



Trends and Opportunities in Advancing South-South and Triangular Cooperation in Tajikistan





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**United Nations Resident Coordinator's Office in the Republic of Tajikistan
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LIST OF ACRONYMS

ADB	Asian Development Bank
ARR	Agriculture Reform Programme of Tajikistan for the period 2012-2020
BOMNAF	Border Management Northern Afghanistan Project
CIS	Commonwealth of Independent States
CSO	Civil Society Organization
DCA	Drugs Control Agency
DFID	Department for International Development
EBRD	European Bank of Reconstruction and Development
EDB	Eurasian Development Bank
EFCD	Eurasian Fund for Sustainable Development
EU	European Union
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
FAR	Foreign Aid Report for 2014
GIZ	German Agency for International Cooperation
IFC	International Finance Corporation
IMF	International Monetary Fund
IOM	International Organization for Migration
IsDB	Islamic Development Bank
JICA	Japan International Cooperation Agency
LLDC	Landlocked Developing Country
MFA	Ministry of Foreign Affairs
NDS	National Development Strategy of the Republic of Tajikistan for the period to 2015
OIC	Organization of Islamic Conference
OSCE	Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe
OSI-AFT	Open Society Institute – Assistance Foundation in Tajikistan
SCO	Shanghai Cooperation Organization
SSC	South-South Cooperation
TBF	Tajikistan Border Force
TC	Triangular Cooperation
UN	United Nations
UNCT	United Nations Country Team
UNDAF	United Nations Development Assistance Framework
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNHCR	UN High Commissioner for Refugees
UNMAS	United Nations Mine Action Service

INTRODUCTION

Background

Tajikistan is located in southeastern Central Asia and borders Uzbekistan in the west and northwest, Kyrgyzstan in the north, China in the east and south with Afghanistan. Ninety-three percent of the country is mountainous and less than 7 percent is arable land. Tajikistan is the poorest developing country in the region with a predominantly agricultural economy. Since 1991, at the initial stage of independence, and especially during the period 1992-1997, the country experienced grave consequences resulting from a civil war and transition from a centrally planned economy to a market-based one, with a sharp increase in poverty. To address complex challenges, starting from peace-making to poverty alleviation, Tajikistan has been engaged in regional and international cooperation through various mechanisms and instruments. Given that Tajikistan is a landlocked country, the prospects of such cooperation have become increasingly important.

In the Nairobi Outcome document, it is emphasized that developing countries tend to share common views on national development strategies and priorities when facing similar development challenges. The proximity of experience is therefore a key catalyst for promoting capacity development in developing countries and, in this regard, accentuates the principles of South-South cooperation. It is important to enhance South-South cooperation in order to achieve its full development potential.

According to the United Nations, South-South Cooperation (SSC) is defined as “a process whereby two or more developing countries pursue their individual and/or shared development objectives through exchanges of knowledge, skills, resources and technical know-how and through collective actions including partnerships involving governments, civil society, academia and the private sector for their individual and/or mutual benefit.”

Most South-South interactions occur within regional neighbourhoods owing to common history, language, culture, ethnicity and geographical proximity. Regional neighbourhoods are also well suited to South-South collaboration to address such cross-border issues as infrastructure development, customs procedures, migration laws and climate change.

Complementing South-South cooperation initiatives is Triangular Cooperation (TC), defined as “collaboration in which traditional donor countries and multilateral organizations facilitate South-South initiatives through the provision of funding, training, management and technological systems, as well as other form of support.”

Further clarifying Tajikistan’s priorities and strategic preferences vis-à-vis the potential benefits that South-South cooperation (which are referred to as “East-East” in the region of Europe and CIS) can bring about, as well as the country’s level of preparedness to pursue such priorities and preferences, is an important step towards unleashing the potential of South-South and Triangular Cooperation for Tajikistan, the ECIS region as a whole and beyond. Therefore, a participatory stocktaking exercise and an initial policy dialogue on South-South (East-East) Cooperation in Tajikistan have been conducted.

Objectives of Stocktaking

Stocktaking pursues the following objectives:

- Identify relevant South-South (East-East) cooperation frameworks, objectives, conditions, patterns, successful practices and challenges at the level of national coordination authority, individual line ministries, relevant civil society and private sector institutions, as well as UN agencies, funds and programmes active in Tajikistan and other triangular cooperation players.
- Analyze shared and individual strengths and challenges of various players vis-à-vis effective promotion of South-South (East-East) cooperation and identify possible synergies.

Stocktaking Process and Methodology

In order to achieve the above-mentioned objectives the following tasks were accomplished:

- Conducted a desk review of the current national institutional and policy frameworks for SS&TC in Tajikistan;
- Sent out a questionnaire online through SurveyMonkey and distributed hard copies to key potential SS&TC stakeholders in order to collect qualitative and quantitative data and analyse trends and opportunities in SS&TC;
- Six consultative meetings with relevant national stakeholders from government institutions, civil society organizations, academia, the private sector, international development agencies and the UN Country Team (UNCT) were held in order to determine the scope and types of SS&TC activities and identify possible areas for future cooperation.
- Additionally, in order to initiate the policy dialogue and explore more potential opportunities for advancing SSC in the country, individual interviews were conducted with international and local organizations with the most active agenda on SS&TC and the government institutions with decision-making power in SS&TC.

The findings of the tasks are based on documentary sources collected, analysis of the survey responses, individual interviews conducted with public and private sector stakeholders and feedback received during the consultative meetings.

I. KEY NATIONAL POLICY AND INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK FOR SOUTH-SOUTH AND TRIANGULAR COOPERATION

The National Development Strategy of the Republic of Tajikistan (NDS) for the period 2007 to 2015 indicates that limited results from international cooperation are a challenge. According to this document a limited extent of cross-border cooperation has reduced opportunities for transit, technology exchange, and dynamic development of the country's own production facilities and has exposed the economy to external shocks caused by fluctuations in demand and prices in international markets.

The NDS indicated that “poor regional cooperation, in particular in trade and transit, also hinders access to foreign markets and complicated trade procedures and barriers on border trade and movement of the labour force also have an adverse effect, along with the lack of a common customs system and energy system with neighbouring countries.”

The current NDS recognizes that economic policy does not do enough in terms of support and development of the country's export potential, including that of highly processed products and educational, medical and other services.

The Agriculture Reform Programme of Tajikistan for the period 2012-2020 (ARP) stresses a need to ensure an export-oriented agriculture and to strengthen the country's position in the regional labour division. The National Education Development Strategy of the Republic of Tajikistan till 2020 requires integration in the global education system, exchange of students and academics, recognition of diplomas and many other tasks related to training and research through a broad international cooperation. The Concept on Local Development Management in Tajikistan for the period till 2030 also points out a need to utilize opportunities of international cooperation in education to improve the capacity of public officials in local governance.

The Economy Adaption Programme of the Republic of Tajikistan, developed in cooperation with the World Trade Organization (WTO) and adopted in 2015, states that one of its main objectives is to attract foreign investments and strengthen bilateral and multilateral cooperation with the country members of the WTO.

Currently, UN agencies are in the process of reporting on the progress made towards achieving the goals set up in the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) for 2010-2015. In light of a new National Development Strategy and setting up new goals towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the new UNDAF for 2016-2020, integration of SSC elements into these documents might be a timely first step for mainstreaming SSC in the development process.

The main institutions in charge of coordination of external aid and cooperation with the development agencies in Tajikistan are the Ministry of Economic Development and Trade, the State Committee on Investments and State Property Management and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. These government institutions provide coordination and interaction of state bodies with foreign states and international organizations; however, there is room for further improvement for a national level coordination mechanism on SS&TC, in case the latter is identified as a useful model.

Therefore, although the national policy and institutional framework for SS&TC has not been developed yet, all prerequisites for institutionalizing SSC at the country level exist, namely:

- A clearly articulated focus on strengthening cooperation with neighbouring countries in NDS for 2010-2015 and other strategies and policies; and
- High-level government officials, particularly in the Ministry of Economic Development and Trade and Ministry of Agriculture and Irrigation, are aware of SSC initiatives and confirmed their interest in advancing SS&TC in the country.

