

Forum: General Assembly 3

Issue: Consolidating the South-South and Triangular Cooperation

Student Officer: Siaya Kaufman

Position: Head Chair

Introduction

Over the course of the years, we have seen more and more economical, social, natural, and many other issues continue to increase by a drastic amount. While there have been many initiatives and solutions proposed by not only the United Nations (UN) but also multiple international organizations, not a lot of the suggested provisions have been seen to be either implemented or applicable. However, while not a lot of them have been as effective as others, there are two specific initiatives that stood out and have shown to be useful. With similar ideas and visions, the South-South cooperation and Triangular Cooperation are both quite effective as they are capable of helping developing countries that are part of the Global South in more collaborative ways.

In 1974, the United Nations ratified “the establishment of a special unit within the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) to promote the exchange of knowledge, experiences, skills, as well as technical skills among developing countries” which essentially was the starting point for both the South-South cooperation as well as the Triangular Cooperation. However, while they both incorporated both beneficial and effective solutions, there were still several flaws seen in the approaches that were come up by the UN. For example, in the South-South cooperation, there are only developing countries involved in the process which may be a possible downfall for all countries involved. They may develop at an even slower pace and result in more issues taking place in the time that is spent trying to solve one specific matter. Triangular Cooperation would be more effective because it involves a third party which is usually a more economically developed country (MEDC) or a developed nation. These member states have much more resources than they can bring to the table and are capable of helping solve world problems at a much faster rate compared to developing nations doing so on their own.

While both initiatives involve flaws, it is quite apparent that they both bring multiple benefits to all parties involved and it is important that member states work together to come up with new solutions that can hopefully strengthen as well as amalgamate ideas and approaches from both initiatives in order to create a more solid solution and approach to tackling world issues we continue to face each and every day.

Definition of Key Terms

Consolidate

To consolidate means to strengthen or to make something more solid. It could also mean combining multiple factors into one single more efficacious and constructive unit. In this specific issue that we are dealing with, it would be referring more towards how to combine both Triangular Cooperation and South-South cooperation into one in order to strengthen the system more in hopes of dealing with pressing world issues that we are still yet to solve up to this very day.

Global South

The Global South includes many of the less economically developed countries (LEDCs) including nations from Africa, the Pacific Islands, the Middle East, Asia, as well as Latin America, and the Caribbeans. It essentially is used to refer to the lower-income nations. The Global North is the opposite of the Global South and are nations on the receiving end of finance and resources.

North-South Divide

The main and quite possibly the only difference between the Global North and the Global South is the number of resources and economic capabilities that they each hold. While the Global North is doing very well and is perfectly capable of looking after themselves with the number of resources that they possess, the Global South needs much more support seeing as they fall behind in many different aspects. In more common terms, the Global North is referred to a lot as either a developed nation or a more economically developed country (MEDCs), while the Global South is known as a developing nation or a less economically developed country (LEDCs). The North-South divide is quite straightforward and refers to the gap that exists between the Global North and South.



Figure 1: A global map that illustrates the general regions of the Global South and Global North.

South-South Trade

Similar to the idea of Triangular Cooperation, South-South cooperation only takes place within developing nations that are part of the Global South. While it involves the same ideas and aims for the same result as the Triangular Cooperation, it is sometimes less effective since it's only involving developing nations that don't possess the same amount of resources and sometimes may not be up to date. Ultimately, both strive to achieve the goal of addressing and fathoming the quandaries that we continue to face in our world today.

Triangular Cooperation

Triangular Cooperation is essentially the act of major parties such as member states, civil societies, international organizations, or private sectors working together in hopes of helping one another achieve the goals of the SDGs. Some benefits that the Triangular Cooperation can bring include gaining more comparative advantages since all partners involved would be providing knowledge and resources of their own. Additionally, Triangular Cooperation can also provide a more collaborative way to come up with solutions to tackle some of the most compelling predicaments we face in today's world.

History

There has always been an obvious social, economic, political, and ideological divide between the LEDC and MEDC nations. All throughout the history of the United Nations, the ultimate goal has been to strive for peace, equality, and a sense of security; to do such, the new organizations that the United Nations continues to establish constantly as well as the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) existing.

