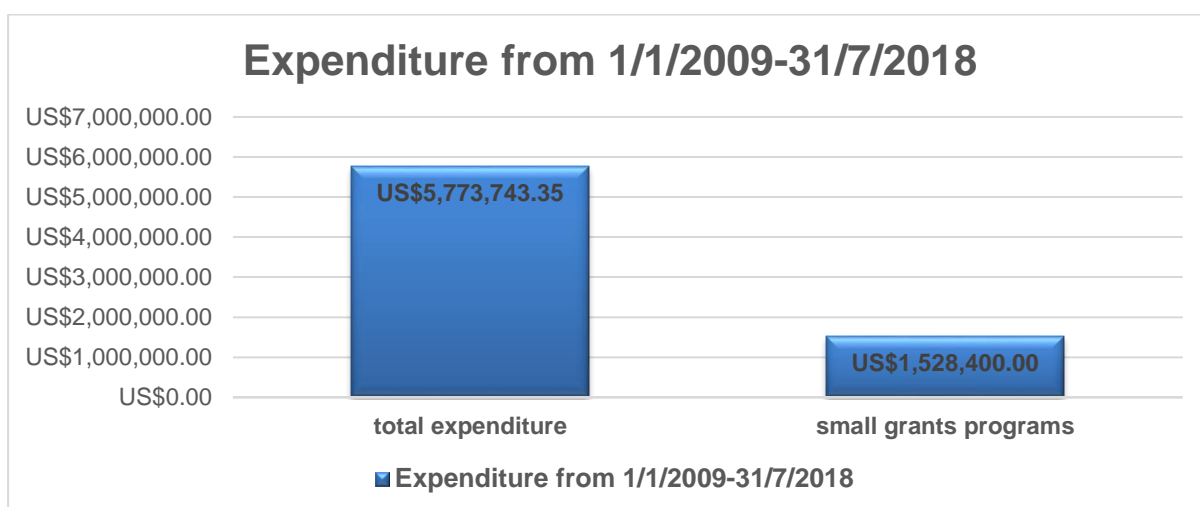
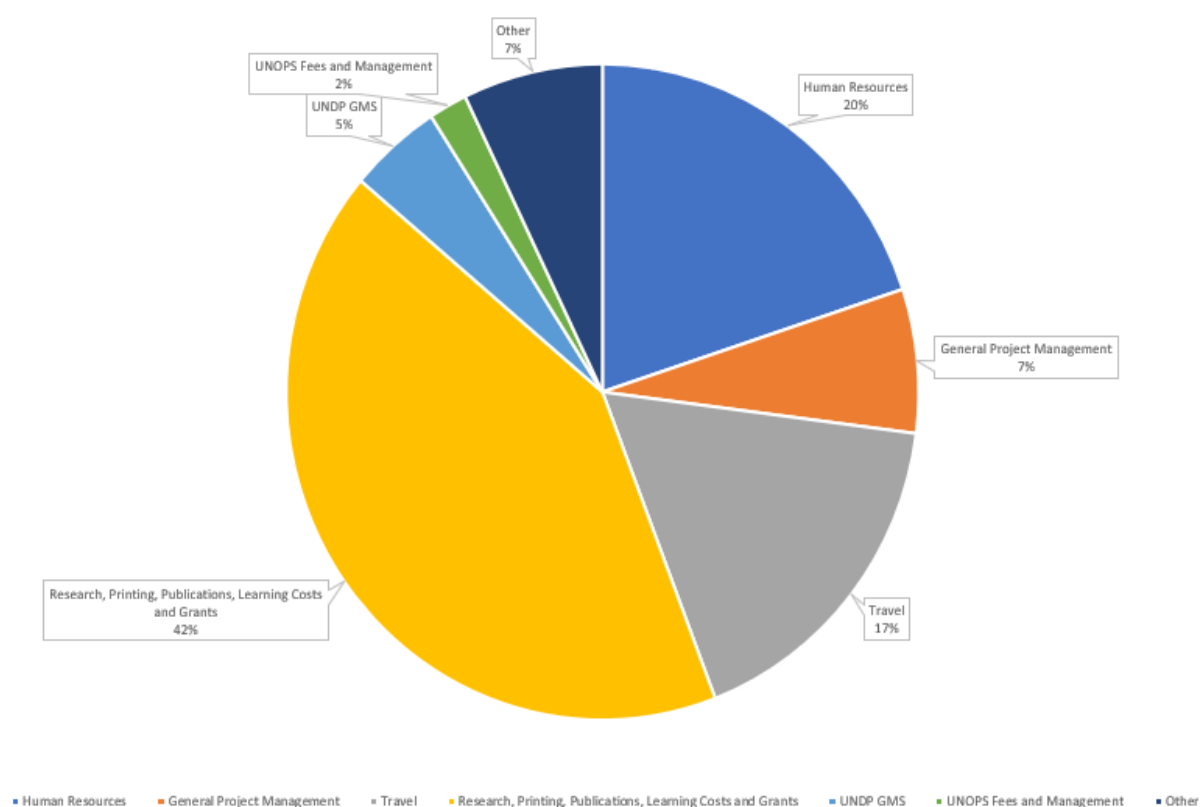
The project represents a good example of value for money (economy, efficiency, effectiveness and equity) and judicious use of resources.

- The SSDC project represents a good example of value for money (economy, efficiency, effectiveness and equity) and judicious use of resources. This is being achieved by its proactive engagement with strategic partners in the execution of the small grants programme, mobilizing resources as parallel

funding matching with the core funds of the project. Noteworthy is the fact that out of USD 3.9 million outlay for the 17 small grants projects so far, USD 2.5 million came as cost-sharing from a range of external sources (the network members, ministries, private sector entities and the host institutions overseas), representing 65 per cent of the total project value. This phenomenon lends itself as a single arrow towards the sustainability of the project.



- Resource allocation so far made are largely in core areas that includes training, capacity building activities, grants programmes, study tours and workshops, and services of project management team at SSDC, and cost for implementation through partner agencies (UNDP and UNOPS). The trend of resource allocation signals to the project getting greater momentum as year passed.
- The project, with support from the UNOSSC has been making serious efforts in adhering to best practices in procurement consistent with the UN procurement rules, and adherence to financial diligence, as required. This was also confirmed by the 2014 independent audit of the project. The project was meticulous and conscious in its budget preparation consistent with the Annual Work Plans, projection of delivery and thereby delivered some over 90 per cent against the allocated budget. The project also updated the annual plans and corresponding budgets to reflect realistic projection of delivery. The yearly expenditures are reflected in Annex 5.7. The following table shows the summary of project expenditures since its inception:
- Attention to important strategic activities such as Advocacy, Communication, Knowledge Management, M&E and Organizational Learning remains low, as no separate budget lines or activities were featured in the project budget. Similarly, study tours and overall knowledge management activities in future need to be targeted for greater impact, both in terms of their strategic positioning in the project and appropriate resource allocation.

