Manual for the framework to measure South–South cooperation

Technical and procedural aspects
for pilot testing

Technical cooperation outcome

UN
trade
& development

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List of Acronyms

BAPA   The Buenos Aires Action Plan (1978)

BAPA+40   Second High-level United Nations Conference
on South-South Cooperation (2019)

DAC   Development Assistance Committee

DSD   Data Structure Definition

ECA   United Nations Economic Commission for Africa

ECLAC   United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean

ESCAP   United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific

ESCWA   United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia

FDI   Foreign Direct Investment

GPI   Global Partnership Initiative on Effective Triangular Co-Operation

G77   Group of 77

IAEG-SDGs   Inter-Agency and Expert Group on SDG Indicators

IFI   International Financial Institution

IMF   International Monetary Fund

IsDB   Islamic Development Bank

ISIC   International Standard Industrial Classification of All Economic Activities

ODA   Official development assistance

OECD   Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development

MDBs   Multilateral Development Banks

MPF   Mobilised Private Finance

SDG   Sustainable Development Goal

SEGIB   Secretaría General Iberoamericana (Ibero-American General Secretariat)

SSC   South-South cooperation

TOSSD   Total Official Support for Sustainable Development

TrC   Triangular Cooperation

UN   United Nations

UNCTAD   United Nations Trade and Development

UNDA   United Nations Development Account

UNDESA   United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs

UN-NQAF   United Nations National Quality Assurance Framework

UNOSSC   United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation

UNSD   United Nations Statistics Division

Chapter 1

Introduction

In a time marked by rapid change and compounding challenges, the global landscape of international development cooperation is undergoing a transformative shift, especially as the world surpasses the halfway mark to achieving the sustainable development goals (SDGs) by 2030. The COVID-19 pandemic, conflicts, and the increasing costs of climate change, debt burdens and environmental challenges have had a particularly devastating impact on developing economies, exacerbating the challenge to achieve the 2030 Agenda (United Nations, 2015c). Amidst these challenges, stakeholders in development cooperation must swiftly adapt to the increasingly complex and diverse landscape to ensure the realization of inclusive and sustainable development and enhanced resilience, leaving no one behind.

It is through international cooperation that international agendas and policies in various sectors are configured and reconfigured, expressed in legal instruments such as treaties, agreements, charters and conventions. What is generally called international cooperation includes cooperation for international development; international regimes in diverse sectors; international commitments and obligations of a member State with other member States, international organizations, and civil society.

Understanding the nature and scope of international cooperation, in its many forms, is, a strategic element in the reflection and planning of the State's international insertion, as it prevents misallocation of resources and efforts to processes with limited relevance to national, regional, or global goals (IPEA, 2013).

Over the years, international development cooperation has been mostly dominated by official development assistance (ODA), also known as North-South cooperation, which involves developed economies providing financial and/or technical assistance to developing economies, typically focusing on poverty reduction and infrastructure development to promote economic welfare. The conventional model of ODA is now complemented by a broader range of cooperation modalities including contributions from the global South, the private sector, philanthropic foundations, civil society, and local governments.

Notably, South-South cooperation (SSC) has emerged as a dynamic approach, reflecting a global shift where developing economies take on more central roles in shaping their own development trajectories.

Within this evolving landscape, the concept of Triangular Cooperation (TrC), sometimes referred to as trilateral cooperation, has also gained prominence. Traditionally, it was perceived as a Southern-driven partnership, involving an SSC provider, a developing economy beneficiary partner, and a provider from developed economies or a multilateral organization (UNOSSC, 2023a). TrC has evolved and adapted to new requirements on the international development arena. It embraces a contemporary, multistakeholder approach, and can thus involve diverse stakeholders such as governments, international/multilateral organizations, civil society, the private sector, and academia among others. Emphasizing knowledge-sharing and mutual learning, TrC reflects a collaborative model that aligns with the broader trend of SSC, reflecting a more inclusive and dynamic approach to international development.

The *Manual for the Framework to Measure South-South Cooperation – Technical and procedural aspects (hereafter referred to as the Manual)* is intended to support pilot testing of and data collection for the *Framework to Measure South-South Cooperation (hereafter referred to as the Framework).* Such pilot testing will

be carried out within the United Nations Development Account (UNDA) project on Quantifying South-South cooperation for the Sustainable Development Goals, led by UNCTAD and in partnership with the United Nations Statistics Division (UNSD) of the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA), the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) and the Economic and Social Commission for West Asia (ESCWA). The *Manual* is a result of a country-led process, drawing on vast experience of pioneering countries in collecting data on SSC, and will be complemented with additional country experience based on pilot testing.

The Manual builds directly on the outcome document of the subgroup on measuring South-South cooperation (United Nations, 2021a), which worked within the Working Group on Measuring Development Support, set up by the Inter-Agency and Expert Group on Sustainable Development Goals Indicators (IAEG-SDGs). Based on the outcome document, all members of the

UN Statistical Commission welcomed the initial voluntary *Framework to Measure South-South Cooperation* in March 2022 to inform Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) indicator 17.3.1. The subgroup was chaired by India and consisted of countries of the global South, including Brazil, China, Colombia Cuba, Egypt, Ghana, Mexico, South Africa and the United Republic of Tanzania. The Russian Federation and Organisation for Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) contributed to the process as observers, and UNCTAD provided Secretariat support.

This *Manual* distinguishes between the theoretical framework for measuring SSC and the practical approach. Drawing from key UN frameworks, such as the Buenos Aires Plan of Action (BAPA) and the Nairobi Outcome Document, SSC is seen as inclusive of diverse financial and non-financial modalities —such as loans, grants, capacity building, technical cooperation and trade. It involves various forms of collaboration, including government-to-government exchanges and private sector partnerships. For practical purposes, *the Manual* focuses on government-led

Figure 1.
Delineating South-South cooperation definition for quantification in the Framework
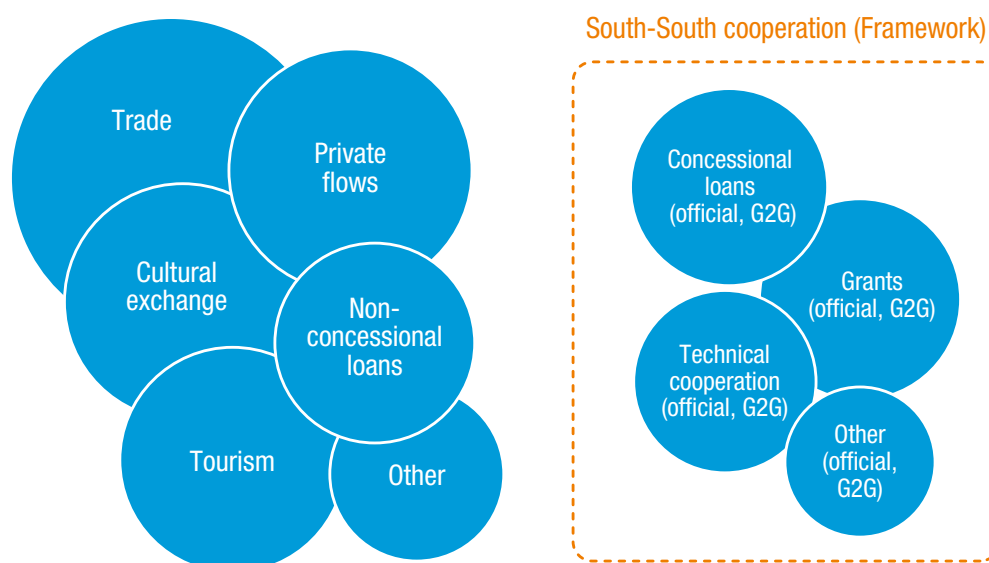
Note: G2G is for official, government-to-government flows
Source: Authors' deliberations

activities that are aimed at development or humanitarian purposes. These elements are the most feasible to track and measure as a starting point. Activities driven by commercial interests, such as trade, as well as exchanges between private parties, are excluded from the *Framework* and this *Manual* (Figure 1); the question of their integration for measurement purposes will be reevaluated with partners after the initial pilot testing has been conducted within pilot countries of the project.

