



DEVELOPING A CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK FOR SOUTH–SOUTH CO-OPERATION

Working Document
September 2015

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Abstract

In March 2015 a group of 25 prominent academics and development co-operation experts from the global South gathered in Midrand, South Africa to discuss a common analytical framework for South–South co-operation. This was the first technical workshop of the Network of Southern Think Tanks (NeST). As part of a wider consultation to provide inputs to NeST’s conceptual work, a multi-stakeholder policy dialogue on the topic ‘Emerging Partners in Africa’s Development’¹ was organised to discuss the role and contribution of South–South co-operation to international development and appropriate monitoring and accountability frameworks for such. The outcome of these meetings was further enriched by a subsequent NeST technical working group held in Johannesburg in early September 2015 to develop indicators to measure the quality of South–South partnerships and processes.

The following document attempts to capture the conclusions, consensus and divergences that emerged in the various technical workshops held among experts and academics from NeST. These meetings benefited from the contributions of representatives from Brazil; China; Colombia; India; Kenya; Malawi; Mexico; Mozambique; Namibia; South Africa; Turkey; Uganda; and Zimbabwe. The document is a work in progress but nonetheless provides insights into the conceptual and methodological aspects of measuring the quantum, quality and impact of South–South co-operation in international development enterprises.



Participants in the NeST technical workshop in Midrand, 4–5 March 2015

¹ For more information, pictures, conference proceedings report and other resources coming out of the Multi-Stakeholder Policy Dialogue on 'Emerging Donors in Africa', see SAIIA (South African Institute of International Affairs), <http://www.saiia.org.za/events/emerging-partners-in-africas-development-measuring-the-impact-of-south-south-cooperation-ness>

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List of Acronyms and Abbreviations

CICETE:	China International Centre for Economic and Technical co-operation
CRS:	OECD-DAC Creditor Reporting System
CSO:	civil society organisation
DAC:	(OECD) Development Assistance Committee
DC:	development co-operation
GPEDC:	Global Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation
HLM:	high-level meeting
M&E:	monitoring and evaluation
NSC:	North–South co-operation
ODA:	official development assistance
OECD:	Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development
RBM:	results-based management
SADPA:	South African Development Partnership Agency
SEGIB:	Ibero-American General Secretariat (Latin American advancement of political, economic and cultural co-operation)
SSC:	South–South co-operation
SSDC:	South–South development co-operation
UNDCF:	UN Development Cooperation Forum
UNDESA:	UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs
UNCTAD:	UN Conference on Trade and Development
UNDP:	UN Development Programme
UNOSCC:	UN Office for South–South Cooperation

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Introduction

Evolving trends in South–South co-operation

South–South co-operation (SSC) had its roots in the Non-Aligned Movement and the historic conferences of Bandung (1955), Buenos Aires (1978) and Nairobi (2009), which set out the principles for economic and technical co-operation among developing countries. Since then SSC has become an important feature of the international development landscape. SSC is increasingly playing a major role in global trade, finance, investment and governance. These changes have opened up opportunities for further partnerships between countries in the South, as evidenced by the plethora of new initiatives aimed at fostering political, economic and social relations. At the political level, there have been growing initiatives to promote South–South partnerships, which are generally perceived as being more economical, effective and favourable than the previous North–South aid relations.

Many aid recipient countries acknowledge that emerging development partners come from similar realities and have more relevant developmental experience, technical capacity and practical know-how they can learn from. SSC has therefore gained traction particularly in Africa, in supporting regional infrastructure development, transferring knowledge and introducing different paradigms and approaches to poverty eradication.

In the past 15 years SSC has been growing in prominence due to a rise in quantum, geographical reach and the diversity of approaches to new forms of development partnerships. This has occurred against the recent background of declining aid flows from North–South co-operation (NSC), as result of the global financial crisis and efforts by traditional donors to share global development responsibilities with the new emerging economies. The Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) reported in 2013 that development aid had fallen by 4% in real terms in 2012, following a 2% fall in the previous year. The unremitting financial crisis and euro zone turmoil had led to several governments tightening their budgets. This in turn has had an impact on overall official development assistance (ODA) flows.²

While Northern donors have pushed for the inclusion of new development partners in systems led by the OECD Development Assistance Committee (DAC), this has been met with resistance by Southern partners, which are not interested in conforming to global regimes that they did not create and that they feel are inappropriate for their specific types of engagement.³

There is nevertheless a growing consensus that South–South co-operation is often poorly understood and that much knowledge and evidence gaps persist with regard to such co-operation. Accounting and reporting on SSC flows is weak and inconsistent, in great part due to the lack of a common definition and conceptual framework for Southern partnerships. This also results from the data limitations and weak information management systems of most emerging development partners, as these struggle to produce accurate aggregate data regarding their total development co-operation. Moreover,

² OECD (Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development), *Aid to Poor Countries Slips Further as Governments Tighten Budgets*, 3 April 2013, <http://www.oecd.org/dac/stats/aidtopoorcountriesslipsfurtherasgovernmentstightenbudgets.htm>, 13 August 2015.

³ *NeST Inception Document*, Beijing, October 2014.

demands for accountability and more impactful development programming are also increasingly coming from the citizens, taxpayers and civil society of both partners in SSC endeavours.⁴

While NSC has had a narrative that has evolved for 50 years, SSC needs a space for the exchange and systematisation of knowledge and the development of a common narrative among South–South partners. Such a platform can assist developing countries to consolidate a stronger common position in various global development forums that can interact with the dominant OECD-DAC discourse.

The Delhi Conference of Southern Providers, held in April 2013, aimed at exploring some of the above issues. It unpacked some of the fundamental principles and modalities of SSC and assessed where the most persistent gaps lie, both analytically and institutional.⁵ The conference was influential in establishing the political forum of the Core Group of Southern Providers within the UN Development Cooperation Forum (UNDCF),⁶ and in stimulating the establishment of an academic/technical group that would assist Southern development agencies to improve evidence, knowledge and understanding around SCC – its approaches, modalities and instruments.

The Network of Southern Think Tanks

The Network of Southern Think Tanks (NeST) was established on the sidelines of the first high-level meeting (HLM) of the Global Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation (GPEDC) in Mexico in April 2014, and as a follow-up to the Conference of Southern Providers held in Delhi in April 2013. The network has committed itself to ‘generating, systematising, consolidating and sharing knowledge on South–South co-operation (SSC) approaches to international development’. A collaborative initiative for the South by the South, NeST is primarily a think tank and academic forum that provides policy inputs into the arena of SSC. NeST welcomes inputs from a diversity of Southern stakeholders, through the open engagement of governments, civil society organisations (CSOs), private sector institutions and various Southern practitioners, to contribute towards creating a unified understanding and framework for debates around SSC.⁷

About this document

The following SSC conceptual framework summarises the discussions around definitions, criteria, indicators, and methodologies, to assess the quantity, quality and impact of SSC. It is based on the debate held in South Africa at NeST’s technical workshop from 2–5 March 2015 in Midrand, and the technical working group on SSC indicators held on 3–4 September 2015 in Johannesburg. The two technical workshops brought together experts with strong knowledge of SSC; technical expertise in statistics, economics, monitoring and evaluation (M&E) and indicator development; and with close links to Southern policymakers. Countries represented included Brazil, China; Colombia; India; Kenya; Malawi; Mexico; Mozambique; South Africa; Thailand; Turkey; Uganda; and Zimbabwe. The diversity

⁴ *ibid*

⁵ *Conference on Southern Providers South-South Cooperation: Issues and Emerging Challenges*. (2013). Retrieved May 1, 2015, from Research and Information System for Developing Countries: <http://ris.org.in/publications/reportsbooks/662>

⁶ For more information on the UNDCF conference for the Core Group of Southern Providers outcome <http://www.un.org/en/ecosoc/newfuncnt/dcfdelhi.shtml>

⁷ See *NeST Inception Document*, Beijing, October 2014

in Southern experts allowed for a rich debate on the purpose, approach and implications of SSC in global and regional development; providing a forum where important steps could be undertaken towards a more consensual understanding of SSC issues. A full list of participants in and contributors to the NeST technical workshops in Midrand and Johannesburg is available in Annexure 4.

The Midrand technical workshop was preceded by a multi-stakeholder policy dialogue that included representatives of governments and civil society from Africa and emerging economies. This sparked lively debate and provided useful inputs for the subsequent technical discussions around the SSC framework developed by the Southern academics. The document also benefited from the inputs received by South African experts and stakeholders who reviewed the draft framework at the second NeST South Africa reference group meeting held on 2 September 2015 in Johannesburg. The document is divided into sections, which follow the same structure as the discussions of the NeST technical workshops, and integrate the written contributions and proposals provided by the various Southern experts in preparation for these meetings.

With the intent to develop a common accounting framework, the first part of the document discusses the definition of SSC, looking at the instruments and modalities through which co-operation is organised. The second part of the document looks at information management platforms and the establishment of an institutional hub where data on SSC flows could be collected, analysed and disseminated. The third part offers some methodological approaches to measure the impact of SSC, and the fourth looks at ways to assess quality and effectiveness, through an initial proposed set of indicators for SSC. The document concludes with the next steps forward to be taken by NeST with regard to research, training and policy support around SSC.

The current draft remains a working document for continuous inputs, edits, updates and revisions by members of NeST, its various national and regional chapters, international experts and the public at large concerned with the analysis of SSC. The document systematises the results of the NeST discussions so that the outcome can be further reviewed, refined and tested by various national and regional chapters. This analytical framework is seen primarily as a tool for research, but elements therein can be adapted and used by Southern governments, civil society, private sector and development agencies for conducting monitoring and evaluation activities around SSC.

Any input and feedback into this working document are welcome and can be sent directly to nest-africa@saiia.org.za.

Defining South–South Co-operation

For the past four decades the OECD-DAC definition of ODA⁸ has been the dominant parameter to quantify development co-operation.

Textbox 1: OECS-DAC definition of ODA

The OECD Statistical directives, paragraph 35, define ODA as:

....flows to countries and territories on the DAC list of ODA recipients and to multilateral development institutions which are:

- a) provided by official agencies, including state and local governments, or by their executive agencies;*
- b) administered with the promotion of the economic development and welfare of developing countries as its main objective;*
- c) concessional in character and conveys a grant element of at least 25% (calculated at a rate of discount of 10%).*

The above definition is currently being debated within the DAC itself,⁹ and it is at the same time also criticised by many Southern partners, which argue that this definition is too narrow and does not capture the specificity and full extent of their SSC activities. Different interpretations, understandings and concepts of ‘development assistance’ can be found among OECD-DAC donors and even among Southern partners.

SSC, for instance, considers many activities excluded from the ODA definition, such as credit lines, tariff reductions, investment promotion (especially in infrastructure), trade, , some student scholarships, cost reductions on remittances, support for private sector development and some forms of development loans (considered by the DAC not to be concessional). Developing countries have convincingly argued that such other forms of co-operation constitute powerful instruments for promoting development and yet are excluded from the traditional OECD-DAC definitions, which are narrower and privilege mainly grants and concessional loans. Furthermore, some aspects of peacekeeping and humanitarian and refugee support are also excluded from ODA, although it is clear that development cannot occur in countries that are not safe, peaceful and stabilised.