Table 4: Project expenditure NIM**Table 5 : Project expenditures against heads**

3.3.4 Effectiveness

The project so far demonstrates strong management arrangements with an effective and competent team of professionals at both SSDC management end and at UNOSSC. However, the effectiveness of management arrangement could be enhanced through the presence of a small but dedicated Knowledge Management, Advocacy and M&E team, perhaps a matter to consider in the possible future phase.

- SSDC project has a well demonstrated technically sound and functional management structure with a strong oversight from Project Steering Committee (PSC). The evidence of strong collaboration is clear among the New York based UNOSSC project management team; the SSDC management, led by the Project Manager; as well as with the officials of CICETE. Regular communication flow between the partners have resulted in free exchange of ideas, management and advisory communication, and administrative and financial information exchanges. This included, but was not limited to information sharing on budgets, small grants agreements, and regular project management issues.
- The project conducted capacity building and exchange activities to promote China's SSC policies, information and experience in other developing countries. Over the years, SSDC sent more than 10 delegations to visit over 30 government departments and relevant agencies in developing countries; hosted more than 20 training courses/seminars; and participated in Global South-South Development Expos and other Chinese and international conferences/exhibitions. Notwithstanding these high-profile activities, there has been limited dissemination of the results among a wider audience on how the visits helped China as well as a natural outcome of a two-way learning process, inherent in the principle of South-South cooperation. Also, the various back to office and mission reports, could be translated or abridged in English for external stakeholders, such as UNOSSC and other organizations.

- The National Implementation Modality (NIM) was the viable execution option chosen for this project given that the financing source was largely the Government of China through CICETE. Also relevant to this modality was the demonstrated capacity of CICETE and the SSDC Secretariat to manage funds, adhere to the mutual rules of the government of China and the UN system, and ability of the government not only to steer the project, but also to undertake NIM reporting and financial management responsibilities, mobilize resources for the small grants projects, and strategically balancing the demand and supply of specific cooperation and alliances between China and the recipient countries.
- The coordination and advisory mechanism, i.e., Project Steering Committee (PSC) served as an effective platform with strategic and operational direction with strong presence of CICETE and external members. While the PSC has been meeting periodically (so far 5 times) and the decisions were largely implemented over time, the project could greatly benefit from a conscious effort to separate the functions of the PSC by creating a Project Management Committee (PMC) focusing on day to day implementation issues, while the strategic and policy direction could be better handled by the PSC.
- The SSDC enjoys strong working relationship with its strategic partners based on mutual trust, respect and shared vision. This has been duly acknowledged by all external stakeholders interviewed. Effective in-house management and mentoring by the senior officials of CICETE has been also acknowledged by the project staff.
- Work Plan updating, forecasting and budget revisions are done on a regular basis through an inclusive and consultative process between the SSDC project office and UNOSSC.
- As mentioned in the earlier sections, the absence of a dedicated M&E team raises questions in terms of the project's effectiveness in pursuing organizational learning and dissemination of results across all levels.

3.3.5 Impact

While it is a little early to gauge the impact of the SSDC project, the activities, especially the small grants program has brought some visible positive changes to the development of the South-South Cooperation as a whole. This relates especially to development of engagement models between China and the host developing countries, developing capacity within the Network members and CICETE to develop and manage projects and external relationship, infuse private-public partnership, mobilize external resources, and focus on gender and environment.

- SSDC Project serves as a significant catalytic undertaking in relation to taking forward South-South cooperation as a complementary model for development cooperation. The strategic initiatives that are emerging in South-South cooperation landscape, i.e., building networks, reaching out to other developing countries, and harnessing opportunities, albeit in a small scale, for China to learn from these engagements.
- SSC embraces cooperation through experience sharing, capacity and skills transfer and underlines development potential that can be untapped through transfer and delivery of solutions, appropriate to specific country contexts. SSDC, through the 19 small grants projects, have facilitated transfer of several practical technologies through training, joint research and development, on-site guidance and demonstrations. These technologies cover agricultural and fishery development (vegetable planting in Kenya and pesticide formulations in Sudan, fishery development in Sri Lanka and Vietnam), clean energy (small hydro power and solar power, energy-efficient housing), industry (automobile maintenance technology, housing technology, and building technologies) as well as cultural development such as dubbing skills.
- The small grants projects were based on the needs and demands of partner countries identified by the different technical centres of the CSSCN. For example, COMESA is one of the members and partners of INSHP in Africa and has been

working closely in small hydropower and renewable energy promotion since 2012. Interviewers strongly agree that all the activities are driven by demands for energy generation and sustainable development from COMESA member countries. Technical knowledge in terms of small hydropower and other energy sources are gained through capacity building training programmes as well as specific projects, which will be vastly spread and scientifically applied in renewable energy promotion in Africa. The small hydropower, which is clean and sustainable, provides electricity both to households and productive use, alleviates poverty, creates employment, protects environment and ultimately promote local sustainable development. Stronger partnership was also built from the project as COMESA-INSHP Co-offices were opened at the INSHP, Hangzhou, China and at COMESA, Lusaka, Zambia in 2017 respectively, thus established “institution to institution” and “people to people” contacts through the activities organized by INSHP.

- Similarly, other small pilot projects have played catalytical role in promoting SSC. For example, after the “Improving Fishery Production Performance and Technical Demonstration in Sri Lanka” was completed, another cooperation agreement was signed between the National Aquaculture Development Authority, Ministry of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources of Sri Lanka and the Freshwater Fisheries Research Center of Chinese Academy of Fishery Sciences.
- The SSDC, with the support of UNOSSC, also helped transfer UNOSSC ideas to the different member institutions as well as private sectors involved in the projects. These included women empowerment, ownership of the partners and appropriate feedback mechanisms.

The impact of efforts of the project in enhancing institutional capacity is gradually emerging. This includes partners’ capacity building in networking, PPP partnership and negotiation skills with potential external partners. As one partners states: *“...we now can explore opportunities without support from SSDC and CICETE we would not have been able to do what and we have just completed. We analyzed the current small hydro power situation in Nigeria,*

Ghana and southeast Africa; Studied the financing strategy of small hydro power project in Africa. We learned how to do site selection, explore financing and make a long-term development plan. Thanks to the project... “. (Development of Untapped SHP Potential in Selected African Countries).

Tangible impact on livelihood, entrepreneurship development, support to training centers (both public and private), productivity, and good manufacturing practices start surfacing. “.... *There are so many people with entrepreneurship skills out there. We are glad we could contribute to a new area—utilizing bamboo for furniture and other products; the technology will be eventually fine tuned and enhanced gradually to meet the traditions, social and economic climate of Vanuatu...*” (Value-Added Bamboo Processing Development in Vanuatu; Partner: China National Bamboo Research Centre).