This living document provides guidance on the concepts and methodologies essential for measuring SSC in line with the *Framework* to enable reporting of data to SDG indicator 17.3.1 on development support. It is intended for national development cooperation agencies, national statistical offices and other relevant stakeholders to use as detailed and practical guidance to consolidate national resources and data for reporting on their SSC activities within the SDG framework and beyond.

This document focuses on the provider's perspective, serving as a starting point for further development. It is a result of collaborative efforts led by Brazil, Mexico and Colombia and supported by UNCTAD, the co-custodian of SDG indicator 17.3.1.

The *Manual* is structured as follows: Chapter 1 provides a conceptual overview and historical background of SSC, including the development of the conceptual *Framework* for measuring SSC, which lays the foundation for discussion on the importance of measuring SSC in Chapter 2. That chapter considers the value of data, challenges and considerations emerging when measuring and reporting on SSC, as well as the rationale behind the *Framework*, including SDG indicator 17.3.1. Chapter 3 details the adopted voluntary *Framework* and lays out means to collect data accordingly, while Chapter 4 explores the national institutional set-up required for effective measurement and reporting of SSC. The focus of Chapter 5 is on data sources needed, whereas Chapter 6 outlines quality assurance considerations in line with practices in official statistics. Chapters 7 and 8 elaborate on the analysis,

dissemination, and reporting of SSC data and statistics, with chapter 8 focusing on reporting for the SDG indicator. The document concludes by providing relevant tools for data collection and reporting as annexes, including a glossary of terms.

1.1 What is South-South cooperation?

SSC encompasses political, economic, social, cultural, environmental, and technical domains among countries in the global South. It is not a substitute for North-South cooperation; instead, it complements it by reinforcing the essential collaboration needed to narrow the technological and knowledge gap between countries in the North and South.

The framework of operational guidelines on United Nations support to South–South and Triangular Cooperation defines SSC to be "*a process whereby two or more developing countries pursue their individual and/ or shared national capacity development objectives through exchanges of knowledge, skills, resources and technical know-how, and through regional and interregional collective actions, including partnerships involving Governments, regional organizations, civil society, academia and the private sector, for their individual and/or mutual benefit within and across regions. South-South cooperation is not a substitute for, but rather a complement to, North–South cooperation*" (UNDP, 2012).

SSC can take various forms, including bilateral agreements, regional initiatives, and trilateral/triangular and multilateral collaborations, highlighting its adaptability and inclusivity, allowing nations to choose the most effective and context-specific modes of collaboration to advance their shared development objectives. It plays a pivotal role in achieving SDG target 17.3 of Goal 17: Partnerships to achieve the SDGs, which is covered in more detail in section 2.4.

The essence of SSC evokes solidarity among the peoples and countries of the global South which, without claiming to be

SSC involves diverse domains in the global South, complementing rather than replacing North-South cooperation

an altruistic phenomenon, express their interest in contributing to mutual well-being and the achievement of elements that imprint an image of national and collective self-sufficiency. Countries of the South have valid contributions and perspectives in an international context where different actors are working to achieve the development goals set out in the 2030 Agenda.

> SSC is guided by principles such as horizontality, solidarity, respect for sovereignty, country ownership, complementarity, mutual benefit, equity, transparency, and accountability

SSC is guided by principles such as horizontality, solidarity, respect for sovereignty, country ownership, complementarity, mutual benefit, equity, transparency, and accountability. In this cooperation modality, the countries of the global South go through a process of self-recognition that their knowledge, know-how, methodologies, and techniques have value and can be shared with other developing countries. In SSC, the voice and agency of the Southern States is made visible as actors with the capacity to influence the solution of global problems. As will be laid out in chapter 3, the practical measurement considerations focus on specific aspects of SSC within the *Framework*, and the *Manual,* while excluding modalities such as trade and private partnerships.

1.2 Historical background and evolution of South-South cooperation

In 1955, Asian and African countries convened in the Bandung Conference to assert their independence and promote mutual interests, laying the foundations for SSC. The Bandung outcomes emphasized technical assistance among Southern countries, fostering exchange of expertise, knowledge sharing, and the establishment of training and research institutes. (UNOSSC and UNDP, 2019)

The second milestone involved the formation of United Nations Regional Commissions and UNCTAD, combined with the emergence of the Group of 77 (G77). The Regional Commissions became platforms for policy dialogue and knowledge sharing among Southern countries, while UNCTAD was established to address the

trade and development challenges faced by developing economies. The G77, on the other hand, is a coalition of developing economies formed in 1964, at the same time with UNCTAD, to advocate for collective economic interests and promote SSC. The third milestone occurred in 1974 with the institutionalization of SSC through the creation of a dedicated unit, evolving into the United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation (UNOSSC).

BAPA, ratified in 1978 as a central milestone, emphasized economic cooperation through technical assistance, technology transfer, and knowledge-sharing. It stated that SSC "*is a vital force for initiating, designing, organizing and promoting co-operation among developing countries so that they can create, acquire, adapt, transfer and pool knowledge and experience for their mutual benefit and for achieving national and collective self-reliance, which are essential for their social and economic development*" (United Nations, 1978). This message was recalled in the two United Nations High-Level Conferences on South-South Cooperation (Nairobi 2009 and Buenos Aires 2019).

40 years later, SSC is no longer solely understood as its technical assistance modality. It has, in fact, evolved into multidimensional branches within the development cooperation landscape. In 2015, the Addis Ababa Action Agenda (United Nations, 2015b) highlighted the importance of SSC for poverty eradication and sustainable development. With the adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development later that year, SSC gained renewed impetus as a vital element complementing traditional development assistance. Recognized as crucial for SDG implementation, SSC presents a 'new' model of international cooperation, combining funding, knowledge, expertise, and technology transfer among Southern countries.

These new contours were emphasized in the outcome document of the Second High-level United Nations Conference on South-South Cooperation in Buenos Aires in 2019 (the so-called BAPA+40): "*We recognize that South-South and triangular cooperation*

contribute to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and to achieving the overarching goal of eradication of poverty in all its forms and dimensions, as it shares the comprehensive vision of development contained in the 17 SDGs, that balance the three dimensions of sustainable development – the economic, social and environmental."(United Nations, 2019a)

The BAPA+40 acknowledged "*the voluntary, participative, and demand driven nature of South-South Cooperation, born out of shared experiences and sympathies, based on their common objectives and solidarity*" and recognized "*that South-South cooperation leads to more diverse opportunities for development*". SSC has emerged as a major force in international development cooperation that operates in parallel to ODA from Northern countries. (United Nations, 2019a)

BAPA+40 also encouraged the development of specific models for measuring SSC, which calls for addressing the challenge of improving the quality, timeliness, and availability of qualitative and quantitative information on SSC.

1.3 Process to develop the Framework to Measure South-South Cooperation

SSC is pivotal in achieving Target 17.3 of the SDGs, which aims to "mobilize additional financial resources for developing countries from multiple sources". However, an internationally agreed indicator to assess progress towards this important goal was missing for a long time. With the end of the 2030 Agenda approaching fast, measurement of SSC using the *Framework* and related concepts is crucial if the world is to assess progress towards Target 17.3 and accelerate progress also by strategic management of SSC flows.