On the other hand, SSC is broadly understood as the exchange of resources, technology, skills and technical know-how among countries of the South, as well as the building of coalitions to promote social, economic, cultural, political and scientific development and to transform global governance power balance.¹⁰ Its roots are found in the solidarity politics and alliances formed by newly

⁸ OECD DAC Statistics, Official Development Assistance – definition and coverage:

<http://www.oecd.org/dac/stats/officialdevelopmentassistancedefinitionandcoverage.htm>

⁹ see DAC HLM, 2013, HLM 2014

<http://www.oecd.org/dac/Outcomes%20of%20the%202014%20OECD%20DAC%20HLM.pdf>

¹⁰ Buenos Aires Plan of Action, 1978

independent countries of Africa, Asia and Latin America, which came together at the Bandung conference in 1955 to set out an agenda that would lay the foundation for co-ordinated action for decades to come.¹¹ SSC is guided by the principles of respect for national sovereignty, national ownership and independence, equality, non-conditionality, non-interference in domestic affairs and mutual benefit.¹² SSC is not a substitute for but a complement to NSC and aims to establish horizontal co-operation for mutual benefit.¹³

In the past SSC was dominated by state-to-state relations, but since the Nairobi Outcome Document in 2009 SSC has increasingly promoted a multi-stakeholder approach including non-governmental organisations, the private sector, civil society, academia and other actors that contribute to development.¹⁴ Some of SSC occurs between parliaments, provincial/state, municipal/local governments and social movements, therefore frameworks to guide SSC should take into account of the evolving sub-national and the multi-stakeholder nature of co-operation activities between developing countries.

In order to be useful for policy and for research, the definition of South–South ‘development’ co-operation (SSDC) must be clearly delineated and distinguished from the traditional North–South aid approaches and from other kinds of more general co-operation that take place among developing countries.

The development of a common definition and conceptual framework for SSDC is paramount and constitutes the foundation for any subsequent accounting, reporting, information management, monitoring and evaluation exercise, discussed later in this document.

Unpacking South–South development co-operation

Southern partners face the challenge of language and concepts that need to be defined and adapted to contemporary times to move forward from the SSC debates of the 20th century. Academic circles within the South, including the current discussions in NeST, continue to debate the relationship between development co-operation (DC) and SSC. Some view SSC as a form of co-operation in the wider arena of DC, while others consider DC to be intrinsically part of a bigger SSC framework.

Some have argued that SSC is too broad and rather put forward the term of SSDC to define the specific ‘development co-operation’ coming from other Southern partners. Others oppose the term of SSDC, as it emerged out of the OECD-DAC and GPEDC debates, which are linked to the ODA conception of co-operation with which Southern partners are uncomfortable.

The Buenos Aires Plan of Action (1978) in fact outlines SSC to comprise technical and economic co-operation between developing countries. SSC is therefore multi-faceted and includes trade,

¹¹ Besharati, N, “Common goals and differential commitments, the role of emerging economies in global development”, German Development Institute Discussion Paper 26/2013. Johannesburg 2013.

¹² U. N. General Assembly (2010). *Nairobi outcome document of the High-Level United Nations Conference on South-South Cooperation 2009*. Resolution Adopted by the General Assembly.

¹³ Ibid, p. 3

¹⁴ Ibid

investment, aid, lending and debt relief, capacity development, technology and knowledge transfer. All together these elements contribute to a larger ‘development compact’ of SSC.¹⁵

Just as in ODA,¹⁶ what drives the definition of SSDC is the ‘motive’ behind the provision of co-operation, namely to promote the economic and social welfare of developing countries. Some argue, however, that all SSC has a developmental purpose. Within UN discussions (UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs [UNDESA]; UN Development Cooperation Forum [UNDCF], UN Development Programme [UNDP]) the concessional flows are what differentiate SSDC from SSC, encompassing all types of Southern links, including trade and investment. With the inception of SSC at the time of the Bandung summit, the term co-operation was used more in the political sphere, but today Southern countries use the term SSC to encompass much of the economic relations between them.¹⁷

Another aspect that has evolved in SSC has been the element of inclusivity and stakeholder participation. Previously much of SSC occurred at high level political circles with presidential visits and summits such as the Africa-South America Summit (ASA), the India-Brazil-South Africa Dialogue Forum (IBSA Forum), the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation (FOCAC) and the BRICS. Increasingly, however, civil society, academia and businesses are engaging more in the SSC process, contributing to the transparency and accountability of the development results that emerge from these partnerships. The principle of broad-based participation affirmed in the more recent Southern conferences (Nairobi 2009, Bogota 2010) therefore needs to be applied to the modern notion of South–South development relations.

A few useful definitions for SSDC offered at the NeST technical workshop included the following:

- Articulação SUL (Brazil) defined SSDC as an intersection between international development co-operation and SSC, comprehending the flows of technical co-operation, financial or in-kind donations and concessional loans among developing countries aimed at tackling primary development problems. (However, the center also cautions against separating SSDC from the web of relationships of SSC, as it may give an incomplete understanding of interests, mutual gains, and the results and impact of such initiatives.)
- The South African government has previously referred to development co-operation as ‘the co-operation between countries in the field of aid, trade, security and politics to promote economic and social well-being in developing countries’.¹⁸ These could include bi-lateral assistance as well as support to regional and multilateral development institutions. It is not only co-operation among official government (national and subnational) agencies but also among non-state actors such as parliaments, academia, civil society and private sector.¹⁹

¹⁵ Terms and concepts put forth by various participants of the NeST technical workshop in Midrand, 4 March 2015.

¹⁶ See, for instance, <http://devpolicy.org/oda-what-counts-as-aid20110506/>.

¹⁷ Bracho, G, ‘In Search of a Narrative for Southern Providers: The Challenge of the Emerging Economies to the Development Cooperation Agenda’, German Development Institute, 2015.

¹⁸ DIRCO (Department of International Relations and Cooperation), ‘Establishment of SADPA’, Presentation to the NCOP Select Committee on Trade and International Relations, 3 August 2011, <http://www.safpi.org/sites/default/files/110803sadpa-edit.pdf>.

¹⁹ See Report of NeST South Africa launch meeting, 28 January 2015, available at <http://www.saiia.org.za/events/launching-of-nest-south-africa-reference-group>

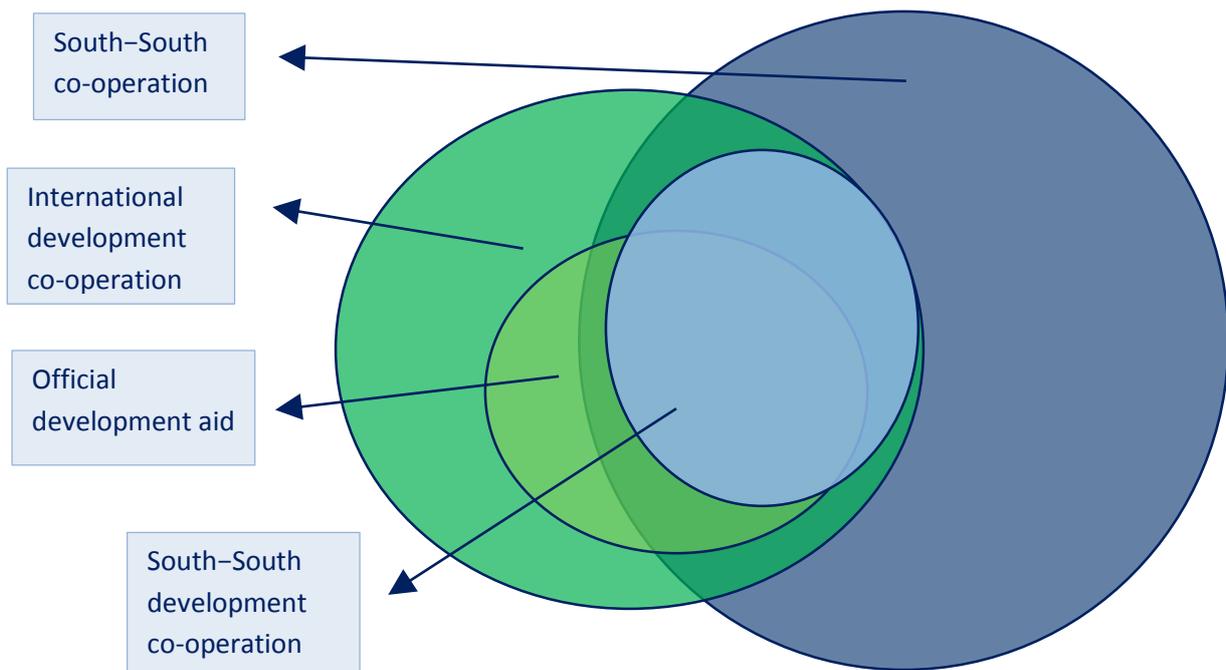
While remaining a highly contested topic, the NeST technical working group concluded that,

1. SSC, DC, SSDC and ODA are four distinct concepts, each defined to cover a specific domain of international co-operation, although there could be several overlaps between them (see Figure 1).
2. SSDC is a subset of SSC, which refers to wider South–South relations that are not all necessarily based on promoting developmental objectives (ie, South–South arms trade, language and cultural exchanges, etc.).
3. SSDC is broader than the OECD-DAC’s definition of ODA (discussed below) and includes peacekeeping, debt relief, student scholarships, humanitarian/refugee support and possibly some trade facilitation and investment promotion measures (to be unpacked further).
4. SSC should include not only ‘official’ co-operation between governments but also co-operation between the peoples and CSOs of developing countries.
5. The degree of concessionality of a Southern loan need to be further unpacked and scrutinised before inclusion in the definition of SSDC.

While endeavouring to construct a common conceptual framework for SSC, flexibility needs to be maintained to allow for countries to adapt to their own specificities and context. A definition for SSC should be broad enough to recognise the diverse approaches of different Southern partners while allowing for innovation and alignment to core SSC values and principles.

NeST acknowledges the growing role of trilateral co-operation and its arrangements in relation to SSC, but the topic needs to be explored in more depth at future meetings of the network.

Figure 1: Relationship between the terms of SSC, IDC, SSDC and ODA



NOTE: The above section endeavours to clarify the meaning and the differences between the terms SSC and SSDC, nevertheless, due to the extended use of the term SSC in academic and policy circles, in this framework document from this point onwards, both terms will be used interchangeably. However, the meaning that remains behind SSC refers to the developmental component of the cooperation endeavours.

Accounting of South–South co-operation

Accounting of SSC is made difficult by the fact that Southern partners do not subscribe to a common definition and reporting parameters for SSC. The quantification and accounting of SSC is problematic for several reasons:

- There is no consistent, recognised way of recording SSC by the various Southern countries.
- The institutions in charge of carrying out development co-operation in individual countries are often highly fragmented and lack a central co-ordinating institution and standard reporting framework; and/or have not developed an effective communication system between the wide gamut of implementing agencies.
- Data is often unreliable and incomplete.
- Transparency and accountability are weak.
- There is a lack of a common methodology for data collection, analysis and reporting.
- Much of SSC consists of technical co-operation and knowledge transfer, typically intangible assets, to which it is difficult to assign a monetary value.
- There is no standard measurement of the value of experts and officials seconded from different countries' SSC and exchanges.

Nonetheless, a) to bridge the current wide information gap in SSC; b) to allow more transparency and accountability towards citizens of developing countries (in both partners' countries); and c) to provide standardised data that will allow for comparison of SSC flows between Southern partners as well as traditional OECD-DAC donors, it is paramount that a common conceptual framework is developed for the quantification and accounting of SSC among developing countries.

Identifying and measuring the elements that are similar and different in the co-operation activities of different Southern partners can assist in developing a common conceptual understanding for SSDC. This process can start with the elements and components of SSDC that are clear, measurable and non-controversial. Some forms of SSDC are too difficult to measure and are more contested, therefore these can be further discussed and incorporated in future phases of analysis.

While acknowledging that this list is still not comprehensive, the NeST technical working group identified and agreed upon the following instruments and modalities that can be included in the quantification of SSDC. The elements marked with an asterisk are more complex and contentious and thus require further unpacking in future NeST discussions.