- Impact is usually a long-term result and it is highly unlikely not to be visible even during the life cycle of the project, let alone in the immediate run. As described above, at this point impact can be assessed through viewing the symptoms of progress in the SSC culture and practices in China and its partner countries. Ensuring responsive SSC results is a matter of culture to be built, owned and operated under the leadership of the governments in partnership with the private sector and stakeholders within and outside the government. Here external and internal factors play a role also. This project can boast to stand out in many ways for its contribution in establishing a long term institutional arrangement in the key government agencies that will over a period of time inform the stakeholders how good it is progressing in terms of grounding a culture of South-South cooperation in China and beyond.

3.3.6 Sustainability

Evidence so far reveals the prospect for SSDC to achieve a high degree of sustainability, from social, policy and economic dimensions. Enhanced capacity of Network partners, and focused, yet flexible approach to

implementation, coupled with targeted Advocacy and Communication strategies would significantly increase sustainability of the project.

- The evaluation assessed whether the outputs of the project are likely to continue after its termination, financially, institutionally, and in relation to development of partnerships, cooperation, and effectiveness. Early indications show signs of sustainability – social, institutional (systems and processes) and financial as affirmed by most partners across the board.
- Given the shortcomings in the design (refer to Section 3.2.1) that lends to overwhelmingly broad and open implementation canvas; the project team has diligently attempted to narrow down the focus of the project within the five identified components. However, it would be appropriate for future phase to rely on a design document that helps to realistically plan activities, against quantifiable indicators, and targets.
- Anecdotal evidence shows sustainable results emanating from capacity building endeavors among the partners, although no strong pre-project data / information is readily available. This affirms again the need for a dedicated Knowledge Management and M&E Unit in SSDC.
- The success in mobilizing resources (parallel funding) for the small grants projects which surpasses the funds from the core project budget is the key to the sustainability of this project. Other aspects that point to the sustainability is the demonstrated continued ownership and leadership of the government in carrying forward the South-South Cooperation principles, including funding this project to a largely extent and support SSDC in the implementation of this project. Evidences from several initiatives of the government, cast no doubt that the government is committed to building a strong South-South cooperation culture that can be demonstrated beyond China, among the traditional bilateral partners of China, and in countries where China had less comparative presence.

3.3.7 Cross-cutting issues: Gender and Environment

Although the SSDC project did not integrate specific focus on gender and environment, as a design requirement, there has been indirect focus on gender and environment, emanating from the various activities of the project. Any future project on SSC needs to integrate, as cross-cutting issues, gender and environment.

- The project team, government and implementing partners are proactively pursuing Gender and Environment aspects in undertaking activities, especially with regard to the small grants projects.
- Out of the 19 small grants projects undertaken so far, 15 projects are directly or indirectly environmentally sensitive, such as those related to hydropower, agriculture, low cost energy saving housing, aquaculture and solar energy promotion. These projects also involved female policy makers, as well as technical sector specialists from China and the developing countries and workers. Other projects, such as the Africa's Broadcast Television Dubbing Skills project involved women and men in a balanced fashion.
- Interviewees from the China-Africa Business Council also mentioned that its private members are now more gender- and environment- conscious due to involvement in activities of the SSDC project.

3.4 Lessons Learned

A number of lessons can be learned from the implementation of the SSDC project over the last ten years. These are summarized below:

- China has shown sustained support to South-South cooperation, exemplified by the establishment of 3 billion USD South-South Cooperation Assistance Fund announced by President Xi Jinping at the UN Development Summit in 2015.

- The umbrella-type model brings flexibility in terms of partnership building and resource mobilization. Traditional projects generally rely on a cooperative unit, focusing on one area or establishing a communication platform to play an intermediary role in promoting project development. The SSDC brings together resources from multiple fields and sectors, as well as a wide range of partners.
- Small grant projects played catalytical role in facilitating technology transfer, although this component was not meant to be the only and the main focus of the project. The flexibility and timeliness of small projects also enabled quick responses to requests from partner countries.
- The absence of adequate focus on M&E, Advocacy and Organizational Learning as an integrated approach in this project was largely due to the lack of an articulation of such provisions in the project document, coupled with the absence of adequate human and financial resources in SSDC to undertake this critical task.
- On knowledge products, the series of books and reports published with the support of the SSDC showcased China's policies and experience in South-South cooperation, discussed the major policy challenges and put forward recommendations. However, the team found that stronger relevance or linkages could be built in the future between the products and the practices of South-South cooperation on the ground, and their accessibility by general readers and policy makers in developing countries who are meant to be the agents of change. The project design, dating back ten years, lacked the design 'perfection', as it did not clearly state the outcome and objectives the project intended to achieve. The design document should have had a Results Framework or a Logical Framework delineating the inter-connection between the broad level goal(s) and outcome, immediate objectives and outputs at the operational levels.

4. Conclusion and recommendations

4.1 Conclusion

The single most noteworthy undertaking of this catalytic project, that points to the promise for a reasonable level of impact is the maintenance of the CSSCN comprising 28 Chinese technical organizations from across the whole of China. These institutions have demonstrated capacity and background in their respective domains of work that can be replicated in other Southern countries, through training, mentoring and exchange of knowledge. These network organizations are listed in Annex 5.3. As can be seen, the organizations are not homogenous in their character or technical areas, or even in their capacity to deliver equal level of quality training and technology transfer to their overseas counterparts, they pave the way for a long term ‘people to people’ or ‘institution to institution’ linkages between the Chinese organizations and their overseas counterparts.

The selection of the network members and their inclusion in the Network Group remained somewhat ad hoc in nature, mainly relying on the knowledge and networks of CICETE. The composition of the CSSCN could be strengthened through a systematic selection process, based on a mapping of demand and supply of activities, and introduction of a selection process, using a combination of soliciting competitive application, and invitation to the proven potential partners.

There has been a common response from the respondents that the design of the subsequent phase of the project must pay consideration to the expansion of the small grants programme to ensure that the sub-projects are targeted, focused on the basis of themes (environment, energy, agriculture, infrastructure etc.) and are demand driven. There is a pressing need for a systematic mapping of demand and supply, in terms of the technical areas to be promoted, instead of treading in areas that are driven by the supply of expertise and technology from the ‘existing’ members of the CSSCN, without a proper assessment of genuine demands from the constituencies to be served.

There is also a consensus among several stakeholders that the CSSCN can be extended beyond the Chinese institutions, to include organizations outside of China (such as the BRICS countries, where China plays an important role) from which China can also receive knowledge and technology in areas where gaps exist. This two-way exchange of ideas, knowledge, technology and business opportunities would truly serve the spirit and principles of South-South Cooperation.