To help the Global South grow and develop at a more rapid pace, in the 1960s, Triangular Cooperation was inaugurated. The key characteristics of the cooperation was that there were three main roles with the member nations involved in the partnerships that were formed: facilitation, which helped with the financial and technical aspects of the collaboration, the pivotal partner, which shares their knowledge as well as their competence through the form of Triangular Cooperation, and lastly, the recipient, the main target for development through the process of Triangular Cooperation. When Triangular Cooperation was first established, it was not seen as something that would help with the less economically developed nations that much and therefore was not regarded with importance. It wasn't until later on in 1978 when the South-South cooperation was established that nations started to dive deeper back into the established Triangular Cooperation.

One of the main reasons why the world did not see both the South-South and Triangular Cooperation as effective solutions when they were first initiated is because some of the earliest nations that made use of these cooperations didn't prove themselves to be successful. The developing nations struggled to gain little to any benefit out of these cooperations when it was just established because it was such a fresh idea and nations were still struggling to figure out what ways of trade would make the most mutual benefit. In the early 1990s, there started to be signs of development and improvement in terms of less economically developed countries (LEDCs).

In the more recent years, there have been previous discussions made within the United Nations (UN) after seeing the recent success rate with both South-South and Triangular Cooperation to combine both ideas into one in hopes of creating more advanced and successful cooperation that can help benefit all parties that would be involved.

Key Issues

COVID-19

With the current ongoing pandemic, there are many nations that have been hesitant to perform any actions of trade - especially with those nations which are considered to be the "hotspot" for most COVID cases. However, as this pandemic has already been around for a bit more than two years, many nations have reconsidered their decisions and started to trade much more than they used to. With the issue of triangular trade, however, there have been some Global North nations that were more uncertain in regards to trading with Global South nations. They have claimed to have to think twice about whether or not it really is worth the risk of bringing more viruses into their nation through the act of trading with such member states.

Tension Between Nations

Another main issue when it comes to whether or not nations want to trade with one another would be tensions that are quite apparent such as Ukraine and Russia with the ongoing invasion as well as Israel and Palestine with their unresolved tension. Because of these obvious tensions and hatred between nations, some would evidently not want to trade and help one another. While it is not necessary for these nations to trade with each other, it is recommended that they do so. While not all member states may be able to provide the best resources, there may be certain information that can be traded through the process and if nations continue to have such tensions, they may be missing out on important tips and information that could have possibly been traded.

Effectiveness

As mentioned, the effectiveness of these cooperations were not apparent until years after the cooperation was established. If South-South Cooperation and Triangular Cooperation were to be consolidated into a single organisation, it may also take a while to get right on track and work as effectively as desired. So before fully committing to combining the two organisations into one, it is also important for them to think about how they can carry out the act most effectively in order to help all parties involved benefit out of the act of trade when it comes to consolidating the two into a single cooperation.

Major Parties Involved and Their Views

China

Being a part of the Global South and holding such a significant role in the world, China is one of the most important contributors in both South-South and Triangular Cooperation worldwide. The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the Chinese government signed an agreement to help build South-South Cooperation to be more solid and sturdy in 2010. This was also the very first time China has agreed to sign such an agreement that included multiple partners. Ever since the agreement was signed, China has collaborated with UNDP to help promote the idea of South-South Cooperation between China and other LEDCs. Additionally, it also helped China participate more in regard to international proceedings. The collaboration between China and UNDP is focused on five main points which include Triangular Cooperation, sharing foreign aid systems, global and regional issues, South-South Cooperation, and sharing development journeys.

India

The South-South Cooperation has always played quite a significant role in the development of India as it has essentially acted as the “support system” of its foreign policy and diplomacy. Ever since India gained independence from Britain in 1947 and has been recognized for their own governmental ruling, they have shared and communicated with their fellow member states to help themselves ameliorate as a nation. Additionally, one significant impact that was made through the process of making use of the Triangular Cooperation is that around 422,250 people were able to benefit from it. In 2017, they were able to benefit nearly 17 billion USD helping support them after disasters took place in previous years.