Over the years, developing economies have witnessed other international actors attempting to quantify South-South flows, based on criteria conceived for other realities which result in under-

accounting and inaccurate classification of SSC modalities. Therefore, developing economies decided to take the lead in the development of a method to quantify SSC, filling a void occupied by other international actors, through approximations.

It was, therefore, important to support efforts of the economies participating in SSC to quantify the value of their mutual solidarity for development – giving due consideration to the diversity of its practices and formats – and support their capacity to monitor progress towards target 17.3. Now, for the first time there are grounds for doing so.

In April 2019, the United Nations General Assembly, in its Resolution on the Buenos Aires outcome document of the second High-level United Nations Conference on South-South Cooperation encouraged "*all actors to support initiatives for information and data collection, coordination, dissemination and evaluation of SSC, upon the request of developing countries*" (United Nations, 2019a). However, country and regional variations in approaches to and concepts of SSC, as well as political dimensions, have made it difficult to reach consensus on a definition or statistical estimates as to the value, scope, and volume of SSC, hampering the measurement of progress under target 17.3.

To this end, the Inter-Agency and Expert Group on SDG Indicators' (IAEG-SDGs) Working Group on Measurement of Development Support, coordinated by the UN Statistics Division (UNSD), established a dedicated subgroup to SSC measurement, to which countries asked UNCTAD to provide secretariat support. The subgroup member countries included Brazil, China, Colombia Cuba, Egypt, Ghana, India (chair), Mexico, South Africa and the United Republic of Tanzania. The Russian Federation and OECD participated as observers.

The subgroup started its work with a discussion aiming to understand the specifics of SSC, including its nature, evolution, challenges in the measurement of SSC, the principles of SSC, consideration of the General Assembly resolution

The BAPA+40 acknowledged "the voluntary, participative, and demand driven nature of South-South Cooperation , born out of shared experiences and sympathies, based on their common objectives and solidarity"

and the related outcome document of BAPA+40 (United Nations, 2019a).

The subgroup agreed that SSC should be measured for the purposes of Target 17.3, as suggested by the IAEG-SDGs, considering its specificities, and that the methodology developed for the SDG indicator should not be seen as an all-encompassing measure of SSC or synonymous with the full context of SSC.

In the course of its work, the subgroup:

a. categorized and grouped practices of SSC;

b. identified categories which are appropriate for 1) measurement of inputs/outputs and 2) monetization; and

c. investigated and agreed on categories/modalities organized by groups to be included in the measure of SSC.

After the consultations, the subgroup achieved a wide agreement on the conceptual *Framework* for measuring SSC for target 17.3. The subgroup noted that SSC has different modalities depending on the country which may be challenging to account for in an internationally comparable way and that the *Framework* should allow flexible application to different national contexts and priorities.

Within the subgroup, a collaborative effort between Brazil and Mexico resulted in the preparation of an initial matrix outlining quantifiable SSC modalities through various methods. This involved consultations with all members of the subgroup, and initial pilot testing and validation of the *Framework* by all subgroup members, especially by China and India.

As a result of this country-led process, the initial voluntary conceptual *Framework* was developed and agreed upon for further testing and validation by additional

countries (see Chapter 3). It is a voluntary framework, which accounts for both financial and in-kind aspects of SSC, allowing countries to select the modalities to be measured upon their respective practices, and the most feasible methods. The *Framework* measures flows intended for sustainable development purposes only, thus providing focused information for inclusive, resilient, and sustainable efforts.

In September 2021, the IAEG-SDGs' Working Group endorsed the *Framework* subject to further technical refinement to ensure its validity, applicability and feasibility across developing economies, and requested UNCTAD to carry out pilot studies with interested countries to refine the *Framework* based on country experience.

At a briefing session in September 2021, members of the G77 and China reiterated the critical importance of measuring SSC for developing economies and for efforts towards achieving the 2030 Agenda, especially considering the resources needed to recover from the pandemic. They encouraged developing economies to participate in the pilot testing and technical refinement of the *Framework*.

At the 53rd session of the UN Statistical Commission in March 2022 (United Nations Statistical Commission, 2022), a new SDG indicator 17.3.1 on additional financial resources mobilized for developing economies from multiple sources was adopted by member States. The Commission has designated UNCTAD and OECD as global custodians of the indicator, asking UNCTAD to support countries' capacity and enable reporting of data on SSC applying the *Framework*. Analysing countries' experiences in SSC will be crucial to ensuring consistency of the new SDG indicator across all its elements.

Importance of data on South-South cooperation flows

The adoption of the 2030 Agenda and its goals required a measurable framework to monitor progress towards SDGs, including development support. Although North-South development finance flows have long been measured by the OECD, quantifying the contribution of SSC to sustainable development at national, regional, and global levels has been challenging due to the absence of agreed upon concepts and methods to measure the varying forms of SSC. Now there is an agreed _Framework_ and concepts to empower governments to collect data on SSC flows to allow the analysis of ways in which SSC adds value to other resources and contributes to progress in sustainable development. This is key to enabling strategic management of development support flows and mobilization of resources where gaps persist.

2.1 Data as a tool for planning, strategic management, and allocation of resources

Data assume a critical role in the context of SSC efforts geared toward advancing sustainable development objectives and appraising the efficacy of collaborative undertakings. SSC has been gaining prominence as a mechanism to address shared development goals and challenges. In this endeavour, data stand as a central pillar, facilitating comprehensive planning, monitoring, and evaluation.

Effective planning is essential for establishing development priorities, and data play a crucial role by providing insights on types of SSC flows provided, their destinations, sectors addressed, and what areas of the 2030 Agenda were most supported and where there may be gaps. Data are key to effective project planning, risk mitigation, cost-efficiency considerations, and more systematic allocation of resources to priority areas and according to national and partner-country agreements. Additionally, data provide strong and convincing evidence

for decision makers of the global South to plan public policies and actions on international development cooperation. They also promote transparency in the allocation of public budgets for SSC. Data collection could follow the famous Deming Cycle of Plan-Do-Study-Act (PDSA).[1]

The process starts with planning (_Plan_). This includes the setting of goals, and scope of data collection considering data needs, as well as the identification of sources and selection of methods and tools. In the second stage, the process of doing (_Do_), the review of evidence and sources of information is carried out, where the aim is to make the data tangible and as close as possible to the reality being studied. Subsequently (stage _Study_), verification and quality assessment are performed, where the data extraction process is validated through benchmarking and comparison. Finally, in the action part (_Act_), the data are used for analysis to verify their fit for purpose. Also, the processes that did not produce satisfactory results are identified for continuous improvement, which requires adjusting strategies and activities based on the findings and lessons learned.

....

[1]   While PDSA is typically used for quality assurance in business processes, and applicable in discussions on data relevance as tools for planning and strategic management, with producing official statistics, other instruments may be relevant, the Generic Statistical Business Process Model (GSBPM). GSBPM (United Nations, 2014a), describing and defining the set of business processes that are needed to produce official statistics, is the main overarching process for statistical production. It is referred to briefly in Chapter 6.

In summary, data-driven planning, progress monitoring, and evaluation are key components of SSC for sustainability

Planning according to this model will improve the efficiency of the efforts that each of the technicians involved invest in data collection and systematization.

Data serve as an indispensable instrument for tracking project activities, gauging outcomes, and evaluating the effectiveness of interventions. This continuous monitoring not only ensures that projects remain aligned to their objectives but also affords the flexibility to make timely course corrections in response to emerging challenges.