While the small grants projects enjoy some degree of collaboration with UN agencies (such as UNIDO, UNESCO, UNESCAP and FAO), there is a need expressed for greater collaboration with other agencies in the future phase, depending on the nature of the grants projects. For example, United Nations International Trade Centre (UNITC), the Geneva based trade related UN organization can be a useful partner in assisting the recipient countries where support could be needed for branding, marketing, and export for products that resulted from the SSDC project's small grants programme, such as bamboo products, fisheries, and vegetable seeds.

The project has been well managed due to the long-term and strong partnership between UNOSSC and CICETE, which brings with it about four decade of project management experience of projects funded by UN agencies such as UNDP and UNIDO. The project steering committee, composed of international institutions, government agencies, and member centres of the CSSCN, has proven to be effective in terms of providing policy guidance and operational recommendations. SSDC, through working with CSSCN with different technical expertise, has effectively met the different demands from developing countries. This has been complemented by the strong partnership CSSCN members have developed with the private sector, resulting in an effect public private partnership (PPP) and resource mobilization.

The core of the small grants projects, i.e., capacity building activities, through training, demonstrations and workshops, have facilitated technical transfer to other developing countries and promoted international development cooperation. It should be noted that the member institutions of CSSCN also benefited a lot from these activities in terms of exposure to different development contexts and their abilities to transfer technologies. This is in line with the UNOSSC's strategic framework that calls to boost Member States' institutional capacities for SSC, including through the provision of knowledge products to inform evidence-based policy choices and programmes.

A number of common elements highlighted by several stakeholders of the project in relation to its impact are summarized as follows :

- Establishing and operationalizing a network group comprising 28 eminent and proven institutions as members;
- Mobilizing external resources, primarily for the small grants projects as parallel funding by each of the participating network organizations, between 1 to 4 times of the SSDC funding. The project, thus in itself remains a strong case for sustainability;
- Extensive collaboration with the private sector, both in China and in the host countries, thus successfully institutionalizing the PPP practice in the project;
- Sustainability of the project has been ensured, especially around the small grants practice, given that the network organizations are self-funded, and operate independently without any funding from the SSDC project.

4.2 Recommendations

A number of recommendations are put forward here emanating from the evaluation:

Future Design, modality, technical and operational issues

1. Future design of a possible new phase must be rigorously pursued to comply with the UN guidelines to the extent appropriate, and must contain alongside the rationale, theory of change, delineated against a logical model that establishes the causal linkage between the broad goal/outcomes and the immediate objectives of the project. This is purely a design issue and does not reflect on the implementation capacity of CICETE. The logic model in future design should be SMART, and targets quantified to avoid any ambiguity among the implementing partners in determining the project targets and results, in the interest of regular project monitoring and evaluation.
2. If a new phase is to be launched, the proven implementation capacity of CICETE, considered an asset in this phase, should continue to be leveraged.
3. Introduction of a Project Management Committee (PMC) to strengthen monitoring and evaluation and to separate the day to day management related advisory role from the Project Steering Committee (PSC) can be considered,

where the latter Committee can focus on more strategic advisory and policy roles.

4. Future project could add the triangular cooperation dimension in line with the Strategic Framework of UNOSSC. This will mean stronger role of UNOSSC as the facilitating body, and those of other UN agencies and Northern partners.
5. SSDC needs to immediately work on the existing website of the project to make it more user friendly and update the English version. In the possible new phase, a new website with a new branding of the project, including SSDC, such as www.ssdccom.cn could be created for easy accessibility and use by relevant stakeholders, including policy makers, donors, development partners, academics and private sector entrepreneurs.
6. There needs to be an integrated approach to Knowledge Management and Organizational Learning, combining Advocacy, Communication (including promotion and visibility) and M&E and Research as one component of the future project. Future activities in research and knowledge area should focus on 'easy to understand' advocacy and communication materials, based on small scale operational researches and focused on advocacy, recording of best practices and case studies, newsletters, and visibility campaigns (please also refer to Section 3.1.1 on Knowledge Management). This will require increased capacity of the SSDC to engage in targeted communications and knowledge management. The existing team in UNOSSC together with possible future additional resources, can also assist in building SSDC's capacity to engage in advocacy work – including promoting the work outside of China/to non-Chinese partners. UNOSSC with its access to UN networks and global reach is well placed to assist in this critical task.
7. The small grant project model has been proven to be highly effective, represents a good value for money and assures sustainability of the project. This component needs to be retained, but making it more targeted, and demands and supply determined through a possible mapping exercise at the outset of the new project phase, or earlier. Linked to this is the need for developing an appropriate Monitoring and Evaluation mechanism to assess the impact and outcomes of the small grant projects over a period of time. This would mean improving capacity of SSDC in M&E, including ability to assess the

impact of small grants projects from time to time. UNOSSC could work with SSDC and provide advisory services in this area.

8. The CSSCN can be extended beyond the Chinese institutions, to include organizations outside of China (such as the BRICS countries, where China plays an important role) from which China can also receive knowledge and technology in areas where gaps exist and strengthen partnerships. (see also discussion in the 4.1 Conclusion section).

Current phase

9. As the project officially ends in December 2018, no new activities should be planned for the remaining part of the year. The remaining period of the year should be devoted to completing the activities planned for in the Annual Work Plan; planning and designing the project document for the new; and possibly completing the signing of the new project document so that there is no hiatus between the current phase and the new phase.

5. Annex

5.1 Terms of Reference

Global South-South Development Center Evaluation Guidelines

Background

Overview

The Global South-South Development Center (SSDC), with its Secretariat in Beijing, was established in 2009 through the partnership between the China International Center for Economic and Technical Exchanges (CICETE) and UNOSSC. The overall mission of SSDC is to promote successful South-South cooperation experiences and practices and build development capacity in the global South. SSDC supports the formulation, coordination, technical support and small-scale catalytic financing of cooperation activities.

SSDC has facilitated cooperation between a network of renowned centers of excellence based in China and institutions from other developing countries. Since 2009, it has sponsored numerous study tours, workshops, training courses and small grants projects. These activities enabled cooperation in a variety of fields: solar energy, information technology application, car maintenance technology and many others.

The SSDC was originally a five-year project running from November 2008 to December 2013. In 2013 the SSDC Project Board decided to extend the project for a further five years to December 2018.

A comprehensive evaluation of the SSDC project 2009 to 2013 was completed in 2014. This evaluation classified the activities undertaken by SSDC into 5 main areas:

6. Capacity and partnership building efforts.
7. Provision of small grants
8. Research and studies
9. Communications
10. Establishment and management of SSDC platform

The evaluation made 5 recommendations:

6. The SSDC platform should be enhanced. UNOSSC and CICETE should make greater efforts to get legal status for SSDC in China.
7. Encourage greater cooperation between SSDC partners – called “Excellence Centers” in the evaluation.
8. Expand the SSDC database. At the time of the evaluation, the SSDC had established a domestic expert database. The evaluation recommended setting up technology and project databases, to facilitate knowledge sharing and cooperation.
9. Establish a China South-South Cooperation Academy, under the umbrella of UNOSSC’s Global South-South Cooperation Academy. The functions of the China South-South Cooperation Academy would be to:
 - a. Provide human resources and technological supports for domestic South-South cooperation practices in different fields.
 - b. Participate in the initiatives carried out by the Global South-South Cooperation Academy in the international context.

