



United Nations
Office for South-South Cooperation

UNOSSC EVALUATION PLAN 2022-2025

11 November 2022

DocuSigned by:
Xiaojun Grace Wang
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Approved by
UNOSSC Director, a.i.

Context

The United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation (UNOSSC) has developed an office-wide Evaluation Plan for its Strategic Framework 2022-2025. This Evaluation Plan should be read alongside the [UNOSSC Strategic Framework 2022-2025](#). The UNOSSC also developed and implemented an evaluation plan 2018-2021 covering the previous strategic framework cycle.

The mandate and the central role of the UNOSSC is to serve as the focal point for promoting and facilitating South-South and triangular cooperation for development on a global and United Nations system-wide basis¹. The UNOSSC in its Strategic Framework 2022-2025 envisions Member States and the United Nations system enhancing South-South cooperation and triangular cooperation as means to accelerate the speed and scale of action towards the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals through the financing, transfer, adaptation and co-design of solutions that address structural development challenges, improve productive capacities and prepare countries for major global transformations. To contribute to this vision, the Office will play a catalytic role, fostering South-South and triangular cooperation knowledge exchange and capacity development as well as facilitating technology development and transfer.²

The evaluation plan is also expected to contribute responding the request made by the Member States in the High-Level Committee on South-South Cooperation (HLC decision 20/1) to ‘improve the impact as well as strengthen the efficiency, effectiveness and transparency of the UNOSSC under the auspices of the United Nations Development Programme, including in the areas of financial, human and budgetary resources’³.

As per UNDP evaluation policy, UNOSSC will undertake “decentralized” evaluations – meaning that the office will commission and manage independent evaluations of its strategic framework and the relevant programmes, projects, initiatives etc. whilst keeping collaboration with UNDP and other UN system entities, as applicable.

UNOSSC considers evaluation is an integral part of its programme/project cycle management and organizational learning. UNOSSC places strong emphasis on evaluations focusing on:

- i. All relevant programmes, projects and other initiatives will include evaluation plans and evaluation line items in budgets.
- ii. Sufficient efforts will be made to implement the planned evaluation in a timely manner ensuring quality.
- iii. Senior Management will review designs and reports of all the evaluations and prepare management responses to the provided evaluation recommendations with the support of the evaluation manager and relevant staff.
- iv. All evaluation reports will be uploaded to the UNDP Independent Evaluation Office (IEO) Evaluation Resource Centre (ERC) website and made publicly available. Upon request, UNOSSC may also organize briefings and discussions on evaluation findings/recommendations.
- v. Management responses will be uploaded to the UNDP IEO Evaluation Resource Center and tracked their implementation progress regularly.
- vi. Emphasis will be given to maximize the utilization of evaluation findings and recommendations to inform the UNOSSC’s decisions making, which also includes a timely adjustment of ongoing programmes and projects and formulation of new programmes and projects.
- vii. Evaluation findings, conclusions and recommendations will be disseminated widely and also utilized in knowledge building within the office and beyond.
- viii. Relevant UNOSSC personnel will be offered the opportunity to build skills in monitoring and evaluation.

¹ BAPA+40 Outcome Document (para 27-h)

² UNOSSC Strategic Framework 2022-2025 (page - 8)

³ HLC decision 20/1 (par - 3)

Purpose

The purpose of this evaluation plan is to enable UNOSSC to systematically assess/evaluate its programmes and projects, produce evaluation findings to support change, support knowledge-gathering and further inform the work of the Office.

Review of the Evaluation Plan

The Evaluation Plan will be reviewed and updated at least on an annual basis.

Evaluation Guidelines

UNOSSC evaluations shall follow the United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG) standards/guidelines, and UNDP Evaluation Policy and Guideline where applicable - as well as considering the principles of South-South cooperation.

Engagement with UNDP

UNOSSC will work in collaboration with UNDP in implementing this evaluation plan and collaborate on following areas.

- IEO will be invited to serve as a technical expert during the recruitment of the evaluators and as a reference/advisory group member while the commissioning of the final evaluation of the UNOSSC strategic framework.
- UNOSSC will consult the IEO Evaluators' Database and the Global Policy Network Experts Roster for Rapid Response as key sources to increase the possibility to hire qualified and suitable evaluators.
- UNOSSC will collaborate with UNDP in monitoring the implementation of the evaluation plan and exchanging necessary evaluation-related information.
- Collaboration with IEO/UNDP will be made in facilitating to development and rolling out of a handbook as a companion to the UNDG/UNEG evaluation guidelines, which can be a reference for evaluating South-South and triangular cooperation initiatives managed by United Nations entities.⁴
- Collaboration with IEO/UNDP will be also made to support the capacity building of UN entities on managing evaluations of their South-South and triangular cooperation initiatives through developing self-paced online training, developing training materials and integrating them into existing M&E training implemented by UN Entities, organizing workshops/side events at the relevant forums (including National Evaluation Capacities Conference), among others⁵.