Table 1: SSDC Instruments and modalities

Instruments (How?)	Modalities (What?)
Grants	Cultural and educational co-operation
Loans (concessional and non)*	Peace-building and post-conflict reconstruction
Technical co-operation (technological transfers; capacity development; knowledge exchange)	Humanitarian assistance and refugee support*
In-kind contributions – goods, products, experts	Infrastructure development
Direct budget support	Contributions to multilateral development institutions
Debt relief/cancellation	Trade*
Credit lines*	Investment*
Public-private partnerships*	Scientific and technological co-operation
Scholarships	

Outstanding issues for debate

- As many different types of loans and lines of credit are provided by different Southern partners, there needs to be clarity on the level of concessionality of the loans (and how this will be measured) before considering such flows as development co-operation.
- While some participants advocated for the inclusion of export credits, public-private partnerships (PPPs), preferential trade and investment, other NeST members were not comfortable with including such flows in the accounting of SSDC, as their developmental vis-à-vis commercial intent is debatable.

→ **FOLLOW-UP ACTION: A special NeST working group on South-South trade, investment and PPPs will be established to discuss this complex issue further.**

- Defense co-operation and security expenditures need to be more closely assessed as to whether they effectively contribute to developmental impact, and how. Similarly humanitarian assistance, peacekeeping and refugee support have been traditionally limited within the ODA definition, therefore the same level of scrutiny needs to occur when it comes to SSDC.
- It was generally acknowledged that monetising technical co-operation, knowledge transfer and deployment of experts to developing countries will always remain a challenging endeavor. Monetising SSC is not only methodologically challenging but also politically sensitive. SSC

cannot be reduced to a development financing mechanism, but is a process of knowledge exchange that contributes to mutual development. Hence there might be political resistance to the monetising of technical co-operation between developing countries.

→ ***FOLLOW-UP ACTION: A special NeST working group on quantifying and accounting SSC will be established to finalise this discussion and develop a common system of SSC reporting that various Southern partners can use as a reference.***

Information Management for South–South Co-operation

‘A common global hub dedicated to the collection, compilation, processing, analysis and dissemination of development co-operation information from the South is a task that is long overdue. With the rise in flows of capital due to South–South development co-operation activities and anticipating this volume to only grow in the future, crafting its own information and statistical management system should be an important agenda going forward.’²⁰

In principle everyone agrees that transparency and accountability are important features that should also characterise SSC flows. Transparency is important for both the taxpayers and the citizens of partner countries involved in SSC endeavours. Issues of accountability and transparency need to be considered carefully for the legitimacy of SSC; however, the degree of transparency and openness of information varies significantly among Southern partners. SSC should not be only an activity between governments. CSOs from the South need to claim this space too. This has political implications on how Southern partners set up their engagement structures with their various internal and external stakeholders, and how they make SSC information publicly available.

Information on SSC can generally be divided in two main categories:

- *Qualitative information*
 - Typically case studies, lessons learned during evaluations and comparative studies from different countries, which look at SSC projects in different geographic regions, sectors (agriculture, health, infrastructure, etc.), using different approaches, modalities and instruments.
- *Statistical information*
 - Aggregated and disaggregated quantitative data on SSC flows (whether financial or in-kind), which can measure volumes and allocations and indicate trends over time and across SSC partners.

The first type of information is often used for knowledge exchange and peer learning among developing countries with similar challenges and contexts. One of the distinctive features of SSC is the exchange of experiences, know-how and public policies previously tested in countries facing similar development challenges. Such qualitative information allows for in-depth analyses of approaches, modalities and instruments taken by Southern partners. Many information repositories already exist in this arena led by the UN system (UNDP, UN Office for South–South Cooperation [UNOSSC] and UNDCF), the World Bank (Knowledge Banks), regional institutions (NEPAD, Ibero-American General Secretariat [SEGIB], etc.) and other networks (ie, Southern Voices, Asia Foundation, Building Block on SSC, etc.).

Statistical information on SSC financial flows, on the other hand, is much more limited. There were some earlier attempts made by UNDESA with development co-operation reports in 2008 and 2010, but the process was interrupted. Quantitative data on SSC still lags far behind in comparison to the statistical information on NSC, which is captured in the sophisticated aid data reporting systems of the

²⁰ Statement made by one of SSC data specialist at the NeST technical workshop in Midrand, 4 March 2015.

OECD-DAC. As discussed in the previous section, the knowledge gap in SSC statistics is in great part due to the lack of a common definition on what to counts as SSDC.

Once a conceptual framework for SSC has been developed, there needs to be a standardised process of data collection, analysis, reporting and publishing. This is a mammoth task, which requires jointly agreed standards of frequency, quality and level of detail in the development co-operation reports of Southern partners. If there is a common template and system to collect SSC data nationally by the different countries, then such information can be consolidated at regional and global level through the information management systems of relevant multilateral institutions. The enterprise of developing a central database on SSC data will facilitate research and comparative analysis on SSC, and improve transparency and accountability for all partners and stakeholders involved in SSC. This endeavour will require strong political as well as technical and statistical expertise, which could potentially originate from within NeST.

Given the complexities and multiple layers of SSC, the accounting of SSC should not be restricted to monetary flows. Technical and educational co-operation, peace-building and other humanitarian efforts, debt relief and concessional lending should also be quantified and captured in the data management systems. The starting point of this process is thus to reach consensus on definitions and concepts around SSC.

National information systems

Existing mechanisms and efforts for reporting SSC focus on the inputs, activities and immediate outputs of the often ad hoc and short-term SSC projects. Reports of Southern partners normally indicate basic information such as money spent, number of country visits/missions, meetings/workshops held, and so on. Little reporting is undertaken on long-term results and the value-add of SSC activities. This information does not effectively respond to the specific demand for knowledge and development solutions that SSC policymakers and practitioners need on a regular basis.

Not all South-South partners are at the same level with regard to information and statistical management. Some more advanced countries already have relevant institutions that collect, compile, process, analyse and disseminate information to their constituencies. Other smaller countries lack the institutional frameworks and staff capacity to undertake even basic reporting functions on NSC and SSC flows. Therefore, any efforts to address the global SSC information gaps will need to recognise the different stages of countries involved in the process and respond accordingly.

Raw data will have to be regularly and systematically collected and compiled by countries concerned – both donor and recipient. The processing and analysis require not only statistical capacity but also academic support.

The vast potential for the cost-effective, efficient transfer of data and knowledge through the latest information management technology remains largely untapped. A systematic and standardised system for SSC information management will contribute to providing more efficient processes for measuring, processing, analysing and reporting on SSC.

Global information management platform

Southern partners can learn much from the aid information systems of traditional donors. The OECD-DAC Creditor Reporting System (CRS), for instance, is the most comprehensive repository of data on development co-operation flows from the Bretton Woods development finance institutions, DAC members and some non-DAC donor countries. Different development partners regularly and systematically report into the CRS, where development finance information is collected and analysed by the OECD and reported publically. Many lessons and good practices can be learned from the CRS system and adapted to the Southern context.

For political and technical reasons, many of the major emerging Southern partners are not comfortable with reporting their co-operation activities to the OECD-DAC. Therefore, Southern partners may want to create their own parallel information management system to account, analyse and compare data on SSC flows in the developing world. For this a joint conceptual framework and common reporting template for Southern development co-operation is required.

To undertake this enterprise collaboration with an appropriate multilateral institution that can host such SSC data management system is essential. The UN's role as a universally representative international body provides the political legitimacy to act as a potential information hub for SSC. There are, however, a number of UN agencies and offices that could host this platform in collaboration with NeST. Each has its strengths and comparative advantages.

- The UNDP has a dedicated SSC unit at its headquarters and at regional centres together with an extensive geographic reach and branch offices in most developing countries, which could facilitate data collection efforts.
- UNCTAD has historically led many SSC processes; it currently hosts strong statistical information from the global South, especially on trade and economic co-operation.
- UNDESA is politically well positioned, with strong links to the UN General Assembly, the G-77, the Office of the Secretary-General, and various member states. It has also been collecting information on SCC for the development co-operation reports prepared for the UNDCF.
- The UNOSSC is an inter-agency UN office dedicated to SSC, and mandated to promote and report on SSC.²¹

Regional information hubs for SSC

While embarking on the ambitious project of a global database for SSC, preliminary steps can be taken at the regional level, where many institutions, such as SEGIB, NEPAD and Asian Development Bank, manage information on SSC within their respective regions. Mainstreaming SSC into regional processes will ensure that SSC is better aligned and contributes to overall development planning in each region. The importance of working with region- and country-specific instruments for self-assessment will lead to greater gains and political support, which would intensify mutual commitment towards SSC for regional development.

²¹ For more on the UNDP Global South-South Development Policies and list of all available documents; http://ssc.undp.org/content/ssc/services/policy/documents_reports/main_reports.html

Latin America has one of the most advanced systems on SSC reporting, and much can be learned from this region. The SEGIB platform was proposed in 2010 as an effort by the Ibero-American region to strengthen information and knowledge on SSC. SEGIB has been carrying out important work to systematise SSC data and has had strong political support from many governments in the region. Although still in the early stages, the SEGIB reports contain basic SSC information about resources provided by its member states to different countries and sectors and through different modalities. SEGIB outlines a common set of criteria for assessment; it highlights good practices and provides space for policy dialogue and knowledge exchange. The SEGIB reports have developed a rudimentary methodology for data collection at the country and regional level, statistical analysis and various indicators to assess SSC. NeST could learn from and capitalise on these initial good efforts in Latin America.

In Africa, NEPAD could play a similar role in co-ordinating information on SSC and assisting African countries to develop the capacity to manage statistics and collect information on SSC and partnerships.

NeST's role in institutional capacity building

Before further work is done at the global and regional level, systems, instruments and capacity need to be developed at the national level to lay the groundwork. In every developing country there needs to be strong units that manage data and statistics on international development co-operation activities, both incoming and outgoing.

Although NeST is a global initiative, its regional and national chapters are committed to support their respective Southern governments and regional organisations to address some of their data management challenges. NeST can contribute to building the necessary capacities, systems and instruments required for effective data collection, analysis and dissemination. In line with the post-2015 'data revolution' agenda, NeST national chapters could provide technical support to their respective governments and assist in strengthening statistical capacity at country level.

Many NeST members are think tanks and institutes with good links to their respective governments. Therefore they can facilitate the necessary political engagements while providing the technical and analytical support in the generation of data, evidence and knowledge required for effective national, regional and international SSC policy.

To fulfill some of the above functions, NeST will also have to be strengthened and appropriately resourced with a secretariat, dedicated staff and strong communication, co-ordination and knowledge-sharing mechanisms at global, regional and national levels.

Evaluating the Impact of South–South Co-operation

As mentioned in previous sections, the lack of a clear definitional framework makes SSC accounting challenging. As a result, assessing the impact of SSC is even more difficult. This is exacerbated by the evidence gaps and the low quality of data on SSC, which is largely incomplete and unreliable owing to weak M&E systems and overall information management in all Southern partners. Development agencies in Southern partners are relatively new and still lack the seasoned M&E experience of those of traditional donors.

Overall SSC initiatives are much smaller relative to NSC projects and therefore their effects are much more difficult to isolate and quantify. Considering the limited size and scope of SSC projects, sample size becomes problematic when conducting impact assessments, as both internal and external validity becomes more difficult to ascertain.

The purpose of this section of the report is to explore the following questions:

- Is the focus on development results and the use of results-based management useful and applicable to SSC?
- What qualitative and quantitative methods and techniques are appropriate for the evaluation of SSC?
- How do we address the issue of causality, attribution and isolation of the effects of SSC projects from the other internal and external forces and interventions present in developing countries?
- Which evaluation approaches are rigorous and scientific, yet practical, cost effective and easy to use by Southern policymakers?