II. THE ROLE AND OVERVIEW OF STAKEHOLDERS IN SOUTH-SOUTH & TRIANGULAR COOPERATION

Over 90 questionnaires were distributed with 31 respondents and an overall response rate of 34 percent.

While the survey does not claim to be representative based on the survey results, 70.1 percent of respondents indicated that their organization had engaged in activities that could be classified as SSC, while 61.3 percent indicated that they had engaged in TC. The survey and consultative meetings evidenced that many organizations in Tajikistan are engaged in cooperation with Southern countries despite the fact they are not formulated as SS&TC activities.

Among the respondents, the most commonly identified areas of benefit from of SS&TC activities include knowledge exchange and technical assistance (61.4%), institutional relations (25.8%), financial (9.7%), and other (12.9%). Responses for the “other” category included humanitarian aid. Within the region, the most commonly identified partners were CIS countries (51.6%), and among other developing countries, (32.3%) Turkey and Afghanistan.

A. NATIONAL STAKEHOLDERS

The Government

As underlined by the president of Tajikistan, given the country's geographic location, geopolitical position and economic interests, five political groups are focused on in its foreign policy:

1. Commonwealth of Independent States;
2. Central Asia, with its further growth of regional cooperation and integration of economic opportunities;
3. Union of countries where Persian is widely spoken, which although they are not united in a single political and economic community, they are connected to each other due to linguistic, historical and cultural commonalities;
4. Muslim countries of the East, which combine not only the unity of religion, traditions and customs but also the opportunities and the needs of national development;
5. Finally, the fifth group: the international community.

One important direction of Tajikistan's foreign policy is its participation in activities of the Commonwealth of Independent States. Tajikistan, along with the CIS, considers cooperation with two other organizations operating in the former Soviet Union -- the Eurasian Economic Community and the Collective Security Treaty Organization -- as a priority in its foreign policy.

Tajikistan attaches utmost importance to regional cooperation in addressing the area's problems, including the situation in the Aral Sea basin. One of the founders of the International Aral Sea Rescue Fund, along with other states of Central Asia, Tajikistan directs all its efforts to solve this regional and global problem.

Tajikistan has become the venue for numerous international and regional events. These include the 10th meeting of the Intergovernmental Commission Transport Corridor Europe Caucasus Asia (TRACECA), the High-Level International Conference on the development of transit potential of Central Asia for the period until 2023, the First Investment Forum on the implementation of the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC) Plan of Action for cooperation with Central Asia, the High-Level International Conference on the International Decade for Action “Water for Life” 2005-2015 and the World Humanitarian Summit (WHS) Regional Consultation for South and Central Asia.

Tajikistan has different incentives for the development of its entrepreneurship sector for local and foreign investors. One incentive is setting up of free economic zones (FEZ). Tajikistan has established four: FEZ Panj, FEZ Danghar, FEZ Soghd and FEZ Ishkoshim.

In the World Bank Doing Business 2015 report, Tajikistan was marked as the country that improved the most in performance of the Doing Business Indicator on business environment and the country that made the biggest advance towards the regulatory frontier in the past years.

The diverse challenges in strategic areas that hinder the sustainable development of the country, such as energy and food security, communication and transportation isolation, dominance of raw materials in export operations and more prompts the Government to cooperate with the regional and global partners.

As a member of the WTO, Tajikistan faces challenges associated with its new status. NDS states that the country's infrastructure is not prepared to function under the conditions required by the WTO, and thus an adaptation plan for the country to operate in the new environment has been developed. Tajikistan intends to continue to liberalize its trade regime and is in a position to grant the most favourable regime in trade for Southern landlocked countries.

The most active government institutions in SS&TC are the Ministry of Energy and Water Resources, the Ministry of Transport, the Ministry of Economic Development and Trade, the Ministry of Agriculture and Irrigation, the Ministry of Education, the Migration Service under the Government of the Republic of Tajikistan and Tajikistan National Mine Action Centre. Trends and opportunities on SS&TC, including best practices shared at the consultative meetings and derived from the survey and the desk review, are reported in Chapter III under the sections relevant to the ministry.

Civil Society

Civil society organizations (CSOs) greatly contribute to solving problems of national and regional characters by engaging in TC. In addressing labour migration issues, CSOs provide legal and information support to migrant workers at pre-departure and on the ground at the destination countries in cooperation with Russian and Kazakhstan authorities and partners and with support of the IOM, ILO, UN Women and OSI-AFT. The knowledge exchange in defence of human rights has been a subject of cooperation between Tajik CSOs and Southern partners, particularly Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan.

Private Sector

Private sector stakeholders are engaged in cooperation with the foreign companies on a bilateral or triangular basis with support from the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Republic of Tajikistan. The Chamber contributes to strengthening trade and economic relations between the companies and the organizations, promoting their participation in exhibitions and fairs and other events to introduce the business community to economic and export opportunities. A recent example is the conclusion of profitable contracts for a total amount of USD\$1 million as a result of participating Tajik enterprises in the exhibition "ProdExpo 2015" in Moscow.

There were approximately 170 joint ventures as of 2014, with the biggest shares of Southern investments coming from Russia, China and Iran.

B. INTERNATIONAL STAKEHOLDERS

International Funding Organizations and Regional Groupings

Mutually beneficial cooperation with influential international organizations - the United Nations (UN), the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), OIC, the European Union, the Commonwealth of Independent States, the Eurasian Economic Community, the Shanghai Cooperation Organization and others takes a special place in the foreign policy of Tajikistan. These organizations played an important and critical role in the peace-building process and in drafting the post-war reconstruction and development of the country.

The partnership of the Asian Development Bank (ADB) with Tajikistan has promoted social development, rehabilitation and construction of new infrastructure, expansion of agriculture production and development of regional cooperation and trade under the Central Asian Regional Economic Cooperation (CAREC) programme and other initiatives.

The Islamic Development Bank (IsDB) financed 52 projects and operations in the health and education sectors, road infrastructure, energy, agricultural sector and microfinance.

The International Finance Corporation has numerous regional projects covering Tajikistan. Among them are the Financial Market Infrastructure Project, part of the regional program of financial infrastructure development in Central Asia (Kyrgyz Republic, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan) and Azerbaijan, with financial support from the Government of Switzerland; the Central Asia Agrifinance Project, funded by Austria to improve (a) access to finance and (b) productivity and access to markets for farmers/producers of supply chains in Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan; the Central Asia Tax Administration project; and the Central Asia Corporate Governance Program for Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan.

UN agencies

For the purpose of stocktaking, some of the UN Country Team (UNCT) members, such as the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) have assigned SSC focal points, evidence of growing interest to integrate SSC in national programming among the UN agencies.

There are many examples where the experiences of other developing countries were helpful in enhancing implementation of development solutions in Tajikistan. UNDP, jointly with the Turkish International Cooperation and Development Agency (TIKA), facilitated exchange visits of Tajik business representatives and policymakers in trade to Turkey to become acquainted with post-WTO accession programming.

Another example is an initiative of UNDP to organize a study tour for Tajikistan Government officials accompanied by program staff from UNDP, ADB and JICA Tajikistan to gain experience from JICA Kyrgyzstan projects "One Village-One Product." Considering lessons learned and good practices of the One Village-One Product project, UNDP identified opportunities for replication of the project in Shurabad area.

UN Women has experience in involving government partners in SSC initiatives in countries like Egypt, Moldova and India.

Best practices

In 2008, the National Taekwondo and Kickboxing Federation of Tajikistan (NTKFT), with the support of UNIFEM (UNWOMEN) and UNFPA, initiated a network of local advocates for the prevention of violence, stigma and discrimination among world athletes in Taekwondo. The main purpose of engaging these athletes was to overcome the stereotypical norms and behaviour in Tajikistan that lead to violence against women in their professional and private lives through sport and communications.



In close cooperation with the Joint Programme on VAW, UN agencies, the Kyrgyz Family Planning Alliance (KFPA), the National Committee of Women Affairs of Kyrgyzstan (NCWAK), NTKFT and CSO Gender and Development Kyrgyzstan national experts shared their knowledge and experience in community mobilization and change of attitude and behaviour in gender equality and women empowerment.