Evaluations of the UNOSSC Managed Trust Funds Projects

For the evaluations of the Trust Fund Projects (India-UN Fund, IBSA Fund and PGTF) which are implemented by other implementing partners, UNOSSC will advise to include a costed evaluation plan in the design stage of the projects – as applicable, and closely monitor and encourage for the quality implementation of the planned evaluations in a timely manner. UNOSSC shall offer technical support in integrating South-South and triangular cooperation perspectives in the trust fund projects' evaluations, and reviewing TORs, evaluation designs/inception reports and final evaluation reports. UNOSSC will analyze the completed trust fund project evaluation reports and prepare synthesis reports/knowledge products to contribute to decisions making and knowledge-building.

South-South Evaluation Capacity Development

Following the Strategic Framework 2022-2025, UNOSSC will collaborate with the United Nations Inter-Agency Mechanism for South-South and Triangular Cooperation to support the United Nations' efforts in building the

⁴ Following UNOSSC Strategic Framework 2022-2025 and the Collaboration Framework and Work-plan between UNDP and UNOSSC 2022

⁵ *ibid*

capacity of the evaluators of the Global South to evaluate South-South and triangular cooperation initiatives. The Office will also work with the United Nations Evaluation Group and evaluation offices of the various United Nations entities to facilitate integration of South-South and triangular cooperation perspectives into their evaluation guidelines.

UNOSSC will explore working with relevant partners to connect evaluation institutions from the South in order to support research on evaluation and impact assessment approaches to South-South cooperation.

Key capacity development initiatives during the evaluation plan cycle include:

- Facilitate to development and roll-out of a handbook as a companion to the UNDG/UNEG evaluation guidelines, which can be a reference for evaluating South-South and triangular cooperation initiatives managed by United Nations entities.
- Support capacity building of UN entities on commissioning/managing evaluations of their South-South and triangular cooperation initiatives through developing self-paced online training, developing training materials and integrating them into existing M&E training implemented by UN Entities, organizing workshops/side events at the relevant forums, among others.

Collaboration in commissioning evaluations

When appropriate, UNOSSC will work closely with its partners in commissioning and conducting evaluations or assessments of joint interest.

Evaluation of South-South Cooperation and Triangular Cooperation Projects

As an office dedicated to supporting and mainstreaming South-South and triangular cooperation, UNOSSC evaluations should also consider the unique history, principles and spirit of South-South and triangular cooperation.

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 an 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.”⁶

In 2014, the Global South-South Development Academy prepared a discussion paper titled *South-South Cooperation Principles in Practice: the IBSA Fund Experience*.⁷ The paper explored the IBSA Fund’s contribution to South-South cooperation through evidence-based analysis of the Fund’s adherence to five core South-South principles: national ownership and leadership; mutual benefit; equality and horizontality; non-conditionality;

⁶ BAPA+40, para - 8

⁷ Discussion paper available upon request from UNOSSC

and complementarity to North-South cooperation. The below questions have been drawn from this paper and can be used as a reference for UNOSSC evaluations, if and when relevant.