Israel

Israel has worked alongside Greece and Cyprus in the Triangular Cooperation for a few times. They were not originally part of an Israeli initiative, however, the proposal to work with them was brought up more than one time by some of the emissaries involved in the Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The finalized

process which made use of both the South-South Cooperation as well as the Triangular Cooperation between the three countries was initially commenced by Greece and Cyprus. Later on, different member states such as Egypt and Jordan started to follow in the footsteps of Greece and Cyprus and also reached out to work with Israel.

Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD)

Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development is a world-known organization that has the vision of “promoting policies that will improve the economic and social well-being of people around the world”. With a group of 34 different member states involved, they get together to discuss and come up with economic and social development and policies. The member states of the OECD are all democratic countries and support the idea of free-market economies. The OECD puts out its economic outlook twice a year. The economic outlook gives a detailed description of the economic policies that are required for each member nation. The OECD has been pushing as well as trying to raise awareness for both the South-South and Triangular Cooperation. Furthermore, in 2015, the survey that the OECD had put out stated that “the Triangular Cooperation led to the creation of an online project database and helped structure a series of policy dialogues in Lisbon, Portugal.” Moreover, the OECD has also stated in recent years that they are still trying to continue to develop South-South and Triangular Cooperation - consolidating the two would be an interesting yet possibly extremely effective solution to this vision.

United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation (UNOSSC)

The United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation (UNOSSC) was an organization that was instituted to help coordinate, promote as well as support the South-South and Triangular Cooperation in global means. This organization, which obviously is run within the United Nations (UN) system, helps developing countries tackle the issues that they face every single day in more effective ways. Additionally, it opens up many new opportunities for the Global South nations to help themselves grow faster not only in the economical sense but also in technological aspects. UNOSSC truly incorporates both South-South and Triangular Cooperation to help all nations develop in the fastest and most efficient way possible.

Timeline of Relevant Resolutions, Treaties, and Events

Date	Description of Event
30th, September 1961	OECD Established: The Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development was formed to help with world trade and improvement within the economies.

1963	Triangular Cooperation Formed: Triangular Cooperation was established to widen trade internationally within all member states.
1978	South-South Cooperation Formed: The United Nations started the South-South Cooperation to encourage the idea of trade and collaboration within South-South Nations.
1995	Significant impact made by South-South Cooperation: South-South Cooperation wasn't seen to be useful until now - when a real change was clear to be seen.
2010	Creation of Database to Track Trade: More than 110 Cases of South-South and Triangular Cooperation were recorded into the database.
2013	Significant Trade Carried Out by Triangular Cooperation: Japan, Germany and Netherlands cooperated with developing countries such as Bolivia, Benin and Bhutan.
16th, October 2019	First African South-South Cooperation Report: Provided a chance for South-South Cooperation to see the progress being made in developing nations. Another step closer towards reaching the SDGs.

Relevant UN Treaties and Events

- International Chamber of Commerce: Belt and Road Dispute Resolution
- Resolution on South-South Cooperation (A/RES/62/209)
- UNCTAD Forging a Path Beyond Borders: The Global South
- High-level United Nations Conference on South-South Cooperation (A/RES/64/1)
- Resolution adopted by the General Assembly for South-South Cooperation (A/RES/72/237)

Evaluation of Previous Attempts to Resolve the Issue

China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI)

President Xi Jinping of China launched the Belt and Road Initiative in 2013 with the intention of better connecting Asia with Europe and Africa through the land in order to better improve trade to improve economic growth. This initiative helped put Asia at the top of the economic food chain. It also helped better improve developing regions such as Africa massively. Although this solution has brought many positive results, it was also suggested to "pause and reassess" the project. The BRI cooperation is also often spoken down upon for the reasons of China taking out loans that they aren't capable of paying back and has ended up in a negative cycle for all parties involved. There have also been more and more complaints over the years regarding how the BRI isn't being "transparent" enough and has been gradually moving downhill.