Athletes successfully combined their participation in the international and regional sports events through the promotion and enhancement of understanding and awareness of their peers and partners of the goals and objectives of the Framework for Action and the Global UN Secretary-General Campaign 2008 - 2015 "UNiTE to End Violence Against Women."

The Orange Day Campaign promoted by NTKFT in 2012 became of interest to the Taekwondo Federation of Africa (TFA), which unites six African countries. TFA joined the Orange Day campaign promoted by NTKFT in several international sports events and used the positive experience of NTKFT. Namely, a contest among all TFA members was conducted to demonstrate their commitment to GBV prevention and GE promotion through participation in Orange Day in creative ways.

UNFPA has successful examples of regional cooperation for institutional development and capacity-building of its partners through such events as a study tour to Thailand for exchange of experiences and knowledge in the field of maternal and child health between officials from the Ministry of Health and Social Protection of Population in Tajikistan and the Ministry of Health in Thailand. UNFPA together with Kyrgyzstan's partners successfully implemented an initiative on promoting gender inequality and ending violence against women through sports.

International Development Organizations and Foundations

Over the next few years, the Aga Khan Foundation (AKF) plans to develop five cross-border markets and three bridges with Afghanistan (in addition to the existing five). Since 2002, AKF has spent \$1.7 million to build and rehabilitate four bridges over the Pyanj River at Tem, Darvaz, Langar and Ishkashim, which now connect the Gorno-Badakhshan region in Tajikistan with Afghanistan's Badakhshan province. This has facilitated some cross-border trade and allowed some Afghans to receive access to critical social services, including emergency medical aid at bordering Tajik hospitals, and has secured delivery channels for humanitarian aid. The Aga Khan Development Network (AKDN) implements regional cooperation projects through the Mountain Societies Development Support Programme, the Institute for Pedagogical Development (IPD) and other AKDN agencies. Through AKDN projects, Tajik doctors have served more than 2,000 Afghan patients in Badakhshan.

With the support of AKDN IPD in Tajikistan and the Teachers' Training Centre (TTC) in Afghanistan, sharing of educational experiences across borders has expanded. IPD has conducted management trainings, translated teacher guides and Tajik learning resources into Dari and sent key staff to Afghanistan to support TTC.

Since 2010, the German Federal Foreign Office has been promoting integration and enhancement of cross-border cooperation and exchange among Afghanistan, Pakistan and Tajikistan through the Pakistan-Afghanistan-Tajikistan Regional Integration Programme (PATRIP). The PATRIP Foundation funds small- to medium-scale social and economic infrastructure projects that strengthen local development, enhance economic and social growth and improve the living standards of the local population.

USAID has several partnerships with AKDN for activities in Tajikistan extending along the border with Afghanistan, and is exploring other collaborative efforts and co-funding arrangements to expand this partnership more broadly in Central and South Asia and structure the programs as Global Development Alliances.

The Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) completed the Tajik-Afghan Poverty Reduction Initiative and Rural development project in the Tajik-Afghan border area of Gorno-Badakhshan Autonomous Oblast and is implementing the project for livelihood improvement in Tajik-Afghan cross-border areas and the project for promoting cross-border cooperation through effective management of Tajikistan's border with Afghanistan.

C. TAJIKISTAN'S ROLE IN SOUTH-SOUTH COOPERATION AS A RECIPIENT AND AS A PROVIDER

a. Recipient

Since 2012, with support from UNDP and the Department for International Development (DFID) of the United Kingdom, the annual Foreign Aid Report (FAR) has been prepared by the State Committee on Investments and State Property Management (SCISPM), based on information provided by the contributing institutions. At the current stage, the system does not evaluate the scope and impact of the assistance provided by Southern countries separately.

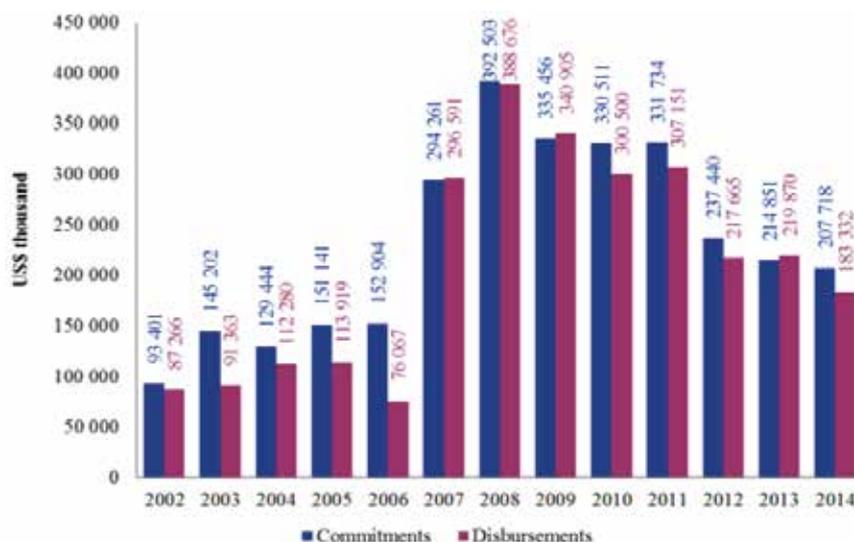


Figure 1. Total external resources provided in 2002-2014

Figure 1 shows total external assistance commitments and disbursements for the period 2002-2014, according to FAR 2014, which constituted an overall increase in annual disbursement of assistance with a peak in 2008, when the amount of assistance totalled \$378,676. During the period 2009-2014, the volume of assistance decreased, predominantly due to the global financial and economic crisis.

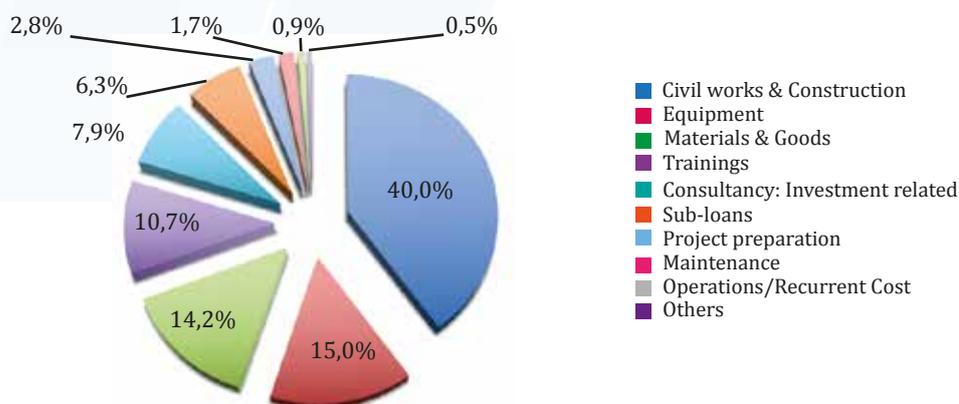


Figure 2. Structure of external assistance in Tajikistan in 2014

Figure 2 summarizes the distribution of assistance by expenditure. According to FAR in 2014, the largest assistance was made under the category of civil works and construction (40% of total assistance), followed by supply of equipment (15%), goods (14.2%) and trainings (10.7%).

Figure 3 below summarizes the assistance provided by Southern countries in 2002-2014, based on the information derived from the Aid Information Management System (AIMS).

Countries-aid providers	USD, thousand													
	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	Total
China	1 842	1 597				223 318	277 246	189 339	107 854	12 9451	27 624	42 158	39 244	1 039 675
Kuwait	718	3 328	4 871	6 651	508	3 207	7 124	5 621	1 633	432	3 524	5 953	4 711	48 282
United Emirates											3 284	2 178	2 068	7 530
Russia			332	10 027		532	1 766	800	87		771	389	1 199	15 902
Saudi Arabia		1 356	5 254	2 158	4 933	2 887	127	400	298	128	14 955	6 996	6 538	46 030
Turkey			86	824	3 283	2 255	2 015	921	2 536	1 880	1 971	856	669	17 296
India	6 020	300	1 110	1 980			2 000	685	500					12 595
Czech Republic			100	21	123	50	92							386
Iran			10 000	6 198	6 724	5 132	3 145				900	200	973	33 272

Figure 3. Assistance provided by Southern countries to Tajikistan in 2002-2014

In 2002-2014, the assistance provided was about \$2,735.362, with the contribution of Southern countries amounted \$1,220. 968 or 44.6 percent.

