

Fourth Asia-Pacific Directors General Forum for South-South and Triangular Cooperation

Mapping Multilateral Support via South-South and Triangular Cooperation in Asia and the Pacific: Getting back on track to realize the 2030 Agenda

Agenda

BACKGROUND

The United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) has been providing a regional platform to facilitate South-South and triangular cooperation among its 62 member States and associate members and address development challenges and opportunities. Historically, ESCAP's South-South and triangular cooperation activities helped shape its technical assistance programmes, informed its research and analysis, and underpinned its intergovernmental and consensus building work.

The COVID-19 pandemic, which has had devastating impact on economies and people across the region, has provided ESCAP with a unique opportunity to focus its energy towards supporting member States to build back better and accelerate its progress towards the 2030 Agenda, keeping South-South and triangular cooperation at the centre of its mission.

One of the centre pieces of ESCAP's South-South and triangular cooperation work is its Asia-Pacific Directors General Forum for South-South and Triangular Cooperation (Asia-Pacific DG Forum), supported by the UN Office for South-South Cooperation (UNOSSC). Leading-up to the Second High-Level UN Conference on South-South Cooperation (BAPA+40), ESCAP jointly established the Asia-Pacific DG Forum with the Government of Thailand and UNOSSC in June 2018. Every year, the Forum brings together the heads of development cooperation and South-South cooperation agencies and units of ESCAP member States to share experiences, good practices, and provide a venue for facilitating collaboration on issues related to South-South and triangular cooperation.

The third and most recent Asia-Pacific DG Forum, held virtually in November 2020, brought together Directors General and other stakeholders from 23 countries in Asia and the Pacific to share experiences concerning their responses to and recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic, and exchange national and regional actions to build back better.

In preparation for the fourth Asia-Pacific DG Forum, ESCAP and UNOSSC proposed to promote the exchange of experiences and best practices among member States and to foster new ideas, namely, through (a) the establishment of a South-South Network of Technical Cooperation Providers and (b) the creation of working groups on South-South cooperation to strengthen the functions of the Asia-Pacific DG Forum. These proposals were discussed in bilateral discussions as well as during a [Roundtable on Network for South-South Cooperation in Asia and the Pacific](#), convened as an associated event of the Asia-Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development (9th session) in March 2022. The outcome of the Roundtable was taken into account in the proposed programme for the fourth Asia-Pacific DG Forum.

The fourth Asia-Pacific DG Forum will be held in conjunction with the [Global South-South Development Expo 2022](#).

OBJECTIVES

The objectives of the fourth Asia-Pacific DG Forum are for governments and other key stakeholders in the region to:

1. Discuss the South-South cooperation needs and resources based on the findings of ESCAP's *Survey on South-South Cooperation Modalities in the Asia-Pacific Region for the fourth Asia-Pacific DG Forum on South-South and Triangular Cooperation*.
2. Exchange ideas and experiences on ways to improve the access to available South-South and triangular cooperation support and resources.
3. Discuss ESCAP's regional and sub-regional South-South support mechanisms and approaches in Asia and the Pacific that can assist member States in their efforts to build back better from the COVID-19 pandemic and get back on track towards meeting the SDGs.
4. To provide recommendations to the Global DG Forum that will also take place in conjunction with the Global South-South Development Expo on 14 September.

THEMES AND ISSUES TO BE DISCUSSED

HYBRID SESSION

Tuesday, 13 September, 14:20 – 18:30 (BKK time)

Chair: H.E. Ms. Millicent Cruz Paredes, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Republic of the Philippines to the Kingdom of Thailand and Permanent Representative to ESCAP

SESSION 1. Opening session (30 mins)

➤ Opening statements

- Ms. Armida Salsiah Alisjahbana, Under-Secretary-General of the United Nations and Executive Secretary of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP)
- Ms. Ureerat Chareontoh, Director-General of Thailand International Cooperation Agency (TICA)
- Ms. Xiaojun Grace Wang, Designated Representative of Director, UN Office for South-South Cooperation (UNOSSC)

SESSION 2. Panel discussion on the role of South-South cooperation for getting back on track to realize the 2030 Agenda (90 mins)

- The panel will reflect on lessons learned and best practices of South-South cooperation to cope with and recover from the COVID-19 pandemic which contribute to getting the region back on track to realize the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Panellists to be selected to represent global, regional and subregional experiences and to include the United Nations Development System

Moderator: Ms. Sandra Hanutsaha

Panellists:

- H.E. Dr. Mahendra Reddy, Minister for Agriculture, Waterways & Environment, Fiji
- H.E. Mr. Tuvdendorj Gantumur, Deputy Minister of Environment and Tourism of Mongolia
- Mr. Prabhat Kumar, Additional Secretary, Ministry of External Affairs, India (remotely)
- Mr. Elmaddin Mehdiyev, Director of Azerbaijan International Development Agency - AIDA, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Azerbaijan
- Ms. Kanchana Wanichkorn, Vice President, Office of National Higher Education Science Research and Innovation Policy Council (NXPO), Thailand
- Mr. Anir Chowdhury, Policy Advisor, a2i Programme, Cabinet Division, ICT Division and UNDP Bangladesh
- Mr. Aminuddin Mat Ariff, Regional Coordinator (Asia), Islamic Development Bank

Open for Q&A and discussions amongst attendees.

Coffee break (20 min)

SESSION 3. Modalities to support South-South cooperation in Asia and the Pacific (80 mins.)

- Presentation and discussion of ESCAP's South-South cooperation survey results
- Review of the proposed working groups on South-South cooperation
- Demonstration of the South-South Cooperation Connector

SESSION 4. Consideration of decisions and closing (30 mins.)

- Summary of key findings, discussions, and ways forward
- Outlook / preparations of 5th DG Forum

PARTICIPANTS

Directors General and senior-level management who are leading their respective government's development cooperation and South-South cooperation agencies in Asia and the Pacific. Representatives from think tanks, civil society organizations, and the private sector may participate as well. Please register at <https://indico.un.org/e/4thAPDGForum>



FORMAT & VENUE

The fourth Asia-Pacific DG Forum is planned as a hybrid session during the GSSD Expo 2022 at the United Nations Conference Centre, Bangkok, Thailand and virtually through MS Teams.

DATE & TIME

Tuesday, 13 September, 14:20 – 18:30 (BKK time)

CONTACT DETAILS

ESCAP secretariat: escap-ssc@un.org

Ms. Ingrid Dispert, Programme Officer - Partnerships, Capacity Development and Partnerships Section, Strategy and Programme Management Division, ESCAP | dispert@un.org | +66 2 288 2501

Mr. Maes Suwantra, UNOSSC, Advocacy Advisor Asia and Pacific, UNOSSC Bangkok Office | maes.suwantra@unOSSC.org | +66 2 304 9100