Results-based management

The OECD defines results-based management (RBM) as a management strategy focusing on performance and the achievement of outputs, outcomes and impacts.²² RBM has been used for decades by traditional bilateral and multilateral development partners, and it is now also being used by emerging SSC partners as frameworks to evaluate the impact of development programmes and interventions. The South African national M&E system is, for instance, completely based on an outcomes-based approach.

Despite its being widely used, RBM has also been harshly criticised. It is said to be a reductionist and burdensome system that encourages the setting of unrealistic goals that are rarely met. It is said to be ill suited to complex systems change and programming in rapidly changing environments. RBM is technocratic and encourages mechanistic planning and reporting, not leaving room for innovation and

²² Kusek J & R Rist, *Ten steps to a Results-Based Monitoring and Evaluation System*. Washington DC: The World Bank, 2004.

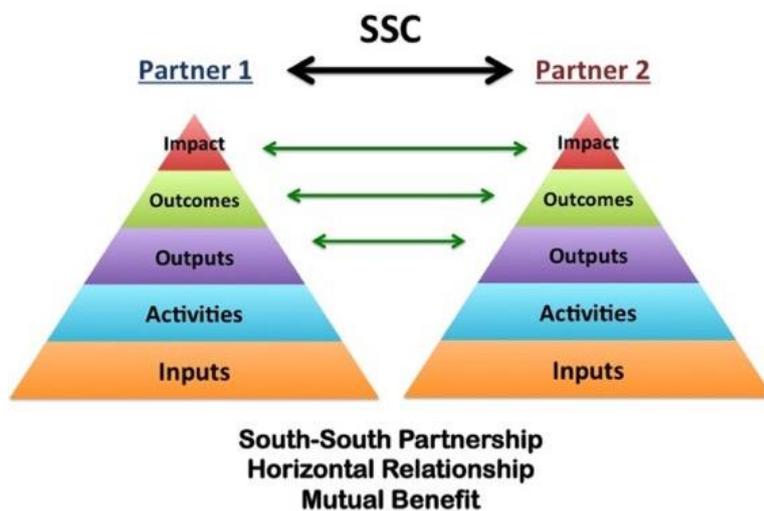
experimentation. Furthermore, it is sometimes misused by international funding agencies as a mechanism for compliance and control; it becomes an end and not a means to an end.²³

The 2008 External Review of RBM in the UN system concluded that with all its warranted criticisms, ‘RBM is nevertheless here to stay’. It remains the modus operandi of most bilateral and multilateral development agencies, and thus likely to also be incorporated in the planning and M&E systems of emerging development partners.

One of the major insights emerging from the NeST discussions is that while RBM can be useful for SSC, it needs to integrate with the Southern concept of mutual benefit. This moves away from the North–South aid paradigm where one partner is ‘giving’ and the other ‘receiving’. Since both partners benefit from the co-operation in SSC, the results of the co-operation need to be reflected on both sides. This requires a transparent and open recognition of all parties’ interests, benefits and objectives in the SSC initiative. In acknowledging this feature of SSC, a double-sided results chain can be developed for both parties involved in the SSC project. While the existing evaluation paradigm followed by the OECD-DAC donors considers the impact of the development intervention on the recipient countries only, impact assessment of SSC interventions should look at the impact of the partnership on both parties (whether provider or recipient) of the co-operation activities.

This can be illustrated in the following manner:

Figure 2: RBM in South–South horizontal partnerships



²³ See more in Ramalingam B, ‘Why the Results Agenda Doesn’t Need Results, and what to do about it’, Aid on the Edge of Chaos, <http://aidontheedge.info/2011/01/31/why-the-results-agenda-doesnt-need-results-and-what-to-do-about-it/>, accessed 5 October 2011; Bester A, *Results-Based Management in the United Nations Development System: Progress and Challenges*. Retrieved from United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Quadrennial Comprehensive Policy Review, 2012 http://www.un.org/esa/coordination/pdf/rbm_report_10_july.pdf

Criteria for evaluating SSC

The OECD-DAC donors have agreed on the following five standard criteria to be used to evaluate development assistance projects.

- **Relevance:** the extent to which the aid activity is suited to the priorities and policies of the target group and recipient.
- **Effectiveness:** the measure of the extent to which an aid activity achieves its objectives.
- **Efficiency:** The outputs measured in relation to the inputs.
- **Impact:** The positive and the negative changes produced by a development intervention, directly or indirectly, intended or unintended.
- **Sustainability:** The measure of whether the benefits of an activity are likely to continue after donor funding is withdrawn.

Are these same criteria useful and relevant for the evaluation of SSC, considering that SSC is fundamentally different from NSC?

A proposal from India suggested the use of some of these criteria with additional elements more appropriate to SSC. The new basket of evaluation criteria suggested included:

- **empowerment** of communities, citizens and partner states;
- **building trust** among communities, citizens and partner states;
- **mutual benefits** for citizens, communities and partner states;
- **impact** on communities, citizens and partner states; and
- **sustainability** of the social, political, human, natural and environmental resources of partner states.

Methods for evaluating SSC

Some of the NeST members advocated for the use of more rigorous quantitative methods to evaluate SSC to improve the empirical evidence stemming from SSC initiatives. Others argued that quantitative approaches are not easily applied in SSC projects, which tend to be small and more concerned with relations and processes rather than results. There was much debate regarding the use of qualitative versus quantitative methods to evaluate SSC; however, it was also noted that both methods have their advantages and shortcomings. A mixed-method approach would probably provide more flexibility and complementarity when choosing and adapting the particular impact evaluation method to the context and situation.

Participatory methods are also well suited for the evaluation of SSC as they allow space for joint assessments of development outcomes, strategic results and institutional processes for all parties involved in the mutually beneficial SSC endeavors. Research and evaluation of SSC should as much as possible engage the multiplicity of stakeholders involved in the SSC activities. Participatory approaches to the analysis of SSC can be further discussed and unpacked in future discussions of NeST.

Considering the data limitations in SSC, one of the easiest and most commonly used approaches in most research and evaluation on SSC is the case study method. This provides a deeper understanding of the context and the intervention. It also allows for some level of qualitative comparison between countries and cases, encouraging the exchange of good practice and lessons learnt. However, case studies are often heavily driven by qualitative methods, and thus based on the subjective views of the respondents and the evaluator involved. This can be balanced through well-conducted case studies that utilise mixed methods, provide in-depth analysis and encourage triangulation of diverse information sources.

The following are other impact evaluation methods that were presented as potential options for the empirical evaluation of SSC. A more detailed description of each of these methods is contained in annex 3.

Table 2: Suggested methods for impact evaluation of SSC

Qualitative case studies	Quasi-experimental methods
Econometric approaches	Outcome harvesting
Experimental/randomised control trials	Crowd sourcing

In conclusion, the members of the NeST technical working group agreed that while it is important and interesting to experiment with the above-mentioned methods and approaches to impact evaluation, **the more pressing and immediate challenges in SSC – weak monitoring and information systems, lack of conceptual framework for basic accounting and reporting – render the impact evaluation exercise a premature endeavour.**

Assessing the Quality of South–South Co-operation

Having looked at the evaluation of the results and impact of SSC, assessing the quality of South–South processes, practices and relations is equally important. What does a successful SSC endeavour look like, and how do we assess success when it occurs? Thus there is a need to outline the approaches, mechanics, methodologies, tools and indicators considered in analysing the quality of SSC.

Linkages between SSC and aid/development effectiveness

The Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness (2005) – complemented by the subsequent Accra Agenda for Action (2008) – is most commonly referred to as the ‘bible’ of aid effectiveness. The declaration has a set of 12 indicators to measure the five principles of good aid practice – ownership, alignment, harmonisation, managing for results and mutual accountability. Many of the aid and development effectiveness concepts emerging from the DAC-led high-level meetings have not been drastically different from that of the SSC principles discussed in Southern conferences such as at Nairobi (2009) and Buenos Aires (1978).

By the second half of the 2000s, large middle-income countries started to have a more prominent role in the global political economy. As such, the emergence of Southern powers has also affected the global development landscape. Southern development partners have been criticised by traditional donors for not adhering to the same rules, practices and standards of engagement in international development as apply to OECD-DAC donors.

‘They do not always operate in accordance with the same development policy principles and procedures as DAC donors. Different interpretations and degrees of respect for the principles of development cooperation, such as good governance, are increasingly causing the recipient countries to feel that double standards are present within the donor community.’²⁴

In the Paris Declaration, Southern partners were primarily considered from the recipient perspective, and it was only at the Accra High-Level Meeting that SSC was brought into the aid effectiveness discourse.²⁵ By Busan HLF-4 the concept of ‘development effectiveness’ entered centre stage where a new GPEDC was established that included traditional donors, recipient countries, provider-recipient countries, the private sector, civil society and legislators. This forum, however, has not managed to engage meaningfully some of the big emerging development partners such as China, India and Brazil, which still view the GPEDC as closely associated to the OECD-DAC.

There is nevertheless common ground shared between SSC and NSC on some aid effectiveness principles. The NSC-affirmed principle of ownership emerging from the Paris Declaration has been a prerogative also of SSC. Similarly, the Nairobi outcome document (2009) expresses a new set of SSC principles such as transparency, inclusiveness, mutual accountability, quality and results, which also form part of the ongoing narrative around NSC.

²⁴ BMZ Strategy Paper 6/2011, Strategy for Development Cooperation with Global Development Partners 2011–2015, Bonn, 12.

²⁵ Besharati N, ‘Common Goals and Differential Commitments: The Role of Emerging Economies in Global Development’, German Development Institute, 2013, p. 32.

Many of the good practices and challenges that affect NSC are also valid for co-operation among Southern partners. Despite their separate traditions and political narratives, the evolution of the principles that animate both NSC and SSC have led to a convergence in the arena of development effectiveness that should not be underplayed.²⁶ Some of the systems to measure the effectiveness, efficiency and results of NSC may also be applicable to the monitoring and evaluation of SSC. While developing a unique analytical framework for SSC, selected elements and relevant experiences can also be drawn out from the aid effectiveness discourse that can feed into the work currently undertaken with NeST.

Participation and inclusive ownership

Building on the premise of self-reliance and concepts of sovereignty, South–South partnerships encourage and respect recipient countries’ need to have their own space to define their own policies and take charge of their development processes. This also entails the recipient countries’ setting their own priorities in terms of the development assistance they wish to receive.²⁷ This is to some extent also echoed in the NSC principle of ownership. The divergence lies in that NSC is often accompanied by policy conditionalities linked to good governance practices, human rights, rule of law reform, and economic liberalisation attached to the development assistance packages.

Nevertheless, both NSC and SSC partners recognise the significance of recipient countries’ developing their capacity to make the relevant decisions for their own countries, as a means to achieve sustainable development results. Complementing the tenet of ownership, demand-driven assistance and capacity building are a crucial component of development co-operation. The Accra Agenda for Action clearly articulates that ‘without the robust capacity – strong institutions, systems and local expertise – developing countries cannot fully own and manage their development processes’.²⁸

Although ‘demand-driven’ development co-operation has been a prominent feature of SSC discourse, the analysis therefore can be fairly challenging. Many approaches exist in providing demand-driven development assistance. However, the underlying question is who exactly is the specific partner requesting the support package?

The concept of ‘ownership’, emphasised in both NSC and SSC, can at times be problematic and therefore needs to be further unpacked. Some of the criticism of SSC is that often it is based only on a government-to-government relationship. South–South partnerships are often established between the top leadership of developing governments, who also have their own accountability problems. Therefore ownership in SSC needs to be expanded to encompass a broader concept that includes civil society and other marginalised groups. However, ‘democratic ownership’, often emphasised within Northern circles, clashes with some standing tenets of SSC such as non-conditionality, non-interference and respect for national sovereignty.