Figure 4 below shows the distribution of total assistance provided by Southern countries in 2002-2014 based on the information provided in Figure 2. The biggest share of assistance in the indicated period was given by China (85.2%).

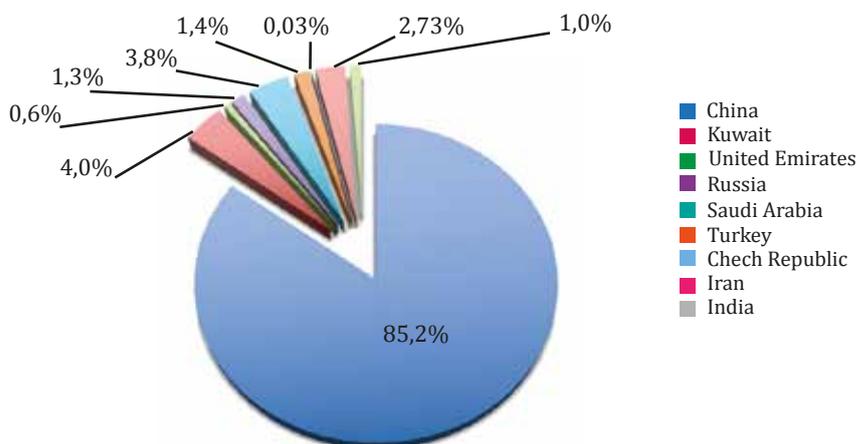


Figure 4. Distribution of assistance provided by Southern countries in 2002-2014

In 2014, foreign countries provided assistance in valued at \$183,332. Most assistance was provided by China (\$39,244 or 21.4%). Other major assistance providers included Germany (\$25,966 or 14.2%), Japan (\$20,089 or 11.0%), EU (\$18,597 or 10.1%), United States (\$16,634 or 9.1%), Switzerland (\$12,385 or 6.8%) and more. From the Southern countries apart from China, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Iran and Turkey are the most active providers of development assistance in 2014.

Sectoral allocation of external resources

In 2014, the transport sector had the highest share in spending external financial resources (25.6%), while the energy sector ranked right after transport (18.1%) with the major contribution from China (74.5% of the total aid for the sector in 2014). Significant assistance was provided for the health sector, which amounted 12.4 percent of the total assistance. For the development of private sector and industry, the funds provided amounted to 8.9 percent of total assistance, while for the education sector, 7.1 percent; agriculture and irrigation, 7 percent; social welfare and labour, 6.8 percent of total assistance.

Geographical allocation of external resources



Figure 5. Allocation of external resources in Tajikistan by region in 2002-2014

Figure 5 shows the dynamics of external assistance by region (capital city, Dushanbe, Gorno-Badakhshan Autonomous Oblast, Sughd oblast and Khatlon oblast) for 2002-2014. During this period, the assistance generally rose in all regions, except at national level, with the biggest share of aid given to Khatlon oblast, south of Tajikistan; the capital, as the most developed area, received comparatively less assistance.

Best practices

The launch of the new Aid Information Management System (AIMS) in 2012 opened an important chapter in the development of foreign aid coordination in Tajikistan. AIMS was developed and introduced by SCISPM with technical support from UNDP through the Support to Effective National Aid Coordination and Investments Promotion project funded by DFID. It is an automated system based on modern information and communication technologies designed to collect, store, update, process, analyse and present foreign-aid related information to stakeholders in response to their requests in real time. AIMS information contains data on all aid projects and agreements in Tajikistan from 2002 until the present and it is fully compliant with the principles of partnership declared in the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness and by the Busan Partnership for Effective Development Co-operation.

b) Provider

Tajikistan as an assistance provider mostly contributes to the development of Afghanistan at bilateral and multilateral levels. The country is a member of the Heart of Asia-Istanbul Process established in 2011 to provide a platform to discuss regional issues, particularly encouraging security, political and economic cooperation in the Heart of Asia by placing Afghanistan at its centre and engaging the Heart of Asia countries in result-oriented cooperation for a peaceful and stable Afghanistan, as well as a secure and prosperous region.

Some assistance provided for the development of Afghanistan includes:

- In 2014, under the Heart of Asia's umbrella, Afghanistan received around 1.1 billion kWh of energy in 2014 from Tajikistan alone.
- Since 2010, Tajikistan has helped Afghanistan to demine its border districts with Tajikistan via Tajikistan's territory.
- More than 200 Afghani students study in Tajikistan; in 2013 the Government provided 50 scholarships for Afghani citizens for the years 2013 -2014.
- Tajikistan traditionally provides humanitarian aid in disaster-affected areas of Afghanistan (200 tons in 2014).
- Tajikistan hosts approximately 4,000 asylum-seekers and refugees (97 percent are of Afghan origin).

III. TRENDS AND PRACTICES IN SOUTH-SOUTH AND TRIANGULAR COOPERATION

Under Figure 6, 17 sectors were identified as points of SS&TC cooperation in Tajikistan. The most active sectors, according to the survey respondents, are education and social protection (10% each), environment (10%) and governance (9%), while human rights (7%) and health (6%) are among the second most-cited sectors. Responses for the “other” category included mostly disaster risk management.

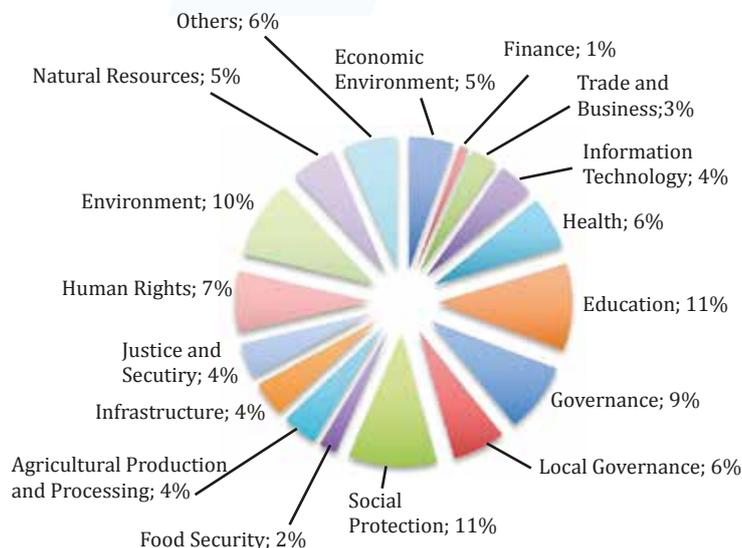


Figure 6. Sectors of SS and TC in Tajikistan under the survey

Energy Sector

Energy, alongside agriculture, is one of the basic sectors of the economy of the country. Tajikistan’s hydropower potential is ranked eighth in the world, three times higher than the current electricity consumption throughout Central Asia. It defines its main line of strategy – to develop the hydropower sector of the country. Tajikistan’s hydropower resource experiences highly seasonal variations, leading to excess summer supply and significant shortages during the winter. This imbalance has set the stage for electricity trade with neighbouring countries.

A project CASA-1000 will boost the export of electricity from Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan for the energy markets of Afghanistan and Pakistan. It is expected to lead to an increase in industrial production and the energy security of both regions and is an important initiative of creating a power bridge between Central and South Asia.



The Government is seeking funds for the proposed Rogun project, which, if completed, would become Tajikistan’s largest hydropower project at 3,600 MW and would turn Tajikistan into a net exporter of electricity. Rogun would also be the world’s tallest dam, at 335 metres. In 2014, the World Bank completed a feasibility study on Rogun, indicating the project is moving forward. Rogun can make a significant contribution for energy export to Afghanistan.