Data help governments effectively manage their SSC initiatives, fostering transparency, understanding whom their actions support, and making visible the interventions carried out and their contributions to achieving the SDGs, as well as national plans and strategies. It is a mutual responsibility of all actors in the international cooperation ecosystem to ensure effective action that can be managed and adjusted to mutual priorities.

The international cooperation public policies of different governments are having an impact on sustainable development and the fulfilment of the 2030 Agenda. Data allow monitoring how the human and financial resources invested in SSC initiatives achieve their purposes. Measuring results can improve the accountability and transparency of governments in their international cooperation policies and support them in effective communication. Without concrete information on the SSC flows, opportunities for the mobilization and management of resources to achieve the SDGs are lost. Also, data enable monitoring of progress and actions taken in line with commitments made between cooperation agencies and other entities involved in SSC activities between countries. In the follow-up, for example, they help to establish whether the activity schedules are being developed according to the programmed dates.

In this sense, data serve as an indispensable instrument for making SSC flows visible. They empower stakeholders to gauge the attainment of envisaged objectives and ascertain whether these initiatives have contributed to enduring development outcomes.

In summary, data-driven planning, systematic progress monitoring, and rigorous evaluation constitute pivotal components of SSC efforts for sustainable development. Data empower SSC collaborators to make well-informed decisions, closely monitor progress, and critically evaluate the impact of their initiatives. Data are imperative for the realization of the shared aspiration of the global South for a more sustainable, inclusive and prosperous future.

2.2 Data collection and measurement challenges

To date, policy makers in developing economies have not been able to implement evidence-based policies on SSC due to lack of data at the global level. Much of the attention and policy action have been by default captured by ODA, concessional finance, foreign direct investment (FDI), portfolio investment, and other investment for which global data have been available for decades.

However, many economic studies argue that SSC is more conducive to inclusive and sustainable economic growth than private capital flows as it nurtures income, technology, and employment linkages, and fosters regional integration, areas that UNCTAD have identified as weak spots in recent international economic development (UNCTAD, 2021).

One of the measurement challenges arises from the diversity of actors involved in SSC, where national public entities, territorial entities, private sector organizations, academic institutions, social actors, among others, participate in SSC within their sectors and mandates. This great diversity calls for tracking different actors who participate in SSC and standardizing the information to be collected from them. The complexity is exacerbated by the lack

of mandatory legal frameworks to report SSC data in most economies of the global South. Not to mention that without a shared understanding of what qualifies as SSC, it becomes difficult to develop uniform indicators or metrics for measurement. Finally, one of the biggest challenges in the context of SSC practices is the development of monitoring and evaluation systems, making it difficult to assess the progress of projects over time, or even to have an overview of all SSC projects carried out.

Establishing data collection standards at the beginning of project planning is crucial for successful project development. This ensures that the relevant information is collected and registered throughout the project's life cycle. On one hand, it helps to have clear objectives, goals, and performance indicators for all projects. On the other hand, it allows timely sharing of data on SSC flows with the agency responsible for consolidating data across the country. In turn, a set of indicators must be defined for all projects so that it can later be followed and measured accordingly. These indicators must be relevant, measurable, and aligned with the expected results of the initiative. In addition, the entities in charge of managing and evaluating SSC must design strategies to assess the sustainability and replicability of each of the exchanges. Thus, it must be ensured that the benefits of each project last over time and that institutional capacities have been strengthened to ensure the continuity of the initiative.

2.3 Measuring South-South cooperation in the context of SDG indicator 17.3.1

SDG indicator 17.3.1 measures *"additional financial resources mobilized for developing countries from multiple sources."* It measures annual gross receipts by developing economies of the following agreed components:

a. Official sustainable development grants,

b. Official concessional sustainable development loans,

c. Official non-concessional sustainable development loans,

d. Foreign direct investment (FDI),

e. Mobilised private finance on an experimental basis, and

f. Private grants.

Components a to c consist of flows from North-South Cooperation, SSC, and TrC. A notable innovation of this indicator is that it covers for the first time SSC flows alongside other development support. Mobilized private finance and private grants are not part of the *Framework*. Furthermore, ODA is not part of the indicator. The indicator fully complies with the Addis Ababa Action Agenda by distinguishing flows of different nature and concessionality that have different impacts on development, thereby promoting transparency.

2.3.1 Sources of data for the SDG indicator 17.3.1

UNCTAD and the Secretariat of the International Forum on Total Official Support for Sustainable Development (TOSSD), hosted by the OECD, serve as co-custodians for SDG indicator 17.3.1. They are responsible for pooling national data into global databases. As custodian agencies, they aim at preventing duplication, particularly in instances where countries or multilateral organizations provide information to both entities.

- UNCTAD reports data on FDI and SSC to SDG indicator 17.3.1, coordinating the country-led work to develop methodologies and guidance to support all Southern countries to collect and report data. The two main data sources are therefore:

  - *FDI database:* UNCTAD maintains the largest global database on inward and outward FDI flows and stock, expressed in millions of dollars, which is also published in the UNCTAD World Investment Report.

- *SSC database:* The ongoing pilot phase of the voluntary *Framework* designed to measure SSC is poised to serve as a primary data source for UNCTAD to report on SSC within SDG indicator 17.3.1. This *Framework* is set to play a central role in supporting UNCTAD's extensive endeavours to comprehensively capture and analyse SSC data.

- The Secretariat of the International Forum on TOSSD reports data pertaining to North-South cooperation to the indicator.

2.3.2 SDG indicator element definitions

The main elements of SDG indicator 17.3.1. can be defined as follows in line with the indicator metadata (United Nations, 2023a):

17.3.1a Gross receipts by developing countries of official sustainable development grants
Grants are transfers in cash or in kind for which no legal debt is incurred by the recipient.

17.3.1b Gross receipts by developing countries of official concessional sustainable development loans

Loans are transfers in cash or in kind for which the recipient incurs legal debt. Loans are considered concessional if they include at least a 35% grant element, calculated using a 5% discount rate. The formula for calculating the grant element was established by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) as a standardized method for evaluating the terms of concessional loans (IMF, 2018).

17.3.1c: Gross receipts by developing countries of official non-concessional sustainable development loans
Official loans with less than a 35% grant element, calculated using a 5% discount rate.

17.3.1d Foreign direct investment inflows
FDI is a critical source of private finance and part of the current indicator 17.3.1. It represents a distinct form of investment characterized by the intention of a resident enterprise in one economy (referred to as the direct investor) to establish a lasting interest in an enterprise (known as the direct investment enterprise) located in an economy different from that of the direct investor. This lasting interest signifies the presence of a long-term connection between the direct investor and the direct investment enterprise, coupled with a significant degree of influence on the management of the enterprise.

For the purpose of defining this relationship, the ownership of 10% or more of the voting power in an enterprise residing in one economy by an investor situated in another economy serves as a key indicator. This ownership threshold is considered indicative of a lasting and impactful association between the direct investor and the direct investment enterprise.

This conceptualization aligns with both the OECD Benchmark Definition of FDI - 4th Edition (OECD, 2023a) and the ongoing efforts by UNCTAD in the field of FDI Statistics (UNCTAD, 2023). This sub-indicator is not restricted to developing countries.

17.3.1e: Gross receipts by developing countries of mobilised private finance - on an experimental basis
Mobilised Private Finance (MPF) is an experimental category covering private resource flows mobilized through official interventions by multilateral development banks (MDBs), bilateral development finance institutions, or other bilateral agencies, excluding those in recipient countries as they do not constitute additional resources. It includes seven types: guarantees, lines of credit, direct investment, co-financing, shares, syndicated loans, and project finance. MPF is a "memorandum item" because it would likely include and overlap with some finance that would also be found in the FDI sub-indicator. It aims to capture significant private flows, but concerns arise about its boundaries,

verification by recipient countries, and data reliance on commitments rather than actual disbursements. The OECD method for counting MPF is used (OECD, 2023b)*. MPF is included on an experimental basis, subject to review in 2025.*

17.3.1f: **Gross receipts by developing countries of private grants**
Private grants are here taken to mean grants for developmental purposes from private institutions outside the recipient country, excluding commercial flows and personal transactions such as remittances. They comprise grants from philanthropic foundations and other non-governmental organizations.