- c. Undertake policy study and research on domestic and international South-South cooperation.
 - d. Undertake training courses on South-South cooperation.
10. Establish a China South-South Cooperation Fund to provide reliable financial support for the sustainable development of the SSDC.

Key Partners

- United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation (UNOSSC).
- China International Center for Economic and Technical Exchanges (CICETE), under the Ministry of Commerce, China.
- United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS).

Management Arrangements

The SSDC Project Document outlined three execution arrangements:

- **National Execution (NEX)** – now called National Implementation Modality (NIM) – with CICETE serving as the Implementing Partner representing the Government of China.
- **SSDC Grants** to various implementing partners, in particular UN entities, national government institutions, or NGOs in recipient countries.
- **Agency Execution Modality**, in particular engaging UNOPS acting on behalf of the SSDC.

Implementing Modality	Primary Uses
NEX	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establishment of the SSDC and its operations. • Umbrella activities to promote South-South cooperation, or initiatives to promote South-South cooperation modalities on a global basis.
SSDC Grants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Given the diverse range of activities that the SSDC will undertake and support, it was foreseen that many activities would be implemented in the form of grants. • Grants facilitate the use of different implementing partners, including UN entities, national government institutions, or NGOs.
Agency Execution (UNOPS)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitoring and evaluation activities. • Coordination of Project Steering Committee activities. • Human resources and procurement activities including consultant contracts, lease of office space, and procurement of equipment.

Notes:

- Many SSDC grantees have also received support from the UNOSSC-managed Perez-Guerrero Trust Fund. A list of these projects is included as an annex to these guidelines.
- There is a separate Project Document, titled *China South-South Development Centre – Management Effectiveness*, which formalizes the Agency Execution arrangement between UNOSSC and UNOPS. The Agency Execution arrangement ceased in 2017. Since this time,

UNOSSC has been responsible for activities envisioned under the Management Effectiveness project.

Overview of United Nations and South-South Evaluations

Rationale

Evaluation is a regular step of UNOSSC/UNDP's project management cycle. This evaluation will be carried out according to UNDP's Evaluation Policy. This policy sets out the purpose and basic principles of evaluation.

The evaluation will follow the United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG) definition of evaluation as "an assessment, as systematic and impartial as possible, of an activity, project, programme, strategy, policy, topic, theme, sector, operational area or institutional performance". As per UNDP policy:

*"Evaluations should focus on expected and achieved accomplishments, critically examining the presumed causal chains, processes, and attainment of results, as well as the contextual factors that may enhance or impede the achievement of results. **Evaluations focus on determining the relevance, impact, effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability of UNDP work in order to make adjustments and improve conditions to development**".*

The UNDP policy outlines three rationales for undertaking evaluations.

1. **Evaluations support better decision-making and promote learning among stakeholders:** Evaluations are important tools for helping UNDP to learn from past experience and better understand what types of development support work well, and not so well, and in what contexts. The scope, design and implementation of an evaluation should generate relevant, cost-effective and timely information.
2. **Evaluations help stakeholders to hold UNDP accountable for contributing to development results at different levels:** Evaluations help hold UNDP accountable to stakeholders including the Executive Board, funders of programmes, and governments and citizens of countries where UNDP works. In addition, UNOSSC is also accountable to the General Assembly High-level Committee on South-South Cooperation.
3. **Improved national evaluation capacity enhances progress towards the sustainable development goals:** Support to national evaluation capacity is a UNDP programmatic priority.

UNDP Evaluation Principles

The evaluation should be guided by UNDP's **people-centered approach to development**, which enhances capabilities, choices and rights for all men and women. The evaluation will abide by universally shared values of **equity, justice, gender equality and respect for diversity**. The ECOSOC requires UNDP to **systematically integrate human rights and gender equality** into evaluating the operational activities for development of the United Nations system.

UNDP/UNEG Evaluation Norms

The evaluation must abide by the 10 norms defined by the UNEG:

1. **Uphold and promote the principles and values to which the United Nations is committed:** In particular, evaluators should respect, promote and contribute to the goals and targets set out in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.
2. **Utility:** There should be a clear intention to use the resulting analysis, conclusions and recommendations to inform decisions and actions.
3. **Credibility:** Credibility is grounded on independence, impartiality, and a rigorous methodology. Key elements include transparent evaluation processes, inclusive approaches involving relevant stakeholders and robust quality assurance mechanisms.
4. **Independence:** Independence of evaluation is necessary for credibility, influences the ways in which an evaluation is used, and allows evaluators to be impartial and free from undue pressure throughout the evaluation process.
5. **Impartiality:** The key elements of impartiality are objectivity, professional integrity and absence of bias. Evaluators need to be impartial, implying that evaluation team members must not have been directly responsible for the policy setting, design or management of the evaluation subject.
6. **Ethics:** Evaluations must be conducted with the highest standards of integrity and respect for the beliefs, manners and customs of the social and cultural environment; for human rights and gender equality; and for the “do no harm” principle.
7. **Transparency:** Evaluation products should be publicly available.
8. **Human rights and gender equality:** It is the responsibility of evaluators and evaluation managers to ensure that human rights and gender equality are respected, addressed and promoted.
9. **National evaluation capacities:** National evaluation capacities should be supported upon the request of Member States.
10. **Professionalism:** Evaluations should be conducted with professionalism and integrity. Key aspects include access to knowledge; education and training; adherence to ethics, norms and standards; utilization of evaluation competencies; and recognition of knowledge, skills and experience.

South-South and Triangular Cooperation

The SSDC was developed as a South-South cooperation project. Therefore, in addition to the above-mentioned principles and norms, the SSDC evaluation must take into account the unique history and principles of South-South and triangular cooperation.

As per UNOSSC, South-South cooperation is a “broad framework of collaboration among countries of the South in the political, economic, social, cultural, environmental and technical domains. Involving two or more developing countries, it can take place on a bilateral, regional, intraregional or interregional basis. Developing countries share knowledge, skills, expertise and resources to meet their development goals through concerted efforts. Recent developments in South-South cooperation have taken the form of increased volume of South-South trade, South-South flows of foreign direct investment, movements towards regional integration, technology transfers, sharing of solutions and experts, and other forms of exchanges.

Triangular cooperation is collaboration in which traditional donor countries and multilateral organizations facilitate South-South initiatives through the provision of funding, training, management and technological systems as well as other forms of support.