Establishment of OECD

The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), established on the 30th of September in 1961 with the assistance of the United Nations (UN), had the aim to improve the economy globally as well as improve trading acts. While the OECD did contribute to many successes when it comes to improvements made by the economy, there have also been many failed attempts. The OECD covers a lot of the economy from a global perspective so it is not guaranteed that every time they contribute to a new trade, it will be successful. With the South-South and Triangular Cooperation has been decently successful when analyzing the numbers, if they were to be consolidated into one single cooperation, it may also be helpful for the OECD as they would not have to focus as much on such cooperations.

Possible Solutions

Improving the Trust Between Nations

By helping improve the relationships and building trust within member states, it may better improve the quality of trade and how the South-South and Triangular Cooperation can grow as a whole. Not only will it encourage a continuous improvement in regards to the products being traded, but also allows them to share more ideas without feeling the need to hold back due to a lack of trust.

- **Pros:** If the nations do learn to build trust with each other, it will improve the quality of trade because they will have a good relationship and want to share ideas as well as trade stocks to help benefit all parties in the best possible ways.
- **Cons:** Building trust takes up a lot of time and many developing nations are in serious need of help in terms of the economy failing and the people struggling to live for another day because of their lack of resources.

Suggesting the Start of a New Organization that Combines South-South and Triangular Cooperation

By simply combining both cooperations into one single organization, it ensures more safety and fairness as it will be monitored. The United Nations would be able to be by nation's sides to help ensure the trade can satisfy all parties involved.

- **Pros:** It seems safer and the nations involved in trade may be more willing to open up and disclose more information since they know the United Nations is there to monitor and help with the trade process to ensure everything is fair.
- **Cons:** The process of starting an entirely new organization is a lot of work and with so much going on in our world today (e.g. COVID-19), the United Nations may be put under a lot of pressure.

Testing the Effectiveness of Combining South-South and Triangular Cooperation Into One Organisation

The entire idea was to consolidate these two cooperations into one to try and make it as effective as possible for all nations when it comes to trade. However, it is not guaranteed that it would be effective. So it is essential to have a number of test trials before making the final verdict and being certain that the two should be made into a single organisation.

- **Pros:** It gives the world a general idea of what it would be like if there wasn't both South-South Cooperation and Triangular Cooperation anymore; instead having them both combined into one. Additionally, if it were to be successful, the parties that were put into the test trial would gain and benefit from this.
- **Cons:** If the test trial were to turn out to be ineffective, the member states that were involved may possibly lose some of their resources and not gain anything from this act. It may also cause some nations to end up being upset.

Bibliography

- OECD. "Triangular Co-Operation Timeline - OECD." *OECD*,
www.oecd.org/dac/triangular-cooperation/triangular-co-operation-in-the-international-development-agenda.htm.
- United Nations. "South-South Cooperation Day-Background." *United Nations*,
www.un.org/en/observances/South-South-cooperation-day/background#:~:text=In%201974%2C%20the%20United%20Nations,South%20and%20triangular%20cooperation%20globally.
- United Nations. "What Is 'South-South Cooperation' and Why Does It Matter? | UN DESA | United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs." *United Nations*,
www.un.org/development/desa/en/news/intergovernmental-coordination/South-South-cooperation-2019.html.
- UNOSSC. "Home." *UNOSSC*, 24 Nov. 2021, www.unsouthsouth.org.
- UNOSSC. "About South-South and Triangular Cooperation." *UNOSSC*, 12 June 2018,
www.unsouthsouth.org/about/about-sstc/#:~:text=Triangular%20cooperation%20is%20collaborati on%20in,as%20other%20forms%20of%20support.
- Wikipedia contributors. "Global North and Global South." *Wikipedia*, 4 Jan. 2022,
en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Global_North_and_Global_South.
- "North And South, The (Global) | Encyclopedia.Com." *Encyclopedia*,

www.encyclopedia.com/social-sciences/applied-and-social-sciences-magazines/north-and-south-global.

“Belt and Road Initiative (BRI).” *EBRD*, www.ebrd.com/what-we-do/belt-and-road/overview.html.

Appendix or Appendices

- I. Policy Recommendations for South-South Cooperation:
<https://www.oecd.org/dac/effectiveness/TT-SSC%20Policy%20Recommendations.pdf>
- II. Dive Deeper into the Cooperations:
https://www.un.org/en/ecosoc/docs/pdfs/south-south_cooperation.pdf