This indicator does not include debt relief, in-donor refugee costs, administrative costs not allocated to specific development activities, or peace and security expenditures other than those reportable as ODA. Moreover, it does not include private non-concessional loans; portfolio investment; export credits, whether official, officially supported, or private; short-term flows with an original maturity of 1 year or less; or any other flows that are not within the scope of the proposed sub-indicators. These exclusions sharpen the focus of the indicator on transfers of new resources to developing countries for sustainable development purposes, while excluding commercially motivated debt-creating flows.

In consultation with countries, the custodians develop and implement validation and quality assurance processes. This document specifically addresses the concepts, measurement, validation and quality assurance, and dissemination of SSC statistics within the SDG indicator 17.3.1. The *Manual* discusses reporting of SSC to the SDG indicator 17.3.1 in Chapter 8.

2.4 Global and regional support

2.4.1 United Nations Trade and Development

United Nations Trade and Development has led SSC activities since the Accra Accord (UNCTAD, 2008) in 2008, which called for enhanced data and analytical tools on SSC flows. The Bridgetown Covenant (UNCTAD, 2021), an outcome document from the UNCTAD15 ministerial conference, reaffirmed UNCTAD's role in supporting SSC and triangular cooperation, by offering methodological and capacity-building support through projects and partnerships.

In 2022, the United Nations Statistical Commission appointed UNCTAD and the OECD as co-custodians of SDG indicator 17.3.1, responsible for advancing the measurement of SSC. The Commission welcomed the development of a conceptual *Framework* for measuring SSC, and requested further work on global reporting and capacity-building, to be led by countries from the global South with UNCTAD's support. (United Nations Statistical Commission, 2022).

Upon final validation of the *Framework* and the collection of SSC data reported by developing economies, UNCTAD plans to establish a platform to manage SSC data, fostering collaboration to support a country-led process for the ongoing development and maintenance of SSC data, methodologies and related analysis.

2.4.2 United Nations Regional Commissions

United Nations Regional Commissions, including ECA, ECLAC, ESCAP and ESCWA, lead regional efforts to support countries in pilot testing and application of the *Framework*, and coordinate knowledge sharing and capacity development within their region. They are project implementing partners in the global project, led by UNCTAD according to advice of countries

of the global South, on Quantifying South-South cooperation for the Sustainable Development Goals. The resolution adopted by the General Assembly on 21 December 2012 (United Nations, 2012) called upon the United Nations regional commissions to play a catalytic role in promoting South-South and triangular cooperation and in strengthening their technical, policy and research support for countries of their regions.

2.4.3 United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation

Established in 1974, UNOSSC leads interagency coordination on SSC and triangular cooperation, ensuring collaboration across the UN system and facilitating global support for SSC initiatives (United Nations, 2018). It serves as a global convener, fostering informed decision-making and shaping policy outcomes pertaining SSC. Its influence extends to diverse United Nations legislative bodies, facilitating thorough coordination efforts to enhance and amplify support from the United Nations Development System for both SSC and triangular cooperation.

2.4.4 Other global and regional roles

Multilateral Development Banks (MDBs), including the Islamic Development Bank (IsDB), actively promote SSC by combining international finance and expertise to support country-led development efforts.

Operating on multiple fronts—country, regional, and global—they engage with diverse stakeholders, including partner governments, the private sector, civil society, parliamentarians, and foundations to advance SSC initiatives.

The IsDB, as a "South-South" bank, has developed tools like the "Capacity Development Program" and the "Assessment Framework for National Ecosystems for SSC" (IsDB, 2020), to enhance national SSC ecosystems. Against this background, the IsDB, through defining the "SSC Index[2]," and UNCTAD, through finalizing the *Framework* for SDG Target 17.3, initiated a collaborative process to advance the measurement of SSC with the objective of having a harmonized approach to the different elements of the SSC.

The Ibero-American General Secretariat (SEGIB) carries out one of the few regular inter-country efforts of harmonizing concepts, collecting data and releasing analysis on SSC projects. Established in 2003, SEGIB's role in SSC involves providing a holistic understanding of SSC activities in the Ibero-American region, which consists of 22 Spanish and Portuguese-speaking countries from Latin America, and Europe. Through the issuance of annual reports, qualitative analyses, and the development of indicators, SEGIB actively contributes to evaluating efficiency and governance, while maintaining an ongoing dialogue with stakeholders to assess capacities and address evolving needs in the dynamic landscape of SSC.

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[2]   A composite index that serves as a benchmark for analysing the progress of SSC activities at the country level. This index is discussed in further detail in Chapter 7.

Chapter 3

Framework to measure South-South cooperation

This chapter details the refined voluntary *Framework* which was initially outlined in the outcome document of the sub-group on SSC (United Nations, 2021a). SSC measurement extends beyond financial flows between developing countries to include all forms of cooperation. Relying solely on monetary flows or monetization as the quantification criterion would overlook the diverse range of modalities inherent to SSC, a perspective that is fundamental to the *Framework*.

The foundational purpose of the *Framework* is to create an internationally recognized and standardised framework capable of capturing all intricacies of SSC. It includes all types of cooperation, not limited to development finance. In fact, non-financial modalities are central to the nature of SSC, whether they can be monetized or reported using non-monetary methods. These include infrastructure projects, goods and materials delivered, scholarships, humanitarian assistance, technical cooperation, joint research, volunteers and alike. Nonetheless, financial resources, such as grants and concessional loans, remain an important and integral part of SSC. For ease of reference and translating comprehensiveness of SSC into practical reality of measurement, these SSC modalities and measurement types have been grouped into three groups. The following sections therefore highlight the diversity of SSC modalities, emphasizing the distinction between SSC and ODA. Unlike ODA's donor-recipient model, SSC focuses on partnership and mutual benefit among countries.

3.1 Structure of the Framework

Reflecting the principle to enable reporting of data on all modalities of SSC and to allow flexibility for different country contexts, priorities and systems (United Nations, 2019b), the *Framework* presents three sets of quantifiable items, that can be independently measured and reported, as fits each country:

- **Group A:** Financial modalities of South-South cooperation (direct financial contributions reported in monetary terms) (Table 1)

- **Group B:** Non-financial modalities of South-South cooperation (including resources and support that are not directly monetary but may be monetized for reporting purposes) (Table 2)

- **Group C:** Non-financial modalities of South-South cooperation measured through non-monetary units (the same items as in group B) (Table 3)

Group A includes SSC activities that involve direct financial transfers (like contributions to international organizations, loans, grants, or donations). These are the most straightforward to measure because they are simply tracked by their monetary values, with no need for additional formulas or non-monetary metrics.

Given the comprehensive nature of SSC as being an all-encompassing development cooperation, some developing countries prioritize reporting on the actual inputs and outputs of their SSC rather than focusing on monetizing them. To accommodate this, the *Framework* offers flexibility by dividing non-financial cooperation into two groups, allowing governments to decide how they want to report these activities.

In that regard, groups B and C focus on non-financial SSC activities. These can be measured either through monetizing inputs (like technical hours, equipment – group B) or by quantifying the outputs (such as the number of beneficiaries, infrastructure built, or scholarships awarded). Non-monetary metrics (group C) are important because they show the tangible impact of cooperation beyond just financial transfers.