²⁶ Tortora P, *Common Ground Between South-South and North-South Co-operation Principles*, OECD/DAC, October 2011, pp. 1-4.

²⁷ Besharati N, *op. cit.*, p. 19.

²⁸ Tortora P, *op. cit.*

It thus becomes increasingly important to assess the role civil society plays in articulating the needs of the poorest, most marginalised and most vulnerable in SSC processes. Historically, CSO involvement in SSC has been weak and limited. Some countries in the developing world use legal frameworks to constrain the activities of CSOs. Owing to the state-driven nature of South–South partnerships, little space for civil society participation exists, leading to increasing neglect of important considerations such as environmental sustainability, democracy, accountability, human rights, social justice and labour practices in SSC activities.²⁹

In order to ensure successful SSC endeavours, it is important to increase multi-stakeholder and civic engagement in both partner countries involved in the development partnership. The overall priorities and policy direction of SSC initiatives should be supported by participatory processes at the national and local level. Both partners need to be accountable towards each other in the development intervention and towards their domestic constituents. The concept of mutual accountability thus expands to ‘multiple accountability’.³⁰

While to some degree the ownership of SSC endeavours is mutually shared by the two partners, it is ultimately the poorer country that should have a stronger voice in setting the direction of the development co-operation initiative. Many Southern partners still prefer to provide co-operation tied to their own products, technical experts and local companies in order to support the growth of their national economies. Although this can feed into a partnership based on ‘mutual benefit’ it does not contribute to national ownership, capacity building and sustainability in the recipient country. Thus in acknowledging that SSC is not always between equal partners, the priorities of the weaker and smaller country should be favoured over that of the larger and more resourced partner.³¹

Measuring the quality of South–South relations

The development of a possible SSC narrative should focus on what distinguishes SSC from NSC and other forms of co-operation. The main distinguishing features of SSC lie in the practices, processes and relations that are built during development partnerships. Southern conferences have continuously reiterated the principles upon which SSC stands, as outlined in Table 3.

²⁹ Moilwa M & N Besharati, ‘Aid and development cooperation: Impact of BRICS and rising powers’, in *State of Civil Society Report 2015*, CIVICUS, 2015.

³⁰ Conclusions that emerged out of the discussion of the NeST technical working group in Johannesburg on 3–4 September 2015.

³¹ *Ibid.*

Table 3: SSC principles emerging from various South–South co-operation conferences

Bandung (1955)	Buenos Aires (1978)	Nairobi (2009)	Bogota (2010)	Delhi (2013)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Respect for human rights • Respect for sovereignty • Equality • Non-interference • Mutual interest & collaboration • International Justice 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Self-reliance • Exchange and sharing • Capacity development • Knowledge transfer • Respect for national sovereignty • Economic independence • Equality • Non-interference 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Multilateralism • Environmental sustainability • Mutual benefit, win-win, horizontality • Capacity development • Mutual learning, knowledge exchange, technology transfer • Transparency and mutual accountability • Respect for national sovereignty • National ownership and independence • Equality • Non-conditionality • Non-interference • Inclusivity and participation • Results, impact & quality 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Capacity development • Human rights and equity • Environmental Sustainability • Solidarity and collaboration • Mutual benefit, win-win • Knowledge transfer, exchange, learning • Specificity of SSC and complementarity to NSC • Inclusivity and participation • Flexibility, adaptation, context-specific • Partnership, equity, trust, confidence, respect • Ownership and demand-driven • Transparency and accountability 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demand-driven • Non-conditionality • National ownership and independence • Respect for national sovereignty • Self-reliance and self-help • Mutual benefit • Common but differentiated responsibilities • Voluntary partnerships • Solidarity • Complementarity to NSC • Diversity and heterogeneity • Capacity development

SSC predicates ideals of horizontal partnerships, equality, solidarity, capacity building and mutual benefit; however, measuring the actualisation of fair and equitable partnerships has always been difficult. SSC needs to be assessed in terms of contributing to the empowerment and capacity building of the various partners. It also needs to assess the extent of trust building and solidarity created among the participants.

One of the most critical challenges in evaluating SSC is to quantify and attribute the extent of ‘mutual benefit’ flowing to both partners. Thus much of the evaluation of SSC needs to be assessed with regard to the relations, practices, attitudes and interactions between people. There is also a need to

recognise that absolute equality is unlikely. Measuring joint ownership, horizontality, solidarity and other aspects of SSC might thus require the use of more ethnographic and qualitative methods of evaluation, and direct interaction with stakeholders involved in SSC initiatives.

In order to move from rhetoric to concrete evidence, all the various principles of SSC need to have clearly defined indicators that can be measured in order to assess the quality and effectiveness of SSC endeavors.

In preparation for the Midrand technical workshop, members of NeST sent contributions for draft indicators and monitoring systems to measure the quality and effectiveness of SSC. These have been compiled and synthesised by the NeST Africa team, but there was not enough time at the Midrand workshop to discuss them in detail.

As a follow-up to Midrand, a special technical working group of NeST was established to continue the discussions around the indicators for SSC. A group of 20 experts from Africa and the global South met in Johannesburg from 3–4 September 2015 to build on the previous NeST proposals and finalise the matrix of indicators and tools to measure the quality and effectiveness of South–South relations, partnerships and processes. Indicators were developed on the dimensions of national ownership; horizontality and solidarity; capacity development, sustainability and learning; transparency and accountability; inclusive partnerships, citizen’s protection and empowerment; efficient partnerships; and SSC in the global arena.



Members of the NeST technical working group on SSC indicators, Johannesburg, 3–4 September 2015

Indicators to assess the quality of South–South partnerships

The tables below consolidate the Johannesburg technical working group’s discussions on the dimensions, indicators and monitoring systems to measure the quality and processes of South-South development partnerships. Such a framework can be used to assess both partners, at micro (project) level (referring to a single project) as well as macro (consolidated country) level of SSC (when it refers to a programme formed by a set of different development co-operation activities). Also, it can be used to assess South–South partnerships that involve government agencies (national and sub-national), CSOs and private actors. Each dimension of the indicator table is accompanied by the relevant definitions, key elements and additional clarifying notes.

There was also a proposal that in the future a map could be developed showing the inter-linkages between the various indicators, as many of them are relevant to different dimensions.

The following is only an initial draft set of indicators and monitoring tools, which can be further elaborated, refined and adapted by different countries and organisations. As they are tested and utilised in real policy, research and evaluation exercises, these indicators will be further refined as field experience and learning is gathered over time and integrated in the formative process.

1. National ownership

National ownership refers to the continued leadership by partner countries on priorities, policy direction and implementation of the SSC initiative, supported by participatory processes at the national/local level. Partners identify and analyse their main development issues and formulate the requisite strategies to address them together.

Key elements of national ownership:

- Meaningful citizen participation
- Long-term approach: Engagement of all stakeholders throughout the whole project cycle
- Mutuality

Please note: By virtue of definition, SSC requires ownership from all parties involved. However, in the case of conflicting partner priorities, ownership should privilege the interests and priorities of the poorer/smaller recipient country.

NETWORK OF SOUTHERN THINK-TANKS

Sub-dimension	Indicator/measurement	Indicator level (country/project)	Guiding questions	Sources of information	Data collection methods
Demand-driven	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of SSC initiatives/projects where there is evidence of a request by the recipient partner Formulation of projects/programmes based on beneficiary country request Level & nature of participation of recipient country in project/programme development 	<p>Country level</p> <p>Project/country level</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Was the SSC initiative/project requested by the recipient partner? How and through which channel (at what level was the request made)? Why? How does SSC ensure the participation of beneficiary countries in terms of the identification and implementation of initiatives? Are partner priorities and structures for the co-ordination of SSC activities clearly identified? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Co-operation agreement Application forms/ proposal formal letters Joint commissions Stakeholders and partners (politicians & technicians) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review of documents Interviews
Alignment to national priorities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recipient country's development strategy incorporates SSC Number of SSC projects initiatives that are aligned to national priorities of the recipient country Extent of use of country results framework by SCC partners 	<p>Country level</p> <p>Country/project level</p> <p>Country level</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How are the local needs identified, assessed and met? Is the co-operation focused on results that meet the recipient country's stated needs and priorities? Was the project aligned with the national strategy/ policy/paper/plan? Or a list of actions agreed between the recipient and international community?³² 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> National & provincial/ state development plans Co-operation agreement International/mul tilateral documents Communiqués 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review of relevant documents

³² Such as the project lists prepared for the enhanced integrated programme, waiting to be financed.

NETWORK OF SOUTHERN THINK-TANKS

<p>Non-conditionality, respect for national sovereignty</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Formulation of projects/programmes is based on the agreed bilateral co-operation framework • Number of initiatives that include any form of policy conditionality (tacit or implicit) 	<p>Country level</p> <p>Country/project level</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are there policy (political, economic) conditionalities as part of the co-operation or operationalisation process? • What are the policy conditionalities? (nature/type) • Are they disclosed? Are there de facto/ tacit conditionalities? • What is the source of the conditionality? Does it affect the partner countries' policies? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) • Co-operation contract • Stakeholders & partners 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Survey • Interviews
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Key notes:

- National ownership may include subnational and non-state actors. Draws out on a multi-stakeholder approach, thus it also links to the dimension of inclusive partnerships (see below).
- In the event of conflicts of interest between partners (as in the case of tied aid), the recipient's priorities shall be favoured over the provider's interests.
- 'Demand-driven' could also be related to the country needs that are identified in a multilateral forum and are aligned to national priorities. States of urgency (including natural disasters) can also be considered as being demand driven and aligned to national priorities.
- Being demand-driven is a necessary but not a sufficient condition for the quality of South-South partnerships. It has to be aligned to national interests in order to have an impact on the results and sustainability of the project.
- It is relevant to see whether there are conditionalities imposed upon the provider, such as local procurement requirements. It is good when purchasing is done locally but it could be interesting to see if there are cases where this appears as a conditionality.
- In creating indicators for respect for national sovereignty we are acknowledging the existence of conditionalities, but in the case of tied aid and conditionalities, ownership should be reflected in the recipients' agency to choose which cases of tied aid and conditionalities are acceptable.

NETWORK OF SOUTHERN THINK-TANKS

2. Horizontality & solidarity

Horizontality refers to shared responsibility, management and implementation in all phases of the project cycle and results. It depends on building trust and good communication channels; and is improved by the existence of mutual benefits at the outcome level. Ultimately, it implies more equal power relationships between co-operation partners.

This dimension is closely linked to other principles such as ownership, respect for sovereignty and non-conditionality.

