



Expert Group Meeting on Promotion of South-South Cooperation in Technology Transfer
25-26 October 2011, Beirut, Lebanon

Preliminary Information Note

1. Background

South-South Cooperation (SSC) could be defined as the technical and economic cooperation between developing countries in the global-south through sharing knowledge and skills in support of sustainable development. SSC is at the core mandate of the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA), to promote regional and interregional cooperation and collaboration by providing member countries with capacity-building and sharing experiences as a means for strengthening ties between countries and networking capabilities. The work of ESCWA takes into consideration the 2009 Nairobi outcome document of the High-level United Nations Conference on South-South Cooperation that calls upon the U.N. programmes and agencies to continue their support towards the development of cooperation programmes, strengthening regional capacities, and identifying the areas of highest impact of South-South cooperation.¹

SSC existed in many formats ranging from cooperation between developing countries to bilateral relations between countries, enterprises and individuals; SSC includes actions of Group of 77, regional and inter-regional trade agreements,² financing development, investment relations, and technical cooperation. Examples of SSC institutions include, among others, Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC), the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC), League of Arab States, and U.N. regional commissions (Asia-Pacific, Western Asia, Africa, and South America). To harness productive and sustained outcomes, SSC is usually driven by mutual benefits and guided by the principles of respect for national sovereignty and independence. Based on a multi-stakeholder approach, SSC involves the cooperation of civil society, private sector, academia and other actors. It complements rather than substitutes North-South cooperation.

Among the areas that pose a challenge and opportunity is the Technology Transfer (TT) and deployment for reaching the development goals of the countries. Hence, regional forums for transferring technology for development include: Consortium on Science, Technology and Innovation for the South; Technology Exchange Forum by the Standing Committee on Scientific and Technological Cooperation of the 57-member Organization of the Islamic Conference; Egyptian Fund for Technical Cooperation with Africa; India's Pan-African e-Network Project; United Arab Emirates in the field of renewable and alternative energy and clean technology; Qatar National Research Fund; United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC); and UNESCAP TT centre in India; United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO); and Arab League Educational, Cultural and Scientific Organization (ALECSO).

The fifth meeting of the ESCWA Consultative Committee on Scientific and Technological Development and Technological Innovation (Beirut, 29-30 March 2010)³ recommended that the ESCWA Technology Centre (ETC) activities connect with "global and regional initiatives to support country-based technology transfer by supporting needs assessment, facilitating information exchange and providing capacity-building services". Furthermore, the 2009 Arab Plan of Action for Science and Technology⁴ that identified the region's priorities in science and technology, promoted intra-regional cooperation on TT projects towards the implementation of the Arab Plan of Action. In addition, TT has been considered to be among the priority areas for sustainable development in the region,⁵ as iterated in a number of Arab declarations, including the Arab Declaration to the World Summit on Sustainable Development (2002).

The Information and Communication Technology (ICT) Division of ESCWA is organizing an expert group meeting on the Promotion of South-South Cooperation in Technology Transfer in selected areas: manufacturing, construction, technological innovation, and technology for education. The meeting is a follow-up to a previous meeting that was held

¹ Nairobi Outcome Document, General Assembly resolution 64/222 of 21 December 2009, <http://southsouthconference.org/wp-content/uploads/2010/01/GA-resolution-endorsed-Nairobi-Outcome-21-Dec-09.pdf>

² <http://www.g77.org/ifcc11/docs/doc-03-ifcc11.pdf>

³ Fifth Meeting of the ESCWA Consultative Committee on Scientific and Technological Development and Technological Innovation (Beirut, 29-30 March 2010), <http://www.escwa.un.org/information/meetingdetails.asp?referenceNum=1248E>

⁴ UNESCO and ALECSO, 2009, *Arab Plan of Action for Science and Technology* (Ar), <http://www.unesco.org/science/psd/focus/focus09/astpa.pdf>

⁵ ESCWA, 2003, *Governance for Sustainable Development in the Arab Region: Institutions and Instruments for Moving beyond an Environmental Management Culture*, E/ESCWA/SDPD/2003/8, Table 4, page 8.

in collaboration with the Royal Scientific Society in Jordan (Amman, 20-21 April 2011),⁶ which addressed the technology for climate change areas of water, energy, and agriculture, together with information communication.

2. Objectives

The main objective of the meeting is to discuss *priority areas* of cooperation in TT with the highest impact for collaboration, share *best practices* for cooperation with successful TT case studies in manufacturing and construction industries, technological innovation, and technology for education, and set the stage for a *collaboration framework* with multi owners for critical technology development, management, maintenance, and services.

3. Topics

The meeting will cover the following topics:

- (a) International/regional organizations perspective on South-South cooperation;
- (b) ESCWA Technology Centre priorities and collaboration framework;
- (c) Follow-up on the previous meeting that covered the themes of water, energy, agriculture, and information communication;
- (d) TT in the thematic areas of manufacturing industry, construction industry, technological innovation, and technology for education;
- (e) Case-studies reflecting successful practices and cooperation mechanisms in the thematic areas of the meeting.

4. Expected outcome

The main outcome of the meeting will be a *collaboration framework on TT* covering the identified areas of priority. The collaboration framework will be illustrated with best practices and lessons learnt.

5. Participants

Participants in the meeting include experts in the TT business modelling and mechanisms and in the thematic focus areas of the meeting, as well as stakeholders from the financial institutions, and public officials who are responsible for formulating or implementing sectoral policies and strategies.

Invited participants should register for the meeting before **Wednesday 21 September 2011**. The title of substantive contributions to the meeting, if any, should be proposed as part of the registration process, within which participants should send an abstract with the registration form and, upon approval, submit the full contribution one week before the meeting date.

6. Organisation, venue and dates

The meeting is organized by the ICT Division of ESCWA, and the ESCWA Technology Centre, and will be hosted by the Federation of Chambers of Commerce, Industry and Agriculture in Lebanon (FCCIAL). It will be held from 25 to 26 October 2011, at the Chamber of Beirut, CCIABML building, Sanayeh, Justinien Street, Beirut, Lebanon

7. Working language

Both English and Arabic will be used during the meeting. Participants are expected to be proficient in English as there will not be simultaneous translation.

8. Additional information

Latest information would be available through the meeting *Web page*. Submissions, inquiries and requests for additional information should be addressed to:

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⁶ <http://www.escwa.un.org/information/meetingdetails.asp?referenceNum=1441E>