<p>National Leadership and Ownership</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Project objectives should be clearly aligned with the priorities of the country concerned <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Was the project sourced through a demand-driven approach? 2. Does the project follow the government’s stated priorities? – National entities in the beneficiary countries are strongly encouraged to participate in the implementation and to do so with a longer-term perspective <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Is the government engaged? 2. How does the government demonstrate its ownership of the projects? 3. Did the government provide a counter-part to the project? 4. Does the government provide continuous strategic directions to the project’s formulation and implementation? 5. Have the directions provided by the government guided the activities and outcomes of the project? 6. Has there been a buy-in process, or was there no need for advocacy for the project and buy support? 7. Is there high-level representation from the beneficiary country at project milestone events? – Projects should seek to improve or create sustainable activities to continue in a longer-term perspective <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Does the project employ government implementing and/or monitoring systems? 2. Is the government involved in the sustainability strategy for the project outcomes?
<p>Mutual Benefit</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Projects are encouraged to utilize mutual exchange between developing countries <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Does the project support mutual benefits through sharing of knowledge and experiences, training, technology transfer? 2. Are there mutual gains? – Projects are encouraged to utilize the capacities and expertise available in participating countries <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Does the cooperation make use of participating country capacities? How?
<p>Equality and Horizontality</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Project objectives contribute to the beneficiary country’s efforts to achieve national development goals. – Projects are encouraged to utilize mutual exchange between developing countries – Projects should identify and strengthen local capacities – with preference for capacities provided through cooperation <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Is there a preference for utilizing local capacities and strengthening them? 2. Are local actors deemed to be the best suited to understand their singularities and conditions and to propose the course of action? 3. Do partners cooperate as peers; consider each other as equals and their relationship as horizontal (non-hierarchical)? 4. Are partners free to express their concerns? Do they discuss and negotiate on equal footing?
<p>Non-conditionality</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – No conditions on support are established in project guidelines/documents <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Did the project or project partners establish any conditions required for the cooperation to take place?
<p>Complementarity to North-South Cooperation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Project objectives should be clearly aligned with the priorities of the country concerned – Projects are encouraged to make use of new ways of approaching development issues, where appropriate, with emphasis on the replication and innovative experiences already implemented in other developing countries

	<p>1. Is the cooperation complementary to North-South cooperation by fulfilling all of the following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. It is not a substitute to NSC but acts side-by-side b. It is not the same as NSC but different and distinct c. It adds value, complements with other forms of contributions
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Evaluation management

As per the UNDP Evaluation Guidelines, evaluation management should be separate from programme/project management. Where the implementing office has a monitoring and evaluation (M&E) specialist or focal point, they should take the evaluation manager role. Where there is no such position, an evaluation manager should be assigned by senior management (i.e. the UNOSSC Director). To avoid conflicts of interest, the evaluation manager cannot be the manager of the programme/project being evaluated. In the context of the UNOSSC, the Result-Based Management Specialist takes the evaluation focal point/manager role.

Potential Risks and Mitigation Strategies

#	Potential Risks	Mitigation Strategies
1	Evaluations are not sufficiently costed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UNOSSC staff will be informed of UNDP Evaluation Policy requirements on planning and resource allocation for evaluations. • Line items for evaluations are to be included in the design of all relevant UNOSSC programmes and project documents along with specific budget lines.
2	Evaluations do not meet UNDP/UNEG quality standards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relevant UNOSSC staff will be offered opportunities to build knowledge and skills in monitoring and evaluation. • UNOSSC will assign an Evaluation Manager having the required expertise to manage the evaluations. • UNOSSC will give priority to hiring evaluators having knowledge/experience on UNDP/UNEG evaluation policies and standards.
3	South-South programmes/projects may not be evaluated in line with South-South cooperation principles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alignment with South-South principles as a key aspect of evaluations to be written into the relevant evaluation terms of references. • Efforts will be made to recruit independent evaluators with experience in South-South and triangular cooperation.
4	Evaluations may not be started and completed on time.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UNOSSC Senior Management will monitor the timely implementation of the planned evaluations with help of the Evaluation Focal Point.
5	Management responses of the evaluations may not be prepared on time and key actions tracked regularly	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UNOSSC Senior Management will prepare management responses to each completed evaluation in a timely manner, and track the implementation of the agreed key actions in the management responses regularly with the help of the Evaluation Focal Point.
6	COVID-19 or other similar disasters may hamper in implementing the planned evaluations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UNOSSC will continuously monitor scenarios and also may consult with UNDP for guidance to identify the best possible options. • UNOSSC shall assign the evaluator to commission the evaluation through remote data collection – where applicable.