Non-monetary metrics (group C) are important because they show the tangible impact of cooperation beyond just financial transfers.

> **Table 1.**
> **Group A: Financial South-South cooperation modalities (reported directly through monetization)**

Group A: Financial modalities of South-South cooperation (to be reported directly through monetization)	
A.1: Loans	A.1.1: Concessional loans (grant element) in credit operations between developing countries as per IMF definition
	A.1.2: Interest-free loans
A.2: Grants	A.2.1: Developmental purposes
	A.2.2: Humanitarian purposes
A.3: Contributions to International Organizations, Development Banks and Funds	A.3.1: Regular contributions to international organizations
	A.3.2: Voluntary contributions (excluding self-benefit)
	A.3.3: Capital paid-in to IFI and Regional/Multilateral Funds
A.4: Direct cash transfers under social development public programmes in partner countries (approved by the partner country)	

> **Table 2.**
> **Group B: Non-financial South-South cooperation modalities (monetized)**

Group B: Non-Financial modalities of South-South cooperation (suitable for monetization)	
B.1: Infrastructure projects	
B.2: Goods and materials	
B.3: Scholarships	
B.4: Humanitarian assistance (between developing countries)	B.4.1: Donations of food, medicine, medical supplies and or other materials
	B.4.2: Assistance to refugees
	B.4.3: Dispatch of humanitarian missions: health professionals; first-aid workers; teachers
B.5: Training (Specialised courses)	
B.6: Participation in Peace Keeping Operations	
B.7: Technical cooperation	B.7.1: Experts/specialists deployed/ opportunity costs
	B.7.2: Per Diems, daily allowances, and airfares
	B.7.3: Services; materials; equipment; supplies
B.8: Volunteers	
B.9: Joint Research	B.9.1: Scientific-related infrastructure (labs, equipment, supplies)
	B.9.2: Research personnel - working hours / opportunity costs
B.10: Administrative/Operational/Management/Coordination associated with the provision of SSC	

> **Table 3.**
> **Group C: Non-financial South-South cooperation modalities (quantification through non-monetized methodologies)**

Group C: Non-financial modalities of South-South cooperation (quantification through non-monetized methodologies)	
C.1. Infrastructure projects	
C.2. Goods and materials	
C.3. Scholarships	
C.4. Humanitarian assistance (between developing countries)	C.4.1. Type: donation of food, medicine, medical supplies and or other needed materials in case of humanitarian distress situations
	C.4.2. Type: assistance to refugees
	C.4.3. Type: dispatch of humanitarian missions: health professionals; first-aid workers; teachers
C.5. Training (Specialised courses)	
C.6. Participation in Peace Keeping Operations	
C.7. Technical cooperation	C.7.1. Type: Experts/specialists deployed
	C.7.2. Type: services; materials; equipment; supplies
C.8. Volunteers	
C.9: Joint Research	C.9.1: Scientific-related infrastructure (labs, equipment, supplies)
	C.9.2: Research personnel - working hours / opportunity costs
C.10. Administrative/Operational/Management/Coordination associated with SSC	

3.2 Concepts and definitions of the Framework

The present *Framework* allows quantification of SSC in both its financial (group A) and non-financial (groups B and C) dimensions from the perspective of developing economies. To that end, reporting on the relevant data for each of the three groups is generally mutually exclusive, unless otherwise indicated. However, a non-financial SSC activity can be reported in both group B (monetized terms) and group C (non-monetized terms), providing complementary information. Group B focuses on monetized reporting of non-financial activities, while group C covers the same activities using non-monetized

values, such as hours worked. Specific guidance is presented on this in section 3.3, as well as in corresponding annexes and online tools for data collection.

Data to be collected and reported should align with sustainable development objectives, reflecting a commitment to long-term environmental, social, and economic considerations. In line with target 17.3, the current *Framework* focuses only on the collection of data regarding development cooperation modalities in benefit of developing economies, that are concessional in nature, and that are provided through official channels. This typically refers to government-to-government transactions or transactions involving official government entities[3].

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[3] Trade is excluded from this Framework due to its commercial nature. While trade can also result from/ in increased ties and mutually beneficial agreements, such as reduced tariff rates among the trading partners, the underlying concept is nevertheless commercial and for-profit, hence its exclusion from the SSC Framework. On the other hand, activities enhancing infrastructure or training within a broader developmental and concessional framework would be included in the SSC Framework and potentially also directly support trade. WTO's Aid For Trade programme – see for example (WTO, 2005).

To guide users in properly understanding and applying the following definitions during the data collection process, the next section outlines fields and process of filling the data collection table. Additionally, Table 6 provides a series of short illustrative examples, demonstrating how different cases would be reported in line with the *Framework*.

Definitions

Group A – Financial South-South cooperation modalities (reported directly through monetization)

Group A assembles modalities of a financial nature, which may be directly reported through monetization:

A.1 Loans – Transfers, concessional in nature, for which the recipient partner incurs legal debt (and the resulting claim is not intended to be traded). The full amount of the loan shall be reported, in full accordance with the IMF's characterization.

A.1.1. Concessionality (grant element) in credit operations between developing countries[4] Interest-free loans are excluded from this category, and instead reported (separately) in A.1.2.

A.1.2. Interest-free loans – Loans to a partner with no interest charges.

A.2. Grants – Transfers in cash or in-kind without the expectation of reflow. This item focuses on financial transfers only, excluding the provision of goods and services. It has two modalities, depending on the cooperation purpose:

A.2.1. Grants with developmental purposes.

A.2.2. Grants with humanitarian purposes.

A.3. Contributions to International Organizations, Development Banks and Funds – Contributions to development banks, development funds, international development and humanitarian organizations. This item presents three modalities:

A.3.1. Regular contributions to international organizations - contributions to international development and humanitarian organizations. Only the value for development activities for developing economies should be reported. This can be reached by each multilateral institution reporting annually the percentage of direct expenditures on projects for developing economies and reporters to this field applying that percentage to their total contributions to those multilateral institutions. This section excludes regular contributions for operations in international organizations that are not focused on development.

A.3.2. Voluntary Contributions – Occasional voluntary contributions for development projects in developing economies by development banks, development funds and multilateral development organizations, excluding self-benefit activities.

A.3.3. Capital paid-in to International Financial Institutions (IFIs) and Regional/Multilateral Funds – It is reported in the year the payment is made. Only developing economies are eligible for this financing, and the purpose may be associated with an SDG.

A.4. Direct cash transfers under social development public programs in partner countries - Direct payments - conditional or unconditional - to individuals or households with the official consent of the partner country.

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[4]   Loans are considered concessional if they include at least a 35% grant element, calculated using a 5% discount rate. The formula for calculating the grant element was established by the IMF (2018) as a standardized method for evaluating the terms of concessional loans – see more in Glossary.

Group B – Non-financial South-South cooperation modalities (suitable for monetization)

Group B includes non-financial modalities of SSC that may be reported through monetization (person, hours, materials, travel expenses, scholarships etc.) – see Table 4. As such, these categories list the non-financial activities that are also replicated in group C, with a distinction that group B here only focuses on monetized valuation (reporting in, for example, United States dollars or national currencies):

B.1. **Infrastructure projects** - Expenses with infrastructure projects with development purposes.

B.2. **Goods and materials** – Donation of goods and materials with development purposes.

B.3. **Scholarships** - Financial awards for individual students from developing economies; contributions to trainees; and indirect ("imputed") costs of tuition in provider partner countries to nationals from developing economies.