Sub-dimension	Indicator/measurement	Indicator level (country/project)	Guiding questions	Sources of information	Data collection methods
Mutual benefit/win-win	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SSC agreement document has stated benefits of each partner country Stated benefits in SSC agreements between countries have been achieved/attained (*Levels: policy; political; socio-economic; strategic) Evidence of mutual learning experiences as shared by SSC partners 	Country/project level	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How has the provider/recipient benefited from the engagement? Are there stated benefits in the SSC agreement? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SSC agreement Partners & stakeholders M&E Reports 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Interviews Document review
Trust	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Frequency and quality of communication between partners Time/duration of the development co-operation partnership 	Country/project level	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Are there formal mechanisms of communication in place? Is there regular and efficient communication among partners? How long have the development co-operation partners been engaged in this and/or other co-operation initiatives for? Is the relationship between the co-operation partners a long-term one? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Media reports Partners & stakeholders Co-operation reports/ other kind of reports that reflect the history of the relationship between the partners 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Document review Interviews

NETWORK OF SOUTHERN THINK-TANKS

Shared decision-making, shared resources and division of labour	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Existence of ex-ante technical discussions, scoping missions or joint evaluations • Existence of mechanism for joint decision-making • Ratio of local human resources in management/ technical/ unskilled activities • The ratio of the executed/ budgeted cost borne by each partner 	Country/project level	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How do partners undertake joint decision-making? • How many staff and officials are involved in the SSC initiative from each partner? • What is the total budget? How much money has each partner invested in the initiative? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Co-operation agreements • Evaluation reports • Partners & stakeholders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Document review • Interviews
Mutual accountability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Countries undertake regular mutual assessments of progress in implementing agreed commitments • Existence of reporting mechanisms that ensure reciprocal accountability 	Country/project level	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How often do partner countries conduct reviews of the SSC initiative? At technical and political level? • When was the date of the last review? • Are the results of the review meetings translated into action and programmatic changes? • Does SSC foster peer networks and trust among the partnering countries? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review meeting minutes • Evaluations • Partners & stakeholders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Document review • Interviews

Key notes:

- Horizontality and solidarity assess the measurement of equality; ie, the extent/level of fairness in a relationship; the equal power relationships in horizontality; the dynamics of mutual benefits & respect for sovereignty and non-conditionality.
- Mutual benefit is a by-product of SSC, the understanding of cultural practices does help improve the quality of co-operation. Still, mutual benefit does need be a requirement of SSC.
- The measurement of mutual benefit should be assessed at the outcome level.

- Mutual accountability should be defined and articulated from both partners, transparency is an element of accountability as reflected under the dimension of transparency, accountability and information management.

3. Capacity development, sustainability and learning

Knowledge and technology exchange: The transfer and/or co-creation of knowledge, experiences, best practices and technologies between partners for purposes of capacity building and the autonomous development of countries.

Capacity development or capacity building?: The development and strengthening of skills (individual level), organisational systems (institutional level), through an enabling environment that promotes growth, development and learning.

Sustainability: The ability of a project or a co-operation engagement and its outcomes to sustain themselves, promote self-reliance and continue to deliver benefits over an extended period of time, transferring knowledge and capacity to the recipient partners.

Sub-dimension	Indicator/measurement	Indicator level (country/ project level)	Guiding questions	Sources of information	Data collection methods
Capacity building	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of capacity-building initiatives within a given SSC agreement • Number of people trained/or part of knowledge exchange within the SSC capacity-building initiatives/projects • Evidence of application of knowledge acquired • Changes in behaviour, institutional and policy practices, as a result of knowledge application 	Country/project level	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How many people receive training? • How many people actually apply the knowledge transferred? • Is there an enabling environment for the adaptation and implementation of knowledge? • Has knowledge acquired been applied? With regard to practices, policies and/or institutions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Human resources and training reports • Project evaluations • Partners & stakeholders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Document review • Interviews

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Knowledge and technology exchange	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of tools, systems and technology adopted from exchanges • Improved partners' capacity to absorb and adapt technology and skills to meet their specific developmental needs (see key note #4) • Technological capacities in developing countries created or strengthened 	Country/ project level	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does the initiative include knowledge- & technology-sharing activities? • What legal/institutional/management incentives for technology innovation and innovative approaches does SSC provide? • Does SSC help attract innovative technologies and approaches, learning and enterprise development? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Human resource and capacity development reports • Reports and evaluations of SSC initiatives • Stakeholders & Partners 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review of relevant reports • Interviews
Untying aid and use of local systems, expertise and resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extent to which SSC is not tied to any predetermined modalities, conditions, materials, institutions or human resources from a specific country • % of tied aid compared to total aid • Use of local financial management and procurement systems (local or national) • % of local human resources and local material resources (local or national) that are being used in the SSC initiative 	Country / Project level	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are the co-operation activities tied to goods, materials, human resources, organisations from a specific country? • Is there overt or covert tied aid practiced in the SSC initiative? • To what extent are the local systems used in the project cycle? • Does the intervention contribute to recipient country's value chain? (Industries, products, human resources, etc.) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Human resource reports • Budgets & procurement documents • Project documents and MoUs • Stakeholders & partners 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review of relevant reports • Interviews
Sustainability and self-reliance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence of partner countries growing out of dependency and taking over the developmental initiatives through national resources and increased capacities 	Project level	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is there an exit strategy for the SSC initiative? • Are recipient institutions continuing the development endeavors by themselves? • Does the project implemented have sustainable impact and/or has it resulted in sustainable change? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project documents progress reports, and evaluation reports 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review of relevant reports • Interviews

				<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Partners & stakeholders	
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Key notes:

- Unpacking the tied aid practices in SSC has major political and economic implications for both partners.
- Tied aid can support mutual benefit objectives but at the same time can have a negative impact on sustainability and self-reliance by the recipient partner.
- Tied aid needs to be looked at and recorded, but the merits and demerits of it remain open to discussion.
- There are four subsections for technology transfer: operational (capacity to manage and use technology systems), duplicative (reproducing the product without external assistance), adaptive (using the technology and adapting it by reengineering it to meet own requirements) and technological (creating the next level technology).
- Impact results of the co-operation initiative should be sustainable, as should the co-operation partnership (long-term SSC partnerships).

4. Transparency, accountability and information management

SSC providers should aim to make information about their development co-operation activities publicly available so that interested stakeholders can act on the basis of available information. Various aspects of transparency and accountability are as follows.

Information management system: A sound in-house information management system is a pre-requisite to making SSC information publicly available. All the agencies responsible for undertaking SSC activities should aim to have a sound information management system in place and the governments should allocate sufficient resources to allow their staff to perform this function effectively.

M&E systems: Agencies responsible for undertaking SSC activities should establish strong M&E systems to promote accountability and learning, efficiency and improvement of future SSC projects.

Transparency/access to information: Availability and public access to information should be assessed throughout the entire cycle of the SSC activities. For instance, from the identification of any particular activity to its implementation, performance, spending and results, there should be information publicly

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available. The content and quality of information is also important. SSC information should be comprehensive, relevant, consistent, timely, accurate and reliable.

Sub-dimension	Indicator/measurement	Indicator level (country/project)	Guiding questions	Sources of information	Data collection methods
Information management systems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Partners possess institutional frameworks, capacity and political will to collect, analyse, simplify and publish data on a regular basis • Detail and frequency of published SSC information: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ MoUs, contractual agreements, planning documents ○ sectoral and geographic focus of SSC initiatives ○ type, modality and instruments of development co-operation ○ implementation status and time-frames ○ results and performance of SSC activities/evaluation reports ○ disaggregated financial spending (budgeted & disbursed) ○ procurement information: tenders, contractors ○ other detailed project information 	Country/project level	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is there an existing central information point capturing partners' development co-operation activities? • Are there adequate human resources (expertise) to compile, analyse and report the data? • What types of reports and in what format are available? To whom? At what frequency is information made available? What is the level of detail (see indicator)? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National co-operation co-ordinating agency • Research studies by think tanks and CSOs • Organisational /project reports & documents: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ co-operation strategy (country/ sector) ○ annual reports ○ evaluation reports; impact appraisals ○ MoUs and contracts ○ budgets and audited financial statements ○ allocation, procurement, HR and other policies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Surveys • Review of relevant documents • Interviews

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Transparency and public access	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evidence of hubs/ sources/ platforms/ mechanisms for public access to SSC information 	Country/ project level	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is the information on co-operation activities publicly available? Are government officials willing to share information on request by the public? Is the access to SSC information protected or restricted by national legislation? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Official websites – open access platforms Partners & stakeholders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review of relevant documents Interviews
Monitoring and evaluation for learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Existence of effective and quality M& E system (national/institutional/project) M&E is performed in all stages of the SSC project cycle (baseline, implementation, ex-post impact evaluations) Evidence of capacity for M&E activities (ie, expertise, budget, time) Evidence that partners are using the results of M&E processes to inform policies and programmes, and promote improvement and learning – knowledge is generated from M&E 	Country/ project level	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Are there adequate frameworks, mechanisms, financial and human resources to monitor and evaluate SSC initiatives? Are M&E reports comprehensive, empirical and conclusive? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Official websites – open access platforms State/agency annual reports Research institutions reports Auditor-general reports Stakeholders & partners 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review of relevant reports Interviews

Key notes:

- SSC information should be reported as frequently as possible, but the minimum standard practice would be at least once a year.

- Standards and criteria for publishing and reporting SSC activities need to be developed and agreed upon, or SSC partners could follow already existing systems such as International Aid Transparency Initiative.

5. Inclusive partnerships, citizens' protection and empowerment

- Participation is already implied when using the term 'inclusive partnerships'. This includes the role and contribution made by legislators, sub-national governments, civil society, private sector, academia and other non-state actors to the SSC activities.
- Inclusiveness and participation need to be looked at in both provider and recipient partner countries.
- Lack of participation from citizens and broader stakeholders can cause problems when implementing the SSC initiative. Coherence of the efforts of all actors (state and non-state) are necessary for the success of SSC endeavours.
- Accountability mechanisms need to be established with various stakeholders affected by the SSC enterprises. The accountability between SSC partners occurs through mutual reviews discussed in the section on Horizontality & Solidarity. Domestic accountability, on the other hand, occurs where Parliament oversees the development co-operation activities and CSOs play the role of watchdog of state activities.
- Multi-stakeholder participation should go beyond dialogue to include 'actions' undertaken together. Involvement of non-state actors can thus occur at the planning, implementation, financing and M&E stages and as beneficiaries of SSC activities.

Sub-dimension	Indicator/measurement	Indicator level (Country/project)	Guiding questions	Sources of information	Data collection methods
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Multi-stakeholder participation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Existence of policy frameworks, legal mechanisms, institutional arrangements, platforms for inclusive dialogue and joint action in SSC between different state and non-state actors (in both provider & recipient countries) Number and type of actors/organisations taking part in consultations and activities of SSC Evidence that non-state actors provide inputs and influence programming, policy formulation, and implementation processes of SSC Frequency and quality of participation (if the consultations are actually occurring and the engagements are meaningful and fruitful) Evidence that non-state actors actively participate in SSC M&E activities 	<p>Country/ project level</p> <p>Project level</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is there an enabling environment and effective space for civil society to engage with the government on development co-operation activities? What is the frequency/quality of these stakeholder engagement forums? Do these spaces engage a diversity of relevant civil society actors (including women's rights, rural, indigenous, people with disabilities and other organisations)? Was the SSC initiative supported by participatory consultations with a multiplicity of stakeholders? Is there evidence of the inclusion of stakeholder views in the co-operation approach or activities? Give some examples Are third-party and non-state actors participating in SSC M&E activities? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Partners & stakeholders Communiqués, strategic plans, official documents 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Interviews Focus group discussions Document reviews
Empowerment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of SSC actions focusing on marginalised and vulnerable people 	<p>Country level</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How are women, poor, marginalised and vulnerable groups engaging in the SSC initiative? Do the SSC activities take into consideration internationally agreed human rights standards and abide by 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All partners & stakeholders (particularly the most marginalised) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community interviews Focus group discussions Observation

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • % of activities and budget focusing on marginalised and vulnerable groups • Inclusion of marginalised population groups in the planning and implementation of the SSC initiative 	Project level	UN frameworks, conventions and protocols, especially for marginalised and vulnerable groups? (Women, minorities, children, etc.)		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Document review
Protection of people and environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SSC partners follow the labour, land, safety and environmental standards of both recipient and provider countries (whichever is higher) • Partner countries have strong national regulatory frameworks to safeguard labour rights, safety standards, land issues and environmental protection, reflecting UN standards and internationally agreed conventions 	Country level	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are the labour standards to be applied equal or comparable to those of the recipient country? • Are the labour standards to be applied equal or comparable to those of the provider country? • Are there explicit environmental and labour guidelines in the project's agreement? • Is there evidence of any side effect or externalities that come up from the activities? • Is the partner country following recipient frameworks on labour and environment? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ILO reports • UNFCCC reports • Country evaluation statistics for labour and environment • Reports from research institutes and CSOs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Key informant interviews • Document review
		Project level			

Key notes:

- The goal of the framework is not to evaluate a partner countries' human rights performance (as there are already other mechanisms and forums for those) but rather to assess if SSC initiatives follow high human rights standards, based on UN and internationally agreed conventions.
- It is the responsibility and remit of each partner country to set its labour, land and environmental standards, but if these frameworks are missing in the recipient country, the provider of SSC needs to follow at least the standards it has set up for itself.