South-South cooperation is a manifestation of solidarity among peoples and countries of the South that contributes to their national well-being, their national and collective self-reliance and the attainment of internationally agreed development goals, including the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable

Development. **The South-South Cooperation agenda and South-South cooperation initiatives must be determined by the countries of the South, guided by the principles of respect for national sovereignty, national ownership and independence, equality, non-conditionality, non-interference in domestic affairs and mutual benefit.”**

The basic objectives of South-South cooperation, as outlined in the Buenos Aires Plan of Action (resolution 33/134) are to:

- **Foster the self-reliance of developing countries** by enhancing their creative capacity to find solutions to their development problems in keeping with their own aspirations, values and specific needs.
- Promote and strengthen collective self-reliance among developing countries through the **exchange of experiences; the pooling, sharing and use of their technical and other resources; and the development of their complementary capacities.**
- **Strengthen the capacity of developing countries** to identify and analyze together their main development issues and formulate the requisite strategies to address them.
- **Increase the quantity and enhance the quality of international development cooperation** through the pooling of capacities to improve the effectiveness of the resources devoted to such cooperation.
- **Create and strengthen existing technological capacities** in the developing countries in order to improve the effectiveness with which such capacities are used and to improve the capacity of developing countries to absorb and adapt technology and skills to meet their specific developmental needs.
- **Increase and improve communications among developing countries**, leading to greater awareness of common problems and wider access to available knowledge and experience as well as the creation of new knowledge in tackling development problems.
- **Recognize and respond to the problems and requirements of the least developed countries, landlocked developing countries, small island developing States** and the countries most seriously affected by, for example, natural disasters and other crises.
- Enable developing countries to achieve a **greater degree of participation in international economic activities and to expand international cooperation for development.**

Guidelines for SSDC Evaluation

Objectives

The objectives of this evaluation are to:

7. Assess the extent to which the planned outputs of the project were implemented and results achieved.
8. Assess the extent to which the project was implemented in line with the principles and objectives of South-South and triangular cooperation, including any unique “value adds” of using the South-South modality.
9. Assess the effectiveness and suitability of the chosen management mechanisms to achieve desired outputs and results.
10. Assess the extent to which recommendations made in the 2014 evaluation were implemented.
11. Identify innovative aspects of the project, challenges faced, and lessons learned.
12. Provide strategic advice to UNOSSC, CICETE, and the SSDC team to enable planning for the next phase of the SSDC.

Evaluation Criteria

Criteria	Suggested Key Questions
Relevance	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• To what extent was the SSDC suited to the priorities and policies of project beneficiaries and partners?• To what extent are the objectives of the SSDC still relevant in the context of an evolving global development landscape – including the 2030 Agenda, and the Belt and Road Initiative?• Were the activities and outputs consistent with the overall SSDC goal?
Effectiveness	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• To what extent were the stated objectives of the SSDC achieved?• What were major factors influencing the successful achievement (or otherwise) of the stated objectives?
Efficiency	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Were SSDC activities cost efficient, keeping in mind the objectives and principles of South-South cooperation?• Were SSDC activities and objectives achieved on time?• Were the chosen SSDC management modalities (NEX, small grants, UNOPS) efficient? What other modalities could have been chosen, and would these have resulted in greater efficiencies?
Impact	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• What has happened as a result of the SSDC?• What real differences have been made to SSDC partners and beneficiaries?• Were there any negative and/or unintended impacts resulting from the SSDC?• How did political contexts, particularly in China, effect the impact or potential impact of the SSDC?
Sustainability	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Has sustainability been built into the SSDC? How?• What are major factors that impact the achievement or non-achievement of sustainability?
Alignment with South-South principles	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• To what extent was the SSDC designed and implemented in line with principles of South-South cooperation?• How did alignment with the principles of South-South cooperation impact – positively or negatively – the achievement of SSDC goals and objectives?

Use of Results

Evaluation results will be used to:

1. Inform the design the next stage of the SSDC.
2. Facilitate organizational learning.
3. Report results.
4. Inform project supporters and beneficiaries.

Evaluation Management

Management Team

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Proposed Mission Plan

Date	Location	Time	Activities
Saturday 14 July	Beijing		Arrive Beijing
Sunday 15 July	Beijing-Tianjin	09:50-10:26	G8911: Beijing south railway station--Tianjin west railway station
	Tianjin	12:00-12:30	Lunch
		13:30-14:30	Meeting with Study Center on South-South Cooperation at Nankai University
	Tianjin- Beijing	15:46-16:21	C2060:Tianjin railway station--Beijing south railway station
Monday 16 July	Beijing	09:30-11:00	Meeting with CICETE
		11:10-12:00	Lunch
		13:30-14:30	Meeting with UNIDO International Center for Materials Technology Promotion
Tuesday 17 July	Beijing	10:00--11:00	Meeting with China-Africa Business Council
		11:00-11:45	Lunch
	Beijing- Hangzhou	14:35-16:50	CA1716:Beijing Capital International Airport-Hangzhou Xiaoshan International Airport
Wednesday 18 July	Hangzhou	10:00-11:00	Meeting with International Center on Small Hydro Power
		11:00-12:00	Lunch
		14:00-15:00	Meeting with China National Bamboo Research Center
	Hangzhou- Beijing	18:10-20:25	CA1715:Hangzhou Xiaoshan International Airport-Beijing Capital International Airport
Thursday 19 July	Beijing	9:30-11:00	Follow up meetings with CICETE as required
		11:00-12:00	Lunch
		13:30-15:30	Mission wrap up meeting

Friday 20 July	Beijing		Depart Beijing (pm)
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5.2 List of Persons Interviewed, Meetings and Site Visits

1. Study Center on South-South Cooperation at Nankai University (Tianjin, China)
 - Professor LI Ronglin
 - Professor CHEN Jianguo
 - Professor GE Shunqi
2. CICETE (Beijing, China)
 - Mr. ZHANG Yi, Deputy Director General
 - Ms. ZHANG Wei, Program Manager
 - Ms. CAI Yun, Program Officer
 - Ms. SONG Bo, Financial Officer
 - Ms. LIU Yang, Program Assistant
3. UNIDO International Center for Materials Technology Promotion (Beijing, China)
 - Ms. LI Juan, Vice Director
 - Ms. ZHOU Chunying, Supervisor of International Scientific Cooperation
 - Mr. SUN Likun, Supervisor of Foreign Affairs
4. China-Africa Business Council (Beijing, China)
 - Mr. Bai Xiaofeng, Deputy Secretary General
 - Ms. Sandy Nduwimana, Program Manager
 - Ms. Vivian Zhou, Program Assistant
5. International Center on Small Hydro Power (Hangzhou, China)
 - Ms. HUANG Yan, Deputy Director
 - Ms. YAO Dan, Program Manager
6. China National Bamboo Research Center (Hangzhou, China)
 - Mr. DING Xuecui, Director, International Cooperation Division
7. UNOSSC (Skype calls)
 - Ms. WANG Grace Xiaojun, Deputy Director for Programme and Operations
 - Mr. Michael Stewart, Knowledge and Programme Analyst (also face to face)
 - Ms. SUN Dingding, Programme Coordination Specialist
 - Mr. Francisco Simplicio, Former SSDC Program Manager
 - Ms. Teresa LIU, Former SSDC Program Manager
 - Ms. HUANG Yinmei, Former SSDC Program Officer
8. Regional Association of Energy Regulators for Eastern and Southern Africa, Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (Email)
 - Mr. Mohamedain E. Seif Elnasr, Chief Executive Officer a.i.