B.4. **Humanitarian assistance** (*between developing countries*) – Assistance that is either delivered directly by a partner country or through multilateral channels in benefit of developing economies. Includes contributions, donations of food, medicine, medical supplies, and other materials in case of humanitarian distress circumstances. This item is divided into three types:

B.4.1. **Donation of food, medicine, medical supplies and or other needed materials in case of humanitarian distress situations** – Expenses with the donation of food, medicine, medical supplies and or other materials in case of humanitarian distress circumstances.

B.4.2. **Assistance to refugees** - Expenses with temporary assistance to refugees and individuals in refugee-like situations in the provider country, as well as material or technical support to refugees in other host countries. Also includes support to refugees returning voluntarily to their countries of origin.

B.4.3. **Dispatch of humanitarian missions: health professionals; first-aid workers; teachers** - Covers operational expenses, salaries, and all non-salary costs of experts (including those of public officials from the reporting country) such as airfare, per-diems, accommodation, and other transportation costs.

B.5. Training (Specialised courses)- Includes the delivery of training by internationally or locally recruited experts. All non-salary costs of such experts are included (comprising those incurred by public officials from the reporting country), such as airfare, per-diems, accommodation, domestic transportation in the recipient country and training. This category also covers capacity building activities such as conferences, seminars, workshops, and exchange visits.

B.6. **Participation in Peace Keeping Operations** - Disbursements related to UN peacekeeping operations and related operations mandated or authorized by a United Nations Security Council resolution. Operations should support the creation of conditions for lasting peace, with no belligerent nature and approach. Moreover, they should comply with the three basic principles of UN peacekeeping operations: consent of the parties[5]; impartiality[6]; and non-use

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[5]   Consent of the parties: United Nations peacekeeping operations are deployed with the consent of the main parties to the conflict. This requires a commitment by the parties to a political process and their acceptance of a peacekeeping operation mandated to support that process.

[6]   Impartiality: United Nations peacekeeping operations must implement their mandate without favour or prejudice to any party. Impartiality is crucial to maintaining the consent and co-operation of the main parties.

of force except in self-defence and defence of the mandate[7].

B.7. **Technical cooperation** - Activities to foster capacity building through knowledge sharing, including advisory and consultation activities, promotional activities (e.g., seminars) to raise awareness of standards or processes, and alike. Note that direct training activities (e.g., delivery of training, including conferences, seminars and workshops, are excluded from this category; rather, they are to be reported in B.5. This item is divided into three types:

B.7.1. Experts - technical hours / opportunity costs - Expenses related to the mobilization of experts/specialists from developing economies, government officials' technical working time and opportunity costs.

B.7.2. Per Diems, daily allowances, and airfares – Expenses related to per diems, daily allowances, and airfares that stem from technical cooperation activities between developing economies.

B.7.3. Services; materials; equipment; supplies - Expenses regarding the acquisition of services, materials, equipment, and supplies that are needed to deliver technical cooperation activities/projects between developing economies.

B.8. **Volunteers** - Non-remuneration costs of experts (e.g., airfare, per-diems, accommodation, insurance etc.).

B.9. **Joint Research** - Disbursements with joint research projects between two or more developing economies,

covering the working time of scientists/specialists from the reporting country, opportunity costs and expenses with services, materials, equipment and supplies mobilized to develop them.

B.9.1 Scientific-related infrastructure (labs, equipment, supplies)

B.9.2 Research personnel - working hours / opportunity costs

B.10. Administrative/Operational/Management/Coordination – In-kind expenses (*human and physical inputs)* of administrative, operational and coordination activities that are related with SSC, however not to a specific bilateral activity. Includes all human and physical inputs associated with technical cooperation projects, scholarships, volunteer management, training, humanitarian assistance, and any other South-South (and triangular) cooperation modalities.

Group C - Non-financial modalities of South-South cooperation (non-monetized measurement)

Group C includes the same non-financial modalities of SSC as group B, to be quantified through a non-monetized method and reported in terms of "material/physical/human" inputs or outputs.

The items in Table 3 (group C) follow the same principles and requirements as those from group B. However, under this *Framework* component, the items listed in group C shall be quantified through non-monetary measurement units, as presented in Table 5. Only the top-level units are used for reporting (see data

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Impartiality may be seen as playing a fundamental function in drawing the limits to the use of force and its purpose. Impartiality does not prohibit peacekeepers from using military force, but links and limits the use of force to a political process and the search for a political solution. The logic differs for counterterrorism, which requires the identification of an enemy.

7   Non-use of force except in self-defence and defence of the mandate: A United Nations peacekeeping operation only uses force as a measure of last resort, when other methods of persuasion have been exhausted, and an operation must always exercise restraint when doing so. The ultimate aim of the use of force is to influence and deter spoilers working against the peace process or seeking to harm civilians; and not to seek their military defeat.

collection table in Annex 2), e.g., hour, individual, unit, or volume/quantity either in square metres or tonnes. The following table outlines the critical distinctions between monetary and non-monetary measurements for both inputs and outputs.

3.3 Table for the collection of data on South-South cooperation

This section elaborates the data collection tool that could be used to collect data on SSC for the *Framework*. Table 6 lists all the variables and their meaning for the collection of the data.

The table to collect data on SSC has 17 major fields, as depicted below. It provides descriptions of the reporting items, including identifying brief examples for each of these, while Annex 2 provides further information, also including the data validation and requirements for each of those fields to support practical application of the *Framework* for data collection.

> ### Table 4.
> **Types of measurement for inputs and outputs**

Elements for measurement	Type of measurement
Inputs	Inputs refer to both monetary and non-monetary resources required to implement an SSC activity. • **Non-Monetary Measurement (group C):** Quantity or volume of inputs, such as technical expertise, equipment, or hours contributed, without attributing a monetary value. For reference, see Table 5. • **Monetary Measurement (group B):** The financial value of the resources provided (e.g., the cost of services, equipment, or other material inputs). These amounts should be reported directly in the Framework's reporting table, either in local currency or United States dollars.
Outputs	Outputs are the immediate results produced as a direct consequence of the SSC activity. • **Non-Monetary Measurement (group C):** The quantity or volume of deliverables, such as the number of beneficiaries reached, individuals trained, scholarships utilized, or infrastructure completed and handed over to the partner country. Examples include also: hygiene kits for humanitarian assistance equipment, or emergency relive operations for humanitarian assistance as number of operations, or tonnes of food supplies for volume of humanitarian assistance; schools or wastewater plants for infrastructure, number of laboratories as a number of infrastructure installed for joint research; or tonnes of organic fertilizer for volume of technical cooperation under items delivered. Further reference in Table 5.

Note: As the reporting is retroactive by design, SSC reporting on group C will predominantly be focusing on outputs.