Apart from ambitious projects in the energy sector, the construction of small- and medium-sized hydropower plants, including through the implementation of projects of regional importance, as well as work on the use of solar and wind energy are considered high importance by the Government.

Roads and Transport

Without direct access to seaports, more than 90 percent of passenger traffic and 70 percent of freight traffic in the country accounts for road transport. Therefore, roads and rail systems in Tajikistan are the key to economic development. The transport infrastructure built in the Soviet period focused on Russian and Eastern Europe needs to ensure access to China and South Asia to expand trade with the new trading partners.

In the last years, Tajikistan implemented cross-border investments projects, including:

- Construction of “Dushanbe–Danghara” Road and “Dushanbe board with Uzbekistan” jointly with “Eksimbank” China for \$552.17 million;
- Construction of “Dushanbe with Uzbekistan board” Road jointly with ADB for \$131.2 million;
- Construction of “Dushanbe with Kyrgyzstan board” Road jointly with ADB for \$76.5 million.

Since 2001, within the framework of CAREC, which provides coordinated regional activity in passenger and freight transport under the joint plan to remove barriers to trade and transportation, 24 national projects in transport, energy and trade facilitation sectors have been approved. With support of ADB, EBRD, IsDB, the Government of the United States, the World Bank, OPEC Fund, 13 projects have been completed and 11 projects are ongoing.

Within the Heart of Asia, numerous joint projects to boost regional economic cooperation are expected to be implemented. Among them are:

1. Energy Infrastructure: construction of Afghanistan-Tajikistan Gas Pipeline (ATGP) (Sheberghan-Mazar-i-Sharif-Hayratan-Kaldar-Aywaj-Kolkhozobod (235 km in Afghanistan and 110 km in Tajikistan)
2. Railway Infrastructure:
 - Construction of railway China-Kyrgyzstan-Tajikistan-Afghanistan-Iran;
 - Kolkhozabad-Panji Poyen (Tajikistan, 50 km) and Shir Khan Bandar-Kunduz (Afghanistan, 61 km).
3. Road Infrastructure: Creating road transport corridors Tajikistan-Afghanistan-Turkmenistan-Iran and Tajikistan-Afghanistan-Pakistan
4. Electric power infrastructure: Participation in a joint project to build transmission lines “Central Asia-South Asia” (CASA-1000)
 - Continuation of construction of 220 kV power transmission lines Sangtuda (Tajikistan)- Puli Khumri (Afghanistan);
 - Construction of 500 kV Transmission Line Sangtuda (Tajikistan)-Puli Khumri (Afghanistan);
 - Construction of 500 kV AC Transmission Line from Datka (Kyrgyzstan) to Khojand (Tajikistan)-470 km;
 - Construction of 500 kV DC Transmission Line from Sangtuda (Tajikistan, 117 km)-Kabul-Torkham (Afghanistan, 562 km)-Peshawar (Pakistan, 71 km) with a capacity of 1300 MW.

In January 2015, Tajikistan became a founding member of the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB), which aims to provide project loans to developing countries. This is a manifestation of emerging opportunities for expanding regional cooperation in the infrastructure sector.

Water Management

Given its dependence on hydroelectric power and its position as a primary source of freshwater supplier (an estimated 60 percent) in Central Asia, Tajikistan has become a major player in global water resource policy, being the initiator of the International Year of Freshwater 2003 and the International Decade for Action, “Water for Life,” 2005-2015, as well as a host of prominent international conferences, such as the High-Level International Conference on Water Cooperation in June 2013 and the Water For Life Conference in June 2015.

To improve the bilateral cooperation between Tajikistan and Afghanistan in mountain ecosystem management, hydrology, natural disasters, climate change and other priority issues, with financial support provided by Russia and Finland, the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) project on the joint watershed management of the upper Amu Darya by Afghanistan and Tajikistan is being implemented.

Agriculture

Agriculture is the second-largest sector of the economy, providing around 70 percent of workplace, accounting for 25 percent of income from exports and 35 percent of tax yield.

The ARP is called to identify strategic directions and methods to ensure a high-income and export-oriented agriculture, proceeding from the general objective of increasing living standards of rural population and achieving food security in the country as well as strengthening its position in the regional labour division.

One of the most active UN agencies in promoting SSC is FAO, which leads a number of regional and cross-regional cooperation initiatives, including production improvement in Central Asia countries, improvements of national locust management in Caucasus and Central Asia and sustainable management of mountain watersheds in Central Asia and the Caucasus through sharing of experiences in the project countries and beyond.

China and FAO have recently signed a \$50 million agreement to support developing countries in building sustainable food systems and inclusive agricultural value chains, recognizing the growing importance of collaboration between Southern countries in eliminating hunger and poverty.

Currently, FAO provides technical assistance to Tajikistan in implementation of ARP under SSC with China. The project intends to promote the technologies in the two key areas of aquaculture and seed production and processing.

With support from the UNDP Istanbul International Centre for Private Sector in Development (IICPSD) and country offices, the Afghanistan-Kyrgyzstan-Tajikistan (AKT) Tripartite/Consortium was launched. The AKT consortium brings leaders from the public and private sectors and from civil society to develop inclusive business models and focus on supporting investment in agro-food industries and increase involvement of rural producers in the regional agro-food value chains in AKT countries.

During the Soviet period, Tajikistan was one of the major suppliers of fresh and processed horticultural products to the Soviet Union. Accumulated vast experience and knowledge of horticulture, specifically, fruit-tree nursery and processing of nuts and dried fruits are an asset that could be marketed and shared with Southern partners.

Mining Industry

Tajikistan has rich deposits of minerals, especially gold and silver, and is taking steps to attract foreign investments to explore its mining potential.

Within the Silk Road Initiative backed by China, in February 2015, the Tajik parliament ratified an agreement between the Government and the (Chinese-owned) Sino-Tajik Mining Company on the development of the mineral deposit of Zarnisori Shimoli (in the northeast of the country), and China has allocated \$200 million for the project. Under the new plan, the mineral deposit will generate two million tons of ore and 20,000 tons of lead will be produced per year. The project will create more than 2,000 new jobs in the area.

The Open Society Institute – Assistance Foundation in Tajikistan currently collaborates with the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (EITI), which is a global standard for transparency in the extractive industries and is implemented in more than 30 countries all over the world. In the Central Asian region, EITI is implemented in Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan.



Tourism

According to the International Trade Centre's study on inclusive tourism and destination management organization in Tajikistan of 2014, the country has numerous touristic products to offer, with two principal ones being tours and trekking, the latter having extraordinary potential in the Fann Mountains and the Pamir Region. In addition, active sports, international tourism hunting, scientific tourism, religious tourism (pilgrimages) and cultural tourism have potential for development.

In order to utilize its potential, the industry needs to be exposed to knowledge and good practices in organization of the industry, marketing and commercialization of a destination, improving hospitality, featuring cultural heritage sites, furnishing hotels and home stays in rural locations and more. Tajikistan could benefit from joint SSC initiatives in the above-mentioned areas with Southern countries, in particular with Kyrgyzstan, which has a comparatively developed tourism industry.

SECO's Trade Cooperation Program, besides increasing the export competitiveness of the textile and clothing sector, also aims to explore the challenges and development potential of the tourism and handicraft sectors in Tajikistan, outlining relevant trade-related technical assistance priorities.

The strengthening partnership between Tajikistan and South Korea is a new opportunity for promoting SSC in tourism. The two countries signed a bilateral agreement on air communication and economic, scientific and technical cooperation; a memorandum of understanding (MoU) on cooperation between the Ministry of Culture of Tajikistan and the Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism of South Korea; and a MoU on cooperation between the Committee for Youth, Sports and Tourism Affairs under the Government of Tajikistan and the Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism of South Korea. The technical cooperation programs will be implemented with support of the Korea International Cooperation Agency (KOICA) by the South Korean Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade.

Education

The main areas of SSC in the education sector are the academic exchange programs with Russia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Ukraine, Turkey and China, as well as establishment of joint education facilities.