- Partner countries need to balance considerations of economic growth with protection and sustainability of the environment.

6. Efficient partnerships

This dimension keeps into consideration issues of efficiency, effectiveness, results and sustainability for to maximise the development impact of SSC endeavours.

Sub-dimension	Indicator/measurement	Indicator level (country/project)	Guiding question	Sources of information	Data collection methods
Flexibility and adaptation to local contexts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Existence of local context-specific elements in the project • Evidence on adaptation and changes as the project unfolds • Evidence of successful scale-up/take-up by the local partner of the project activities 	Project level	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To what extent is the project locally relevant? • How much care has been paid to location specific conditions? • Is there evidence of comprehensive development and adaptation of project to local context? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Partners & stakeholders • Project documents, strategic plans, evaluation reports 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interviews • Observations
Time and cost-efficiency, reduced bureaucracy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ratio between budgeted and actual costs • Ratio between planned and actual implementing time • Average duration of SSC projects/initiatives (start-completion dates) • Lack of bureaucratic delays • Time and costs of SSC activities compared to those of NSC activities in similar projects and contexts 	Project level	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is there evidence of reduced cost and bureaucratic delays from both partner countries? • What is the cost and time of delivery of the SSC initiative compared to other initiatives of other traditional donors and Southern partners? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Partners & stakeholders • Project documents, strategic plans, MoUs, evaluation reports • Budgets and financial reports • Implementation timelines and logs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interviews • Observations • Document review

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<p>Co-ordination and complementarity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Between national agencies • With other development partners 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Existence of structured country co-ordination mechanism in recipient country with respect to development partner's co-ordination • Participation of the SSC provider in the recipient country's development co-operation coordination mechanisms • National agencies of provider and recipient countries are co-ordinated and coherent with regard to their development co-operation with other partner countries • Existence of a centralised agency to co-ordinate development co-operation activities 	<p>Country level</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is there a central agency to co-ordinate development co-operation activities (incoming/outgoing)? • Do SSC partners work through existing co-ordination mechanisms both domestically as well as abroad? • Is there consistency and continuity between the approaches, strategies and policies of the various development agencies and departments of both partner countries? • Are any domestic or international policies of the SSC partner causing harm to any other Southern country? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development partners • Diverse co-operation agencies • Country-level development co-operation reports and evaluations • Development co-operation policy frameworks 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Key informant interviews • Document review
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Key Notes:

- Bureaucracy to be measured as a negative indicator; ie, from both recipient and partner level, starting at a baseline of no bureaucratic delays.
- Often recipient countries do not want to co-ordinate and prefer to deal with development partners bilaterally, other times the recipient prefers to co-ordinate the partners through one mechanism to reduce duplication, fragmentation and transaction costs. Thus the narrative of co-ordination should be decided by the recipient country and not be donor driven.
- Southern countries often undertake SSC through a variety of different ministries, agencies, and parastatals, but often these multiple players are not well co-ordinated and coherent in their activities with the partner country (ie, Brazil, South Africa, etc.)

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7. SSC in the global arena

Aside from contributions to national development, SSC also contributes to developing and strengthening international relations.

SSC contributes to coalition building of Southern governments (in regional integration initiatives) of Southern CSOs (in organisations or networks), and in communities of practice around technical and other knowledge and policy areas. South–South solidarity is thus expressed through regional and global platforms.

Sub-dimension	Indicator/measurement	Indicator level	Guiding question	Sources of information	Data collection methods
Coalition building	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evidence of joint positions taken at multilateral policy forums Number of formal international coalitions created and active (ie, BRICS, ASA, UNASUL, etc.) Joint actions, especially within the UN, regional and other bodies where SSC partners are both members 	Global / regional level	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Has the bilateral SSC engagement resulted in or contributed to formal or informal international coalitions? Are these coalitions actively working at the policy, advocacy or technical level? How does participation with multilateral and regional organisations fit into the work programme of the SSC partners? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Partners & stakeholders – diplomats Joint communiqués Bilateral and multilateral treaties and MoUs Research and articles of research institutions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Interviews Literature review
International peer review	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participation of partner countries in regional and global accountability and peer review mechanisms of development co-operation (ie, APRM, SEGIB, FOCAC, AP-Dev, etc.) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Global/regional level 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Are SSC partners involved in multilateral platforms where Southern partners review their development co-operation activities with multiple stakeholders? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Partners & stakeholders Joint communiqués Bilateral and multilateral treaties and MoUs Research and articles of research institutions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Interviews Literature review

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Policy coherence for development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Absence of policy incoherence – negative externalities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Country/international level 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Are SSC partners' policies and practices consistent and supportive of recipient development efforts? Are SSC partners coherent in their aid, trade, investment, peace and migration policies which ultimately support developing countries' needs? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Partners & stakeholders Research and evaluation reports of think tanks and CSOs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Document review Interviews
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Key notes:

- Consensus building occurs before coalition building.
- This international dimension is linked to the sub-dimension on Accountability and Solidarity, where reviews and accountability processes also occur but at national level.

Conclusions

Updates from national and regional NeST chapters

A brief report was provided by some of the main country/regional chapters, their activities to date and their plans going forward:

- **Brazil**

On 26 February the NeST Brazil chapter was officially launched at the BRICS Policy Center, Rio de Janeiro, with participation of approximately 25 researchers and practitioners from 15 Brazilian research institutes, universities, government agencies, international organisations and NGOs. The Brazil chapter determined that defining its operational guidelines, structuring of the Latin-American regional NeST chapter, and identifying its contribution to the global NeST are its priorities in the short term. After the launch, a draft concept note containing the objectives, membership eligibility, governance mechanism and workplan of the NeST Brazil Chapter was prepared and shared with participants for comments and validation. A Secretariat based in Rio de Janeiro and comprising four volunteer organisations – the Institute for Applied Economic Research (IPEA), the BRICS Policy Center (BPC), the South–South Co-operation Research and Policy Centre (Articulação SUL) and Centro Brasileiro de Relações Internacionais (CEBRI) – was established to lead, advise and support the ongoing institutionalisation process of the NeST Brazil Chapter. Three members of NeST Brazil attended the Midrand global NeST event and the subsequent NeST technical working group in Johannesburg in September. Joint research and training projects have been initiated among members of NeST Brazil and NeST Africa chapters to assess the existing monitoring and evaluation practices of Brazilian development co-operation and to build the evidence of South–South and triangular co-operation contribution to development and the post-2015 agenda. A pilot joint academic course on SSC offered by Brazilian and South African university members of NeST has also been initiated (see more below). The institutions that comprise the secretariat of NeST Brazil will also be engaged in the next 10 weeks in a research project on M&E mechanisms in Brazil, with support of the UNDP.

- **India**

NeST was established in 2014 on the sidelines of the Mexico High Level Forum on Effective Development Cooperation, and in response to the 2013 Delhi Conference of Southern Providers and subsequent meetings in Beijing. Since then the Research and Information Systems for Development Countries (RIS) has been hosting the NeST Global Secretariat, responsible for NeST joint research agenda, communications, knowledge management and special projects. Three NeST members from India attended the Midrand global NeST event and have been conducting research on public-private partnerships and Indian co-operation in Africa. Consultations and side events to the 70th UN General Assembly on South–South capacity development and technology transfer are also being organised. Going forward, the NeST Global Secretariat will be firmly established and strengthened. A detailed workplan will be fleshed out based on the broad areas of work outlined in the Beijing NeST inception document. The workplan will also be the basis of fund-raising efforts and other targeted

proposals. RIS will host the Second Delhi Conference in March 2016, when the four institutions that comprise the Executive Group of NeST (RIS, IPEA, SAIIA and CAU) will sign an MoU to formally launch the initiative.

- **China**

The NeST members in China will collaborate on a research project calling for a case study on China's South-South co-operation within the 'Chinese International Development Research Network (CIDRN). The selected case study will utilise the above NeST analytical framework to explore the principles behind and the practices of China's South-South co-operation as well as its impact on host countries. The project encourages comparative approaches, which could shed light on the similarities and differences between China and other Northern donors in terms of aid motivations, principles and models, and also help identify the development trend of China as an emergent aid donor and the space for co-operation and mutual learning between China and traditional donors. The project will lead to the publication of two books (in English and Chinese respectively) with research on China's South-South co-operation. The publication will be launched in an international conference that will be held at Xiamen University, possibly in January 2016.

- **South Africa**

The South African chapter has been in the process of consolidating its membership, under the leadership of SAIIA, Oxfam SA and the Wits School of Governance. The multi-stakeholder nature of the South African chapter (involving academia, government, civil society and private sector) is a distinguishing feature that adds great richness to the discussions, allowing for a diversity of critical views to be voiced and providing a diversity of inputs and contributions for the future South African development co-operation policy. Particular focus has been placed on the processes of defining a role for NeST in the establishment and subsequent operationalisation of the South African Development Partnership Agency (SADPA). The South African chapter has decided to broaden its membership and sphere of debate to become 'NeST Africa'; in order to integrate perspectives from other stakeholders on the continent and to avoid South Africa's positioning itself as a 'big brother' regional hegemon. As an effort to build and expand the research agenda, NeST South Africa will be embarking on a research project of quantifying South Africa's development co-operation in Africa, which will be directed by a steering committee to include key government departments, co-operation agencies and key think tanks involved in the arena. Lastly, a conference of the NeST African chapter has been planned for November 2015, to reflect on the contribution of South-South co-operation to post-conflict reconstruction and development, which is central to the continent's priorities. A number of African case studies, including one on the support of South Africa to effective governance in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, will be presented at the November conference.

Taking forward the NeST agenda

After two days of intense discussions on the analytical framework for SSC in March 2015, the members of the NeST technical workshop agreed to the following steps:

1. *Methodological framework and technical working groups*

- Following the Midrand workshop the SAIIA team will finalise the SSC framework discussed at the NeST technical workshop, and will circulate it via e-mail to all the participants for further inputs and edits.
- The framework will be further discussed by the various NeST national/regional chapters in order to receive further inputs and comments by the entire NeST community.
- In order to finalise some of the outstanding parts of the framework, three special working groups will be constituted to work on specific aspects of the framework, namely:
 - indicators to measure quality of SSC relations and processes (held in Johannesburg on 3–4 September 2015);
 - accounting, quantifying and defining SSC (to be held in Geneva in December 2015 with UNCTAD); and
 - South–South trade, investment, PPP and credit lines (details to be confirmed)
- The framework will be disseminated nationally and regionally through the various NeST chapters, to allow for further consultation with relevant policymakers and broader stakeholders so to receive further inputs, validation, critique and endorsement. As a working document, the SSC Conceptual Framework will continuously be strengthened and adapted to different settings as the work of NeST develops and evolves.