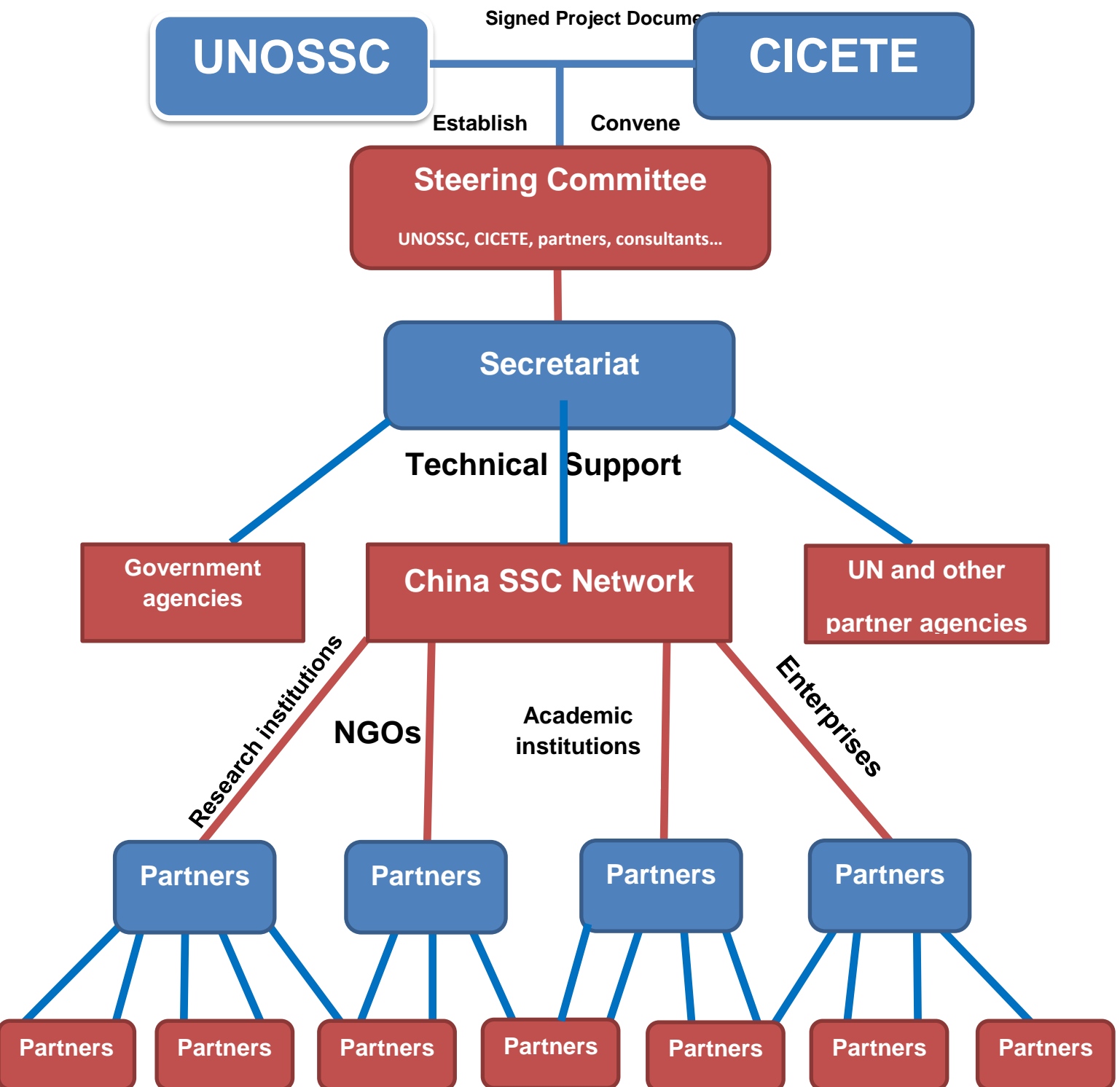
5.3 Key Documents and Books Reviewed

1. SSDC Project Document, dated 30 December 2008
2. SSDC Project Extension – Minutes of the Third Steering Committee Meeting, dated 12 December 2012
3. Addendum 1 to the Project Document, dated 28 August 2014
4. SSDC Project Document – Management Effectiveness (UNOPS) dated January 2010
5. Evaluation Report on the Project of South-South Development Center 2008-2013
6. SSDC Activity Summary 2009 – 2014 Report
7. SSDC Summary of Project 2015
8. SSDC Annual Report 2016
9. SSDC Annual Report 2017
10. Minutes of the Fourth Steering Committee Meeting, dated 19 May 2016
11. SSDC Annual Workplan and Activities 2018
12. Book--Review of UN's Assistance to China in 30 Years
13. Book--China Development Report on South-South Cooperation: Trade Relations between China and Other Developing Countries
14. Book--China Development Report on South-South Cooperation: Investment Relations between China and Other Developing Countries
15. Book--China Development Report on South-South Cooperation: China's Foreign Aid to Developing Countries
16. Book--China Development Report on South-South Cooperation: Trade and Investment Relations between China and African Countries

5.4 Members of China South-South Cooperation Network (CSSCN)

- China International Centre for Economic and Technical Exchanges (CICETE), Ministry of Commerce
- Beijing Academy of Agriculture and Forestry Sciences (BAAFS)
- Biogas Institute of Ministry of Agriculture (BIOMA)
- Center for Environmental Education and Communications of Ministry of Environmental Protection
- China-Africa Business Council
- China National Bamboo Research Center
- CIFAL Shanghai International Training Center
- Freshwater Fisheries Research Center of Chinese Academy of Fishery Sciences
- Fujian Provincial Science and Technology Exchange Center with Foreign Countries
- Fujian Provincial United Nations SSC Network Demonstration Base
- Gansu Natural Energy Research Institute/UNIDO International Solar Energy Center for Technology Promotion and Transfer
- International Center for Small Hydropower
- International Seabuckthorn Association
- Jiangxi Association for International Economic Cooperation
- Management Observer Magazine Office
- National Research Institute for Rural Electrification, Ministry of Water Resources/Hangzhou Regional Center (Asia-Pacific) for Small Hydro Power
- Office of the Mountain-River-Lake Development Committee of Jiangxi Province
- Shenzhen International Technology Promotion Centre for Sustainable Development
- South-South (Beijing) Biological Technology Center
- South-South Global Assets and Technology Exchange
- Study Center on South-South Cooperation Nankai University
- The International Info Center for the New Silk Road
- UNIDO International Center for Materials Technology Promotion
- United Nations Nantong Pesticide Formulation Development Center
- UNIDO Center for South-South Industrial Cooperation (China)
- WMO RTC Nanjing
- Lancang-Mekong Sub-Regional Economic Cooperation and Trade Development Center
- China Meat Research Center
- The New Eurasian Continental Bridge Development Research Center