As a result of cooperation between the governments of Russia and Tajikistan, the Russian-Tajik Slavonic University was established in 1996.

Recently, under agreement between the Ukrainian National University of Water Industry and Nature and Tajik Technological University, a new Tajik-Ukrainian faculty has been opened.

The University of Central Asia (UCA) was founded in 2000 by the Governments of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan and His Highness the Aga Khan, offering an internationally recognised standard of higher education in Central Asia.

In Khorog, the capital of the Gorno-Badakhshan region, the UCA School of Professional and Continuing Education has begun offering training courses in English in business, management accounting and accounting technology to more than 30 Afghan nationals from government institutions and civil society organizations. UCA is expanding its facilities by constructing a new campus in Khorog, which is to accommodate approximately 1,000 students and more than 100 faculty members. It is also considering developing a distance-learning project that would allow UCA programmes to reach Afghanistan and other countries in the region.

To contribute to the human resources development and labour market facilitation, there was an inter-governmental negotiation to establish a technical vocational training centre (in mining, railways, construction, operation, maintenance, disaster risk management and health care) in Tajikistan for 1,000 to 3,000 students from Afghanistan during one year, and to other students of the region. To implement this project, support and additional financing are needed.



Migration

By various estimates, out of 8 million people more than 1 million of the country's labour migrants work abroad, mostly in Russia. According to the World Bank, remittances comprised 49.6 percent of Tajikistan's GDP in 2013 and 41.7 percent in 2014, making Tajikistan the world's most remittance-dependent country. In this regard, the issue of social protection of labour migrants and other problems associated with labour migration are one of the main challenges for the country's development and regional cooperation.

To promote a sustainable, participatory and equitable approach to the governance of labour migration, the International Labour Organization implemented the regional project, which involved Russia, Armenia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan.

Tajikistan faces complex subregional challenges related to population movements, including human smuggling and trafficking and forced migration. The UN refugee agency (UNHCR) estimates that Tajikistan hosts approximately 4,000 asylum-seekers and refugees (97 percent are of Afghan origin), the largest refugee population in Central Asia. UNHCR promotes access to asylum and ways to safeguard border management systems.

Governance

European Union, ADB, UNDP and other assistance providers supported establishment of Single Window for Export, Import and Transit procedures in Tajikistan, an electronic automated information system for customs control. Currently, UNECE and UN Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) are implementing the joint project on improved customs data exchange between Afghanistan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan, which aims to assist Afghanistan and its neighbours on implementation of the Customs Convention on the International Transport of Goods under Cover of TIR Carnets (TIR Convention).

Best practices

In 2012, the local government (municipality) of Dushanbe city and the Public Fund Civil Internet Policy Initiative with support of OSI-AFT launched a project aimed at creating an online platform that stimulates use of affordable mobile and web technologies to increase the quality of municipal services through active participation of the citizens in both decision-making and monitoring of taken actions. The solution, available at <http://www.mometavonem.tj/>, shows elements of the e-government that are able to increase the public service delivery quality, improve interaction of citizens with the government institutions, help public service providers and administration of the local governments receive on-time and reliable reports and data in order to analyse and take steps as required. The solution is based on open and free tools and standards in its design and implementation. The platform is based on Ushahidi, well-known crowd-source platform, and it uses an online map of Dushanbe available from Open Street Maps, <http://www.openstreetmap.org>. FrontLineSMS is another free and open application that is used for receiving and delivering SMS to the website.

Border Management

Due to inputs from UNDP's South-South oriented projects, border management authorities on both sides of Tajikistan-Afghanistan's shared border are now better equipped, better housed and better trained than ever before. These steps have improved their abilities for involvement in trade facilitation, counternarcotics and migration issues. UNDP's EU-BOMNAF (EU Border Management Northern Afghanistan) and Japan BMP (Border Management Project) are involved in a comprehensive programme of South-South-oriented cross-border cooperative key issues, including:

- **Capacity building.** Continuing efforts on both sides of the border, with joint training to promote a focus on mainstreaming issues of refugee law and joint training projects with other agencies and partners. Such activities incorporate education in civil and public affairs, as well as information about customs regulations, immigration procedures and civil and criminal laws.

- **Promoting cross-border and regional cooperation.** BOMNAF “Building Bridges” initiatives have successfully brought together senior managers from both sides of the border and have helped create ongoing liaison links. Further similar activities are planned. In addition, annual conferences for decision-makers from the region’s borders over the past three years have addressed such issues as trade, commerce and investment, migration and communication across the region to increase understanding among institutional actors in border management between Afghanistan and Central Asia.
- **Border-crossing points.** Since 2008, four new border-crossing points have been built on the border of Tajikistan and Afghanistan. These facilities already provide customs, immigration and border management infrastructure to both countries and all are associated with cross-border markets. New BCPs will be constructed at Shurobad-Khohon and at Langar-Dekhonqona in 2016.
- **Cross-border markets.** Renovation of existing cross-border markets, originally built by UNDP almost a decade ago, at Ishkashim and Darvoz is already planned for completion in 2016.
- **Inter-agency cooperation and creation of partnership frameworks and programmes.** Pursuit and development of practical cooperation activities with TBF, DCA, MFA, OSCE, IOM, UNHCR, UNODC and combined projects are planned for implementation throughout 2016.

Environment and Disaster Risk Management

Consequences of climate change and natural disasters, including desertification and land degradation and accelerated melting of glaciers affect the sustainable development of the country and are therefore in the spotlight of the Government. Regional cooperation is an important factor in coping with these challenges.

The joint UNDP and UNEP Poverty-Environment Initiative (PEI), which covers 18 countries, including Tajikistan, employs regional cooperation and knowledge sharing to facilitate integration of pro-poor environmental outcomes into regional institutions and sustainable development processes. This has been ensured through identifying best practices, experiences and technologies on designing and implementing policies and frameworks integrating poverty and environmental issues-in-nexus in priority sectors and exchanging them among countries and identifying and facilitating key partnerships at the regional level.

To improve the safety of dam operations in Central Asia, UNECE has implemented the Dam Safety Project, which intends to promote subregional cooperation for information exchange and notification in case of accidents or emergency situations with dams, expertise provided to the development of dam safety legislation in Kazakhstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan, as well as joint training for experts in the region.

The Tajik and Afghan offices of FOCUS Humanitarian Assistance, an affiliate of AKDN, work closely to coordinate response efforts to disasters in the mountainous areas of the Gorno-Badakhshan region in Tajikistan and Afghan

Badakhshan. In many cases, remote communities in Afghanistan can be more easily reached by crossing the border from the Tajik side than by going through Afghanistan. FOCUS’s approach to disaster management in the region is strongly supported through the sharing and utilisation of contiguous geographic information and radio communication systems across Tajikistan and Afghanistan.

The Green Bridge Initiative can also benefit from the experience of Tajikistan by sharing the country experience in integrating poverty and environment indicators into national strategies. Expo-17 on Future Energy in Astana, Kazakhstan, might be an opportunity to market the country’s assets in bringing poverty-environment tools into the planning process.



Best practices

Having assessed the entire planning process from the national down to the local or 'jamoat' level to find the pressure points for transforming the policy cycle, the government discovered that one of the key bottlenecks was at the subnational level. In some cases, the plans barely acknowledged environmental issues, while district and regional authorities lacked the training or the capacity to assess the state of their natural resources. Due to UNDP-UNEP PEI's interventions in Sughd, north of Tajikistan, for the first time representatives from the country's environmental department (Committee for Environmental Protection) were given a place at the table to develop the regional development plans. Working closely with community leaders and government representatives, the initiative developed guidelines to help district planning officers integrate poverty-environment issues into their development planning process. As a result of the work, the Sughd regional development plan and all 14 district plans describe poverty-environment issues. Planners around the country can now learn from the experiences in the Sughd region via a handbook that details in practical terms how to bring poverty-environment into the planning process. The national statistics agency has also now incorporated the indicators developed at the regional level into its database in order to track and monitor the new objectives.

Mine clearance actions

Tajikistan faces mine threats, including the border area mine belts placed after the Soviet Union breakup. Tajikistan has taken considerable steps towards clearing mine-contaminated zones within its territory.