Planned Evaluations

UNOSSC Strategic Framework Outcome	UNDP Strategic Plan Results Area	Evaluation Title	Partners (Joint Evaluation)	Type of Evaluation	Planned Completion Date	Key stakeholders	Estimated Cost	Provisional Source of Funding	Status
<p>1 OUTCOME 1. Strengthened multilateral policymaking processes to advance Southern interests and development agenda, and enhanced coherence and coordination of United Nations support.</p> <p>OUTCOME 2. Capacities of Member States, the United Nations system and other partners in South-South and triangular cooperation strengthened through enhanced generation and sharing of knowledge and access to high-quality advisory services.</p> <p>OUTCOME 3. South-South and triangular cooperation partnership initiatives and demand driven programmes facilitated to address sustainable development needs of developing countries.</p> <p><i>Note: the above outcome statements are from UNOSSC Strategic Framework 2018-2021. The evaluation report is at the management response development stage.</i></p>	NA	Final Evaluation of UNOSSC Strategic Framework 2018-2021	-	UNOSSC Strategic Framework Final evaluation/Outcome	Nov 2022		USD 60,000	Regular resources	Ongoing
<p>2 OUTCOME 3. Developing countries are enabled to implement the 2030 Agenda through harnessing South-South and triangular cooperation knowledge exchange, capacity-building and facilitation of technology development and transfer.</p>	NA	Joint-Mid Term Review of the Cities Project and the GSSDC Project	-	Project Mid-term Review/project	Apr 2023		35,000	Project budget	Initiated
<p>3 OUTCOME 1. Policies to advance South-South and triangular cooperation are strengthened through effective, evidence-based support to intergovernmental processes, multi-stakeholder dialogues and reporting.</p> <p>OUTCOME 2. The capacity of United Nations entities to respond to requests by developing countries to address specific development challenges in implementing the 2030 Agenda through South-South and triangular cooperation is strengthened.</p>	NA	Mid-term review of UN System wide Strategy on South-South and triangular cooperation	UN Interagency Mechanism for South-South & Triangular Cooperation	UN System wide Strategy on South-South and triangular cooperation/Outcome	Oct 2023		40,000	Regular resources	Planned
<p>4 OUTCOME 3. Developing countries are enabled to implement the 2030 Agenda through harnessing South-South and triangular cooperation knowledge exchange, capacity-building and facilitation of technology development and transfer.</p>	NA	Mid-Term Evaluation of ROK-UNOSSC Facility Phase III	-	Project Mid-term evaluation/project	June 2023		25,000	Project budget	Planned
<p>5 OUTCOME 3. Developing countries are enabled to implement the 2030 Agenda through harnessing South-South and triangular cooperation knowledge exchange, capacity-building and facilitation of technology development and transfer.</p>	NA	Joint-Final Evaluation of the Cities Project and the Global South-	-	Project final evaluation/project	Mar 2025		35,000	Project budget	Planned

UNOSSC Strategic Framework Outcome	UNDP Strategic Plan Results Area	Evaluation Title	Partners (Joint Evaluation)	Type of Evaluation	Planned Completion Date	Key stakeholders	Estimated Cost	Provisional Source of Funding	Status
<i>Note: this evaluation to be used as one of the case studies for the Final Evaluation of UNOSSC SF 2022-2025.</i>		South Development Center Project							
<p>OUTCOME 1. Policies to advance South-South and triangular cooperation are strengthened through effective, evidence-based support to intergovernmental processes, multi-stakeholder dialogues and reporting.</p> <p>OUTCOME 2. The capacity of United Nations entities to respond to requests by developing countries to address specific development challenges in implementing the 2030 Agenda through South-South and triangular cooperation is strengthened.</p> <p>OUTCOME 3. Developing countries are enabled to implement the 2030 Agenda through harnessing South-South and triangular cooperation knowledge exchange, capacity-building and facilitation of technology development and transfer.</p>	NA	Final Evaluation of UNOSSC Strategic Framework 2022-2025	-	UNOSSC Strategic Framework Final evaluation/Outcome	Sep 2025		USD 60,000	Regular resources	Planned
<p>OUTCOME 1. Policies to advance South-South and triangular cooperation are strengthened through effective, evidence-based support to intergovernmental processes, multi-stakeholder dialogues and reporting.</p> <p>OUTCOME 2. The capacity of United Nations entities to respond to requests by developing countries to address specific development challenges in implementing the 2030 Agenda through South-South and triangular cooperation is strengthened.</p>	NA	Final Evaluation of UN System wide Strategy on South-South and triangular cooperation	UN Interagency Mechanism for South-South & Triangular Cooperation	UN System wide Strategy on South-South and triangular cooperation/Outcome	Dec 2025		60,000	Regular resources	Planned
<p>OUTCOME 3. Developing countries are enabled to implement the 2030 Agenda through harnessing South-South and triangular cooperation knowledge exchange, capacity-building and facilitation of technology development and transfer.</p>	NA	Final Evaluation of ROK-UNOSSC Facility Phase III	-	Project final evaluation	Dec 2025		30,000	Project budget	Planned

[End]