

Statement
by
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at the
NeST Technical Workshop: Updating the M&E Framework for South-South
Cooperation
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Distinguished Participants,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

I have to apologize for not being able to join you in person but still, it is a distinct honor and privilege for me to be able to convey my short message to you through video and to launch, with you, this review process of the yearlong development of the first iteration of a monitoring and evaluating framework of South-South cooperation at this NeST Technical workshop, which to me, symbolizes the priority and importance of such a framework in our efforts to make measurable impact in changing and transforming our world.

We know two things.

One: We know that over the past 20 years South-South cooperation has grown exponentially in intensity, modality and geographic reach.

Two: We know that, in our cross hairs, is an ambitious development programme as laid out by the now one year old Agenda 2030 for

which we are accountable to 17 sustainable development goals and 169 targets.

What do these two things mean? Let me start with number one:

The last two decades have given credence to South-South cooperation more than ever before. South-South cooperation is now recognized as an important complementary source not only of financing of global, regional and national development, but also for sharing and exchanging knowledge and experience of critical development challenges overcome in southern countries. The past 20 years of the boom of South-South cooperation have naturally led to a need or quest to account and quantify these significant flows of human, financial, knowledge and technological transfer between developing countries.

This, however, is no easy feat. Understanding South-South Cooperation in terms of flow, scale, trend, and impact is difficult for several reasons not least of which is the challenge it poses for many national governments as well as international institutions from a capacity point of view.

In addition, there are inconsistencies in recording what actually constitutes South-South cooperation across countries, making the collection, analysis and compilation of data on South-South cooperation unreliable. As a result, the availability of data and the quality of research on the scale and impact of South-South

cooperation has not kept pace with the growing demand for information, intelligence and data. Knowledge gaps and uneven access to solutions are bottlenecks to the scaling-up of South-South cooperation and the maximization of its impact on sustainable development

On to my second point - so we know Agenda 2030 has placed in front of us a hefty global development programme for the next 15 years. It is clear that South-South cooperation is pivotal to the implementation of Agenda 2030, across the full gamut of SDGs for example: Goal 7 -- sustainable and affordable energy, Goal 9 -- infrastructural development and of course, Goal 17 which calls for a strengthening of 'the means of implementation', of which South-South cooperation is among.

In order to deliver on these 17 goals and measure progress on the 169 targets, data is a must! The monitoring framework required for such an endeavor is sure to be larger than was required for our last framework – the MDGs, its sure to be much more complex given we are now looking at 169 targets, and in some instances requires new data. Many of the countries of the global South do indeed have a significant gap to bridge insofar as data collection, analysis are concerned. They have national development plans to which such data would be invaluable for instance to better monitor poverty, keep track of gains in education and healthcare in their efforts to illustrate that the lives of their citizens are improving.

In tandem with the sustainable development goals and targets, the Addis Ababa Agenda lays presses the issue of *how* the targets will be met. Where will the financing come from? How exactly will South-South cooperation help as a “means of implementation”. There is therefore, a need to better understand South-South cooperation through data and evidence to enable extraction of its full value in contributing to the achievement of Agenda 2030 and the Addis Ababa Action Agenda.

So for me, it is such an honor to be a part of this workshop – where the Network of Southern Thinktanks -- NeST has taken the leadership role in trying to establish a framework that will allow defining and measuring South-South cooperation. This is critical as we know that the OECD is developing a framework for measurement of overall contributions both from the north and the south to meeting the SDGs. This means that they will set out a possible framework for measuring SSC. So it is my firm view and belief that there is a “fierce urgency of now” for the South to lead and shape, such a measurement framework, on its own terms, using concepts and methodologies appropriate to the South.

Let me close by again expressing my appreciation to NeST Africa, Oxfam and Instituto Mora for organizing this workshop. UNOSSC is very pleased to have had the opportunity to speak with you as you kickoff this very important work over the next 2 days. I wish you the best in the workshop and trust that there will be a role for UNOSSC and other relevant UN bodies in such a framework. I very much look

forward to the validation process by countries of the South, deliberations, outcomes, actions and next steps.