Since 2003, the OSCE office in Tajikistan and UNDP have been supporting Government efforts on clearing the areas contaminated with landmines to make more land available for agriculture and reforestation through establishment and operations of the Tajikistan National Mine Action Centre (TNMAC). Afghan experts also undertook trainings and shared experiences and best practices in humanitarian demining with Tajik colleagues.

Addressing the Third Review Conference of the AP Mine Ban Convention in Maputo, Mozambique, in 2014, Tajikistan explicitly confirmed its willingness to continue regional cooperation with Afghanistan to further develop and promote South-South cooperation by sharing national expertise, good practices and experience in the field of Victim Assistance/Disability.

Within the framework of South-South cooperation, UNDP and UNMAS supported exchange visits between TNMAC and the Lebanese Mine Action Centre in Tajikistan in 2013 and in Lebanon in 2014.

Best Practices

The TNMAC implemented a project on gender mainstreaming in Mine Risk Education (MRE) from April–September 2008, which established a common understanding of the need for gender equality among all MRE stakeholders through trainings and awareness-raising on the risk of mines and explosive remnants of war among government structures and relevant local organizations.

The TNMAC built a network of some 80 women heads of households in some 22 districts covering 331 villages. The 80 focal points are located in areas that are hard to reach or where the security situation is sensitive, including border areas with Afghanistan. The focal points help the coordinator to share information and to support remotely the conduct of activities in their villages. TNMAC engages the women councils in each village and ensures that the voice of their community reaches the government institutions in charge of women's and family affairs.

IV. CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

CHALLENGES

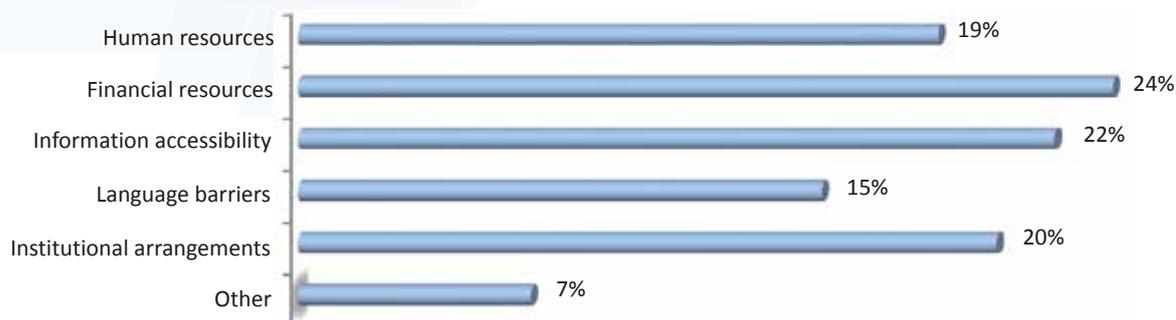


Figure 7. Challenges in promoting SS and TC in Tajikistan

As a result of the survey and the consultative meeting, the following challenges were identified:

- There is a certain awareness about SSC activities among the government officials, although general awareness of the stakeholders about the SSC concept and its opportunities and benefits is not common, which according to the stakeholders is attributed to limited access to relevant information, including knowledge about regional/subregional SSC information platforms and resources (22% of the respondents);
- There are no policy frameworks, coordination, structures and mechanisms for SS&TC in the country to provide support to the stakeholders wishing to engage in SS&TC activities. This challenge affects efficiency and overall sustainability of these activities (20%);
- Issue of financing was clearly articulated as a challenge among all respondents (24%) and confirmed at the consultative meetings;
- Commitment of the Government in terms of financial or in-kind contribution as a precondition for engagement in SS&TC;
- Language barrier (20%): insufficient English proficiency of local experts; nevertheless the Government makes efforts to advance English in the education system. As mentioned at the consultative meeting, there is also a trend of slow decline of Russian, which is a lingua franca for the CIS among youth and a potential risk of being limited to cooperation with Persian speaking countries, while the written communication among them can be a challenge due to the different scripts used;
- Development of human resources at the government and nongovernment institutions (19%);
- Proximity to Afghanistan, which can affect the development plan of the country both in a negative way with its political instability and merging threat of religious extremism and terrorism in the region and beyond, as well as a positive way through boosting cooperation.

OPPORTUNITIES

Given that the country lies at the crossroads of the Chinese Silk Road initiative and CAREC, it has opportunities to benefit from comparative advantages to push forward bilateral and multilateral cooperation in economy and trade, infrastructure construction, energy and mining.

Accession to the WTO will require strengthening of cooperation for a change in trading conditions, border and customs controls on the movement of goods, work, services and capital. The experience of other Southern countries that underwent the transition process of adapting economic and customs duties after joining the WTO, such as Turkey and Ukraine, can benefit Tajikistan.

Tajikistan's water endowment gives the country an opportunity for becoming a regional hub for electricity trade and water management, and the experience that the country has gained with its water initiatives can be a subject of knowledge exchanges with Southern countries.

Tajikistan can potentially act as a communication bridge for Southern countries to Iran and Afghanistan; the latter being in the Heart of Asia Process as well as other initiatives.

In order to successfully utilize these and other emerging opportunities, it is essential to secure internal and external resources for SSC initiatives.

RESOURCE MOBILIZATION

With the agreement signed in early 2015 between UNDP and Russia for setting up the Russian Federation-UNDP Trust Fund for Development, with initial funding of \$25 million from Russia over the next four years, new funding opportunities for TC are emerging. The activities supported by the Trust Fund will focus on poverty alleviation; disaster risk reduction and early preparedness for emergencies; and energy and environment. It will support initiatives implemented by UNDP in Central Asia and elsewhere.

Apart from regional funding opportunities, there are numerous potential funding sources beyond the region, like IBSA Fund and Perez Guerrero Trust Fund, as well as development banks, including NDB BRICS and Eurasian Bank.

The [IBSA Facility for Poverty and Hunger Alleviation](#) (IBSA Fund) established by India, Brazil and South Africa supports other developing countries, particularly Least Developed Countries (LDCs) and Post Conflict Reconstruction and Development (PCRD) countries around the world in partnership with the UN through identifying replicable and scalable projects that can be disseminated to interested developing countries as an example of best practices in fighting poverty and hunger.

[The Perez-Guerrero Trust Fund](#) established for the purpose of supporting activities in economic and technical cooperation among developing countries (ECDC/TCDC) of critical importance to developing countries members of the Group of 77, in order to achieve national or collective self-reliance, according to the priorities set by them. Tajikistan is the only member of the Group 77 from CIS and has an opportunity of benefiting from potential support.

The New Development Bank BRICS (NDB BRICS), formerly referred to as the BRICS Development Bank, is a multilateral development bank operated by the BRICS states (Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa) that was set up to foster greater financial and development cooperation among the five emerging markets.

Out of 10 major bilateral SSC contributors (Brazil, China, India, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, Republic of Korea, Turkey, United Arab Emirates and Venezuela) as mentioned earlier, Tajikistan benefits from cooperation with China, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait and Turkey, while there is room for expanding collaboration with Arab funds like the Arab Fund for Economic and Social Development (AFESD), IsDB and OPEC Fund for International Development (OFID).

The IsDB provides financial assistance to member countries for economic and social development. Considering SSC as one of its main priorities, IsDB is particularly interested in supporting capacity development for management of SSC and scaling up the joint IFAD and UNOSSC initiative on South-South and Triangular Cooperation for Agricultural Development and Enhanced Food Security (SSTC-ADFS) across Central Asia.

Successful resource mobilization can be achieved through the strong commitment of the Government towards SSC, i.e. establishing national SSC funding facility to contribute into SSC initiatives.

V. FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

FINDINGS

The first identified records of the country's cooperation within the framework of SS&TC come under cooperation of TNMAC in mine actions at the regional and global level, although the country has a long history of cooperation with developing countries in the past and in the present that has not been formulated as SSC. In general, the notion of South-South cooperation is a new phenomenon for the country and for the region, and there is a need to introduce policy framework and national level coordination mechanisms on SSC, as well as to dedicate the relevant resources to effectively promote and take the full advantage of SS&TC.