2. *Generating political traction*

- It is important that NeST endeavours to be a multi-stakeholder platform, and does not limit itself only to academics and think tanks but also engages governments, CSOs, the private sector and other key stakeholders in SSC.
- NeST will endeavour to use global events and policy windows, such as UNDCF, Global Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation, Financing for Development, Post-2015/SDGs, BRICS/IBSA, to present work done by NeST on SSC framework and receive feedback, inputs and buy-in from policymakers and broader stakeholders. Plans are underway to host potential NeST side events at the Addis FfD3 in July 2015 and at the UN Summit in September 2015.
- NeST could eventually grow into a multi-stakeholder platform (with governments, CSOs, academia and private sector) for knowledge sharing, learning and peer review of SSC practices and experiences.

3. *Research agenda*

Evidence-based analysis offers a powerful tool for policy and strategy development of SSC partners and NeST should spearhead research work in this arena in order to address the

evidence gaps and dispel many of the misconceptions about SSC. Authoritative evidence-based analysis of SSC is limited, which partially hinders the translation of many good practices into international standards. NeST will systematise conduct research on SSC, by initiating projects and facilitating collaboration in the SSC research area, organised by:

- sectors/themes and specific fields (ie, agriculture, infrastructure, social grants, etc.)
- countries, regions (Africa, Asia, Latin America) or political-economic status (fragile states, Least Developed Countries, Middle Income Countries)

4. SSC data and information management

In order to assist research, policy and transparency efforts in SSC, NeST will

- Assist the respective governments to strengthen SSC data, information management and M&E systems for SSC
- Support the establishment of an online depository and begin uploading academic research on SSC activities (this could include key documents from the various SSC high level meetings, with the depository maintained by NeST)

Following discussions at the Midrand workshop on Information Management Hub for SSC (see Chapter 3 of this report), NeST will collaborate with a UN institution to establish a global statistical centre, where data on SSC from different countries can be regularly gathered, standardised, analysed and presented to Southern governments, academics and other stakeholders. This will be a similar information system to IATI and the CRS, but adapted to the SSC specificities and definitions. Considering the political support that such an initiative would require, NeST would work closely with one of the specialised UN agencies (UNDESA, UNOSSC, UNDP, UNCTAD, etc.)

5. NeST training and education hubs

- In the same way that NeST members collaborate on research, there could be a university sub-group of NeST that collaborates on training and capacity-building programmes.
- A NeST academic group can encourage inter-institution academic exchanges, facilitate scholarships and bursaries, and allow for students and faculty to do research and be hosted at various Southern universities.
- A preliminary step in this direction is a proposed joint post-graduate executive education programme on international development and SSC, offered jointly by the University of the Witwatersrand in Johannesburg and Pontifical University Catholic in Rio. Discussions and plans are underway.

6. NeST governance

- There needs to be more clarity about procedures of membership to NeST and a database of NeST members needs to be maintained and updated by the NeST global secretariat (RIS).

- The NeST Secretariat should maintain regular communication with various NeST members, national and regional chapters, through newsletters, knowledge hubs and an interactive website.
- The NeST executive (founding) group currently comprising four leading think tanks from Brazil, India, China and South Africa will by the end of the year expand to seven members, which will include three additional think tanks from lower-income countries in Africa, Latin America and the Asia-Pacific region. This endeavour is aimed at increasing representation and encouraging inclusivity within NeST beyond just BRICS and big Southern providers.
- There need to also be regular meetings and annual NeST conferences held in different countries.
- The next major SSC conference will be held in Delhi (as a follow-up to Delhi 2013), where NeST will officially be launched and an MoU between founding institutions will be signed. Tentative date: March 2016.
- Although NeST should continue to be primarily an academic network driven by think tanks and researchers, it should endeavour to engage broader stakeholders from government, civil society and private sector to ensure policy traction. Such engagement and facilitation of policy dialogues should be led by the national and regional chapters.

For further background, information and documentation about the NeST technical workshop in Midrand visit: www.saiia.org.za/nest

Annexure 1: Useful reference documents

- *Conference on Southern Providers South–South co-operation: Issues and Emerging Challenges.* (2013). Retrieved May 1, 2015, from Research and Information System for Developing Countries: <http://ris.org.in/publications/reportsbooks/662>
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Annexure 2: Types of impact evaluation methods

Types of impact evaluation	Description
Qualitative case studies	<p>A case study is defined as ‘a method for learning about a complex instance, based on a comprehensive understanding of that instance obtained through extensive description and analysis of that instance taken as a whole and in its context’.³³ In <i>Qualitative Research and Case Study Applications in Education</i>, Merriam gives the following account of case studies. As it is based on real life situations, the case study offers a thick, rich description and analysis of a phenomenon.³⁴ The disadvantages to using this method are that it may be too expensive or time consuming. In the case that there is money and time, the product may be too lengthy, too detailed or too involved for busy policymakers and practitioners to read or use.³⁵ Further the generalisability of case studies often arises. However authors like Erickson argue that much can be learned from particular instances.³⁶ Qualitative case studies are also limited by the integrity of the researcher. This is what Guba and Lincoln refer to as ‘unusual problems of ethics’ whereby an unethical case writer could so select from among available data that virtually anything he wished could be illustrated.³⁷ There are problems of biases that may affect the final product due to the subjectivity of the researcher. Thus problems of reliability, validity and generalisability often arise in dealing with case studies.³⁸</p>
Non-experimental and econometric methods	<p>Non-experimental methods can be used in cases when it is not possible to randomly select a control group, identify a suitable comparison group through matching methods or use reflexive comparisons. In such situations, programme participants can be compared to non-participants using statistical methods to account for differences between the two groups. One of the econometric techniques that can be used to compare participants and non-participants correcting for selection bias is instrumental variables. This involves using one or more variables (instruments) that matter to participation but not to outcomes given participation. This identifies the exogenous variation in outcomes attributable to the</p>

³³ Morra LG & AC Friedlander, *Case Study Evaluations*. Washington, DC: The World Bank Operations Evaluation Department, 1990.

³⁴ Merriam SB, *Qualitative Research and Case Study Applications in Education*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, 1997.

³⁵ *Ibid.*

³⁶ Erickson F, ‘Qualitative methods in research on teaching’, in MC Whittrock (ed.), *Handbook of Research on Teaching*. Old Tappan, NJ: Macmillan, pp. 119–161.

³⁷ Guba E & Y Lincoln, *Effective Evaluation*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1981.

³⁸ Merriam SB, *Qualitative Research and Case Study Applications in Education*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, 1997.

programme, recognising that its placement may not be random but purposive. The instrumental variables are first used to predict programme participation; then the programme impact is estimated using the predicted values from the first equation.

As with quasi-experimental methods, this evaluation design is relatively cheap and easy to implement since it can draw on existing data sources. The drawbacks are first, that the reliability of results is often reduced as the methodology is less robust statistically. Second, the methodology has some statistical complexities that may require some expertise in the design of the evaluation and in the analysis and interpretation of results. Third, although it is possible to partially correct for selection bias, full correction remains as a challenge (World Bank, 2011).

<p>Experimental / Randomised control trials</p>	<p>This method involves gathering a set of individuals (or other unit of analysis) equally eligible and willing to participate in a programme and randomly dividing them into two groups: those who receive the intervention (treatment group) and those from whom the intervention is withheld (control group).</p> <p>These designs are generally considered the most robust of evaluation methodologies as the assignment process itself creates comparable treatment and control groups that are statistically equivalent to one another, given appropriate sample sizes. Thus the control groups generated serve as a perfect counterfactual, free from the selection bias issues that exist in all evaluations.</p> <p>Advantages include the simplicity in interpreting results – the programme’s impact on the outcome being evaluated can be measured by the difference between the means of the samples of the treatment group and the control group. Disadvantages include:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Randomisation may be unethical owing to the denial of benefits or services to otherwise eligible members of the population for the purposes of the study. 2) It can be politically difficult to provide an intervention to one group and not another. 3) The scope of the intervention may rule out the possibility of selecting a control group such as with a nationwide programme or policy change. 4) Individuals in treatment or control groups may change certain identifying characteristics during the experiment that could invalidate or contaminate the results. If, for example, people move in and out of a project area, they may move in and out of the treatment or control group. Alternatively, people who were denied a programme benefit may seek it through alternative sources, or those being offered a programme may not take up the intervention. 5) It may be difficult to ensure that assignment is truly random. An example of this might be administrators who exclude high-risk applicants to achieve better results. 6) Experimental designs can be expensive and time consuming in certain situations, particularly in the collection of new data (World Bank, 2011).
<p>Quasi-experimental</p>	<p>This design involves constructing a comparison group using matching or reflexive comparisons.</p> <p><i>Matching</i> consists of identifying non-programme participants comparable in essential characteristics to participants. Both groups should be matched on the basis of either a few observed characteristics or a number of them that are known or believed to influence programme outcomes. Matched comparison groups can</p>

	<p>be selected before project implementation (prospective studies) or afterwards (retrospective studies).</p> <p>An advantage of evaluations using matching methods is that they can draw on existing data sources and are thus often quicker and cheaper to implement. The disadvantages are that the reliability of the results is often reduced, as the methodology may not completely solve the problem of selection bias; and the matching methods can be statistically complex, thus requiring considerable expertise in the design of the evaluation and in analysis and interpretation of the results. Types of matching include propensity score matching, in which the comparison group is matched to the treatment group by using the propensity score (predicted probability of participation given observed characteristics), and score matching, useful for when there are many potential characteristics to match between a sample of program participants and a sample of non-participants. Here, instead of aiming to ensure that the matched control for each participant has exactly the same value of the control variables X, the same result can be achieved by matching on the predicted probability of programme participation, P, given X, which is called the propensity score of X. The range of propensity scores estimated for the treatment group should correspond closely to that for the retained sample of non-participants. The closer the propensity score, the better the match.</p> <p><i>Reflexive comparison</i> is another type of quasi-experimental design. In a reflexive comparison, the counterfactual is constructed on the basis of the situation of programme participants before the programme. Thus, program participants are compared to themselves before and after the intervention and function as both treatment and comparison group. This type of design is particularly useful in evaluations of full-coverage interventions such as nationwide policies and programmes in which the entire population participates and there is no scope for a control group.</p> <p>A major drawback with reflexive comparisons is that the situation of programme participants before and after the intervention may change owing to myriad reasons independent of the programme. Unless they are carefully done, reflexive comparisons may not be able to distinguish between the programme and other external effects, thus compromising the reliability of results (World Bank, 2011).</p>
<p>Outcome Harvesting</p>	<p>Outcome harvesting is used to identify, monitor, and learn from changes in social actors, through harvesting bites of detailed outcome information with colleagues, partners, and stakeholders. The information describes what changed, for whom, when and where, why it matters to the development objective – the significance of the change – and how the programme contributed to the change. Outcome harvesting is useful for complex aspects of a</p>

	<p>programme, when the significance of particular milestones and outcomes may be unknown in advance. There is often a need for learning to understand how change happened.</p> <p>The harvesting process is stakeholder-centred and captures qualitative, tacit knowledge. It includes tools to substantiate and analyse this knowledge collaboratively and communicate progress toward impact to clients, management and partners. The tools are flexible to adapt to a programme’s design and can provide useful details to inform the theory of change, implementation lessons, outcomes, and indicators (World Bank, 2014, 5).</p>
<p>Crowd Sourcing</p>	<p>Crowd-sourcing is defined by Howe (2008, 99) as the act of taking a job traditionally performed by a designated agent and outsourcing it to an undefined, generally large group of people in the form of an open call. Crowd-sourcing is used as an informational resource for development and can be used to track flows of aid, reporting on poor government performance or organizing grassroots movements, for example (Mott et al, 2014, 1).</p>

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