5.5 SSDC's Management Structure



5.6 Small Grants Projects

	Project Name	Duration	Chinese Partner(s)	Overseas Partner(s)	Core Funding	Parallel Funding	Remarks
1	Sino-Kenya Small Scale Demonstration Project on Solar PV System and Solar Water Heating System	2009.12-2012.03	Gansu Natural Energy Research Institute		US\$ 80,000	US\$ 350,000	Completed
2	International Cooperation of City ICT Application Promotion for the Developing Countries	2010.10 - 2012.12	CIFAL-Shanghai International Training Centre		US\$ 80,000	US\$ 220,000	Completed
3	Training Plan for Popularizing the Automobile Maintenance Technology	2010.10 - 2013.10	Jiangxi Association for International Economic Cooperation		US\$ 60,000	US\$ 140,000	Completed
4	Affordable Housing Technology for Developing Countries	2010.10 – 2011.12	International Centre for Materials Technology Promotion	Ministry of Housing, Eskin Bank, University of Bahrain in Bahrain; Ministry of Urbanization and Spatial Planning; Holding d'Aménagement Al Omran (HAO) in Morocco; Sudan National Fund for Housing and Re-construction	US\$ 60,000	US\$160,000	Completed

	Project Name	Duration	Chinese Partner(s)	Overseas Partner(s)	Core Funding	Parallel Funding	Remarks
5	Technology Transfer Package for Commissioning an Environmental Friendly Pesticide Formulation Plant in Sudan	2011.11-2013.10	United Nations Nantong Pesticide Formulation Development Centre (NPFC)	Senal Agricultural Industry and Chemical Company Ltd Sudan	US\$ 60,000	US\$ 60,000	Completed
6	Improve fish seed production performance in Sri Lanka though technical staff's training and study tour	2013.10-2014.09	Freshwater Fisheries Research Center, Chinese Academy of Fisheries Sciences (FFRC/CAFS)	National Aquaculture Development Authority, Sri Lanka	US\$ 50,000	US\$ 56,000	Completed
7	Improve fish seed production performance in Vietnam though technical staff's training and study tour	2013.09-2014.08	Freshwater Fisheries Research Center, Chinese Academy of Fisheries Sciences (FFRC/CAFS)	Hanoi Department of Agriculture and Rural Development	US\$ 50,000	US\$ 56,000	Completed
8	Building Efficiency and R&D and Application of Energy Efficient Walling Systems Tailored for Vietnam and Cambodia	2014.01-2015.12	International Centre for Materials Technology Promotion	Vietnam Institute of Building Materials, Cambodian Ministry of Housing and Land Resources Management	US\$ 100,000	US\$ 160,000	Completed

	Project Name	Duration	Chinese Partner(s)	Overseas Partner(s)	Core Funding	Parallel Funding	Remarks
9	Technical Cooperation for an Environmental Friendly Bio-insecticide of Emamectin Water Dispersible Granule (WG) Formulation Plant in South Africa	2014.01-2015.12	United Nations Nantong Pesticide Formulation Development Centre (NPFC)	Villa Crop Protection Group (VCPG) of Ministry of Agriculture, South Africa	US\$ 90,000	US\$ 90,000	Completed
10	Exchange and Cooperation of Technology and Management on High Value-added Vegetables	2014.06-2015.06	Promotion Association for Mountain-River-Lake Regional Sustainable Development of Jiangxi Province (MRLSD)	Department of Fisheries, Ministry of Livestock, Fisheries and Rural Development (DoF/MLFRD)	US\$ 50,000	US\$50,000	Completed
11	Technical demonstration of standardized rice-fish farming system in Myanmar	2014.07-2015.12	Freshwater Fisheries Research Center, Chinese Academy of Fisheries Sciences (FFRC/CAFS)	Friends of Lake Victoria, Kenya	US\$ 98,400	US\$99,000	Completed
12	Powering Villages Sustainably: SHP Development in South and South East Asia	2015.08-2016.12	International Centre on Small Hydro Power	Different institutions in Laos and Nepal	US\$ 100,000	US\$192,000	Completed
13	Promoting Africa's Broadcast Television Dubbing Skills	2016.12-2017.11	China-Africa Business Council StarTimes	Tanzania National Television and other relevant agencies	US\$ 100,000	US\$120,000	Completed

	Project Name	Duration	Chinese Partner(s)	Overseas Partner(s)	Core Funding	Parallel Funding	Remarks
14	Promoting Prefabricated Housing in Liberia.	2017.04-2018.03	China-Africa Business Council Hengtong Science and Technology Innovation Saimu Technology Co. Ltd	N/A	US\$ 100,000	US\$ 200,000	Completed
15	Comprehensive Utilization of Wastes and Sustainable Development in Building Materials Sector for Asian Countries along the Belt and Road	2017.10-2018.12	International Centre for Materials Technology Promotion	Vietnam Institute for Building Materials Science	US\$ 100,000	US\$ 100,000	Ongoing
16	Development of Untapped SHP Potential in Selected African Countries	2017.11-2018.11	International Centre on Small Hydro Power	Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa; Federal Ministry of Science and Technology of Nigeria Energy Commission of Ghana	US\$100,000	US\$ 180,000	Ongoing
17	Value-Added Bamboo Processing Development in Vanuatu	2017.11-2018.10	China National Bamboo Research Center	Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock, Forestry, Fisheries and Bio-security (MALFFB), Vanuatu	US\$100,000	US\$ 120,000	Ongoing

	Project Name	Duration	Chinese Partner(s)	Overseas Partner(s)	Core Funding	Parallel Funding	Remarks
18	Promoting Industrial Construction Technologies in Ethiopia	2017.12-2018.11	China-Africa Business Council	Ethiopia Ministry of Urban Development and Housing	US\$100,000	US\$100,000	Ongoing
19	Training Stakeholders in Forest-Fungi System Agroforestry in Nepal, India and China	2018.06-2018.11	Center for Mountain Ecosystems Studies, Kunming Institute of Botany, China Academy of Science	Balipara Tract and Frontier Foundation (India) Ministry of Forest and Environment (Nepal)	US\$50,000	US\$70,000	Ongoing

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