There is a vast potential for South-South dialogue through international and regional cooperation platforms through existing and evolving ones. Transboundary issues, such as energy and water management, transport, especially roads and railways, custom services, human and animal health, climate change and environment will remain high priorities for regional cooperation.

Despite the extensive collection of local successful practices and good experiences in the above-mentioned sectors, their sustainability, inter alia documenting and marketing or sharing with Southern partners to scale up or replicate, is not properly addressed.

Although Tajikistan is commonly perceived as an assistance-seeker, there is strong evidence for positioning the country as an important regional and global player in water management and as a regional hub for electricity trade. Based on the earlier achievements, the new NDS could serve as an entry point for policy coordination and support the integration of South-South initiatives into national policy, planning and budgeting.

Increasing regional integration will greatly affect the modalities for cooperation, resource and partners mobilization both for the Government and international development agencies. There is a potential for mobilizing partners and resources from specialized trust funds and new emerging aid development partners.

There are examples of global, regional and country-level experience of organizations more advanced in mainstreaming SSC in development planning and programming, like FAO and UNMAS, which should be a subject of sharing and learning among other stakeholders.

Experience shows that countries with existing policy, coordination mechanism and resources (including packaged knowledge and expertise, clearly identified needs and some funding to support exchange in those with other countries) have proven more successful in SSC than countries that revert to SSC on an ad hoc basis.

RECOMMENDATIONS

I. Country recommendations:

- i. Leverage the commitment of the Government to SS initiatives through the development and adoption of strategy on SS&TC and institutionalizing the country policies (in a new National Development Strategy), establishing a national-level coordination mechanism based on existing institutional arrangements and allocation resources for SSC, including some funding to support exchange with other Southern countries. The latter two elements are particularly important for sustainable and strategy-based efforts to build long-term and mutually beneficial relationships with Southern partners;
- ii. Support implementation and further expansion of the provisions on cooperation between Tajikistan and other countries envisaged in NDS and other strategies and policies for advancing the role of Tajikistan as an important regional player by setting up a national coordination mechanism: national coordination unit and assigning focal points in ministries/agencies; in particular, through introducing SSC into national development strategies;
- iii. Develop institutional and human capacities in SS&TC at the level of the Government, civil society, private sector and academia;
- iv. Integrate SSC components in new government agreements with neighbouring countries, other developing countries and regional groupings;

- v. Introduce SSC component in the action plan for the future development of AKT programs and seek support from new funding facilities for the programs' implementation;
- vi. Advocate to ensure that SS&TC are adequately featured in the discussions with international organizations and regional groupings;
- vii. Assess the impact of assistance provided by Southern countries' segregated data provided in the Aid Information Management System by the type of country providing assistance (Northern or Southern country);
- viii. Market or share best practices and home-grown solutions in mainstreaming MDGs and SDGs in national strategies and plans in addressing poverty and environment issues, in mine clearance actions and developing an emergency system with Southern countries;
- ix. Strengthen partnership, exchange experts and transfer knowledge within the CIS and Central Asia where possible, without challenges of language and context;
- x. Consider opportunities to join existing regional and cross-regional SSC partnerships, such as the joint UNOSSC and IFAD initiative on South-South and Triangular Cooperation for Agricultural Development and Enhanced Food Security in the Arab States, Europe and Central Asia;
- xi. Consider opportunities to replicate low-cost Southern solutions proven to be successful in other developing countries, which match the demand of the country, particularly in low-cost solar energy production (Solar Mamas from Jordan);
- xii. Capitalize on funding opportunities arising from the new emerging donors and partnerships in the region and beyond, like IBSA Fund, the Perez-Guerrero Trust Fund, FAO-China Trust Fund, UNDP-Russian Federation Trust Fund and other and national development aid agencies from Russia (Rossotrudnichestvo), Azerbaijan (AIDA), Kazakhstan (KazAid) and South Korea (KOICA);
- xiii. Collaborate and cooperate with other landlocked countries beyond the region in sharing knowledge and experience, technology transfer, capacity development, peer-to-peer learning within the Vienna Programme of Action for LLDC.

II. Recommendations to UN CT:

To increase the role of the UN Country Team in supporting Tajikistan's South-South Cooperation agenda through the UNDAF:

- i. Support a policy dialogue initiated by UN Resident Coordinator's Office and UNOSSC on mainstreaming SS&TC in the development processes;
- ii. Promote information-sharing and monitoring of South-South and triangular cooperation activities, and raise awareness of the benefits of SS&TC;
- iii. Provide support to the Government for its efforts to build a national level coordination mechanism responsible for the coordination of SS&TC, based on existing institutional arrangements through awareness-raising and capacity-building;
- iv. Provide assistance to the Government to identify priority areas for SSC aligned to the priorities specified in the new NDS and other strategic documents;
- v. Provide assistance to the Government in ensuring that the United Nations Development Assistance Framework identifies opportunities for accessing Southern development assistance, technology transfer and capacity development;
- vi. Provide assistance to Government to gain access to [the Web Information for Development \(WIDE\)](#) and other development-oriented information networks and platforms.
- vii. Provide dedicated training on SSC to COs staff and national partners in coordination and cooperation with the Regional Division of UNOSSC for the Arab States, Europe and CIS;
- viii. Provide advice to the Government on existing South-South exchange platforms, such as WIDE Expert Roster, and facilitate engagement of national practitioners in such exchanges by developing roster of experts to be shared;

- ix. Familiarize UNCT with the main South-South cooperation funding mechanisms such as South-South Cooperation Fund and South-South Grants Facility, and render assistance to the Government of Tajikistan to gain access to these sources;
- x. Establish a multi-agency trust fund in order to channel and leverage resources in an effective and coordinated way in support of SSC;
- xi. Promote awareness of the benefits of South-South and Triangular Cooperation on the Annual United Nations Day for South-South Cooperation, celebrated 12 September;
- xii. Provide support to national partners in sharing local expertise and knowledge on innovative SS&TC projects by documenting Southern development solutions on [the Regional SSC Online Mapping Portal for Europe and CIS](#).

Recommendations on mainstreaming South-South Cooperation in the country office (CO) programming:

- xiii. Ensure that the UNCT is aware of the content of mandates requesting provision of the United Nations system support for SS&TC;
- xiv. Provide support for the establishment of institutional arrangements essential to the management of SSC activities by assigning focal points responsible for coordination of SSC in UN agencies;
- xv. Screen programmes and projects for inclusion of SS&TC and integrate opportunities for promoting SSC, which might be of low cost but efficient and effective; and specifically introduce SSC component in the action plan for the future development of AKT programs;
- xvi. Enhance the portfolio and activities of UNCT members through designing new SSC initiatives that match the country's home-grown solutions to the demand of Southern countries, particularly in horticulture value chain and marketing the best practices described above, as well as satisfying the local needs by replication of best practices such as the One Village-One Product initiative and Solar Mamas;
- xvii. Consider an option of securing budget for SS&TC programmes and projects at the institutional level;
- xviii. Share experience and learn from and build upon knowledge of FAO, UNMAS, UNDP and UNFPA in mainstreaming SSC in programming;
- xix. Utilize new funding opportunities like IBSA Fund, IsDB and others to launch SSC initiatives, particularly for AKT Consortium and potential replication of the One Village-One Product initiative and Solar Mamas;
- xx. Regularly identify and document Southern development solutions on [the Regional SSC Online Mapping Portal for Europe and CIS](#);
- xxi. Provide dedicated training on SSC to COs staff and national partners in coordination and cooperation with the Regional Division of UNOSSC for the Arab States, Europe and CIS;
- xxii. Develop and integrate indicators on SSC performance into programming like a number of cross-country initiatives, joint Southern projects, number of documented Southern development solutions etc.;
- xxiii. Seek sectoral and inter-agency coordination and strengthen cooperation among UN agencies by sharing best practices of SSC in joint programming, like the UNDP-UNEP PEI programme, and by development of joint projects on addressing the proposed SDG through SSC.