➤ **Table 5.**
Quantifying non-monetary South-South cooperation inputs and/or outputs; detailed breakdown

Non-monetary quantification (Inputs and Outputs/Deliveries)		
Unit of measurement	**Sub-units** (Inputs and Outputs in the year reported)	**Where to use** (ref. Table 3 of SSC Modalities)
1. Hour	1.1 Number of hours worked/reported	Training (instructors)
2. Individual (#ByGender)	2.1 Number of Individuals directly benefited (#ByGender)	Training (trainees)
		Assistance to refugees (individuals registered for assistance)
	2.2 Number of volunteers dispatched (#ByGender)	Volunteers
	2.3 Number of disaster relief personnel dispatched (#ByGender)	Humanitarian assistance
	2.4 Number of foreign students (#ByGender)	Scholarships (number of foreign students enrolled)
	2.5 Number of researchers/scientists (#ByGender)	Joint Research (cooperation in science and technology)
	2.6 Number of experts/specialists dispatched (#ByGender)	Technical cooperation
3. Unit	3.1 Number of jobs created (#ByGender)	Infrastructure
	3.2 Number of patents registered	Joint Research (Cooperation in science and technology)
	3.3 Number of documents published (studies, research etc.)	Joint Research (Cooperation in science and technology)
	3.4 Number of technical cooperation actions implemented	Technical cooperation
	3.5 Equipment and supplies delivered/donated	Goods and materials
		Humanitarian assistance
	3.6 Number of infrastructure, public facilities, laboratories, etc., installed/built	Infrastructure
		Joint research
	3.7 Number of Operations	Humanitarian assistance
		Peacekeeping operations
4. Volume/Quantity:	4.1 Items delivered/donated measured by Sq. meters (applies when not related or included from projects under the modality "1 - Infrastructure projects").	Technical cooperation
		Humanitarian assistance
	4.2 Items delivered/donated measured by Tonnes (applies when not related to or included in projects under the modality "1 - Infrastructure projects").	Technical cooperation
		Humanitarian assistance

➤ **Table 6.**
**Reporting items within the South-South cooperation
data collection table**

Reporting Items	Description
I - Identification data	**Fields for basic identification of the activity being reported**
1 - Reporting year	EXAMPLE Activity for reporting was conducted in 2023, hence the value is: *2023*. Calendar year for which data is reported.
2 - Provider partner[8]	Unique code identifying the reporting country partner. EXAMPLE Colombia's M49 code is 170 (select from drop-down menu), hence the value is: *170*. | M49_code	M49_label
076	Brazil
152	Chile
170	Colombia
218	Ecuador
238	Falkland Islands (Malvinas)
254	French Guiana
328	Guyana
600	Paraguay
604	Peru	
3 - Provider agency	Unique name or code, if available, identifying the agency within the provider partner that has budget responsibility and controls the activity for its own account. EXAMPLE Code for the Colombian Ministry of Foreign Affairs' South-South Cooperation department, hence the value is: *COL-MoFA-05*. If code is not available, the name of the provider agency is sufficient, in which case the value to be reported is (e.g., Mexican provider): *Agencia Mexicana de Cooperación Internacional para el Desarrollo*.
4 - Provider ID number of project reported	Unique code for identifying the project reported in the provider's internal databases. EXAMPLE A unique project code for a technical assistance program in Agriculture of Colombia has the value of: *COL-SSC-2023-045*.
4.1 - Provider ID number[9] of the action reported	Unique code for identifying the action reported in the provider's internal databases. EXAMPLE A unique sub-code for a specific activity, such as an agricultural training program within the above-mentioned project (technical assistance agriculture program of Colombia): *COL-SSC-2023-045-A1*.

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[8] In the context of SSC, the term 'provider' reflects the diverse roles that developing countries play in development cooperation. It encompasses both financial contributions and non-financial support, such as technical expertise and capacity building. Provider also reflects the dynamic nature of SSC, where countries often play dual roles—as both providers and recipients of support.

[9] Both project and action ID numbers are not required to track these directly, rather to allow for analysis and reporting in aggregated manner, as well as to observe specific project/action in time. Due to potential confidentiality issues, the ID numbers can be determined by national authorities additionally and artificially, without any real connection to the actual ID numbers of projects/actions.

Reporting Items	Description
II - Basic data	**Fields for basic identification of the activity being reported**
5 - Cooperation Framework	Multiple codes identifying specific frameworks of collaboration such as bilateral, trilateral, or multilateral co-operation. EXAMPLE Multilateral co-operation between Colombia, Namibia, Kenya, Nigeria and Zimbabwe (select from the options): *MulC*. CooperationFramework_code / CooperationFramework_label BilC — Bilateral cooperation TriC — Triangular (or trilateral) cooperation MulC — Multilateral cooperation
6 - Recipient Partner/ Organization	Unique code identifying the recipient partner country or institution. EXAMPLE Namibia's, identified as a recipient partner, M49 code is 516 (select from drop-down menu), hence the value is: *516*. M49_code / M49_label 072 — Botswana 748 — Eswatini 426 — Lesotho 516 — Namibia 710 — South Africa 204 — Benin 854 — Burkina Faso
6.1 - Number of additional partners	The count of additional partners (next to reporter/provider and recipient) in case of trilateral or multilateral cooperation. EXAMPLE Two additional partners identified, Kenya and Nigeria, the value is: *2*.
6.2 – Additional cooperation partner(s)	Unique code identifying the (other) Triangular or Multilateral cooperation partner country(ies) or institution(s). EXAMPLE M49 codes for two additional partners are (select from drop-down menu): *404; 566*. M49_code / M49_label 231 — Ethiopia 260 — French Southern Territories 404 — Kenya 450 — Madagascar ... — ... 562 — Niger 566 — Nigeria 654 — Saint Helena
7 - Title	Free text indicating the official title of the action reported. EXAMPLE If available, specific activity's title to be recorded. Alternatively, project's title: *Capacity Building for Sustainable Agriculture in Namibia*
8 - Description	Free text describing the activity, including its objectives, planned outputs and outcomes (limit of 500 characters). EXAMPLE Directly from the project document, e.g., : *This project provides technical assistance to Namibian farmers in sustainable agricultural practices. The goal is to enhance crop yields while preserving water resources*.
9 - External link	Digital Object Identifier (DOI) or link to a web page (of the provider, recipient, or other partner) containing detailed information on the activity. EXAMPLE Made-up example: *www.agency.com/south-southNamibia2023*.

Reporting Items	Description
10 – Main SDG	Code identifying the goal in the UN list of SDGs.

EXAMPLE

Select relevant SDG from the drop-down menu: *SDG1*

SDG_code	SDG_label
SDG1	End poverty in all its forms everywhere
SDG2	End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture
SDG3	Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages

Reporting Items	Description
10.1 - Additional SDGs	Multiple codes identifying the goal in the UN list of SDGs.

EXAMPLE

Select relevant SDG(s) from the drop-down menu: *SDG2; SDG3*.

SDG_code	SDG_label
SDG1	End poverty in all its forms everywhere
SDG2	End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture
SDG3	Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages

Reporting Items	Description
11 – Main SDG Target	Code identifying the target in the UN list of SDG targets.

EXAMPLE

Select main SDG target from the drop-down menu, reflective of the identified main SDG: *1.5*

SDGTarget_code	SDGTarget_label
1.1	By 2030, eradicate extreme poverty for all people everywhere, currently
1.2	By 2030, reduce at least by half the proportion of men, women and chil
1.3	Implement nationally appropriate social protection systems and meas
1.4	By 2030, ensure that all men and women, in particular the poor and the
1.5	By 2030, build the resilience of the poor and those in vulnerable situatic
1.a	Ensure significant mobilization of resources from a variety of sources, i
1.b	Create sound policy frameworks at the national, regional and internatic

Reporting Items	Description
11.1 - Additional SDG targets	Multiple codes identifying the target(s) in the UN list of SDG targets.

EXAMPLE

Select additional SDG targets, reflective of the identified main and additional SDGs: *1.3; 2.3; 2.4; 3.8*

SDGTarget_code	SDGTarget_label
1.3	Implement nationally appropriate social protection systems and measures for all, including floor
...	...
2.3	By 2030, double the agricultural productivity and incomes of small-scale food producers, in parti
2.4	By 2030, ensure sustainable food production systems and implement resilient agricultural pract
...	...
3.8	Achieve universal health coverage, including financial risk protection, access to quality essentia

Reporting Items	Description
12 - Sector	Code identifying the main sector that the resource transfer is intended to foster (ISIC 2-digit codes).

EXAMPLE

Select relevant activity from the drop-down menu: *01*

ISIC_code	ISIC_Label
01	Crop and animal production, hunting and related service activities
02	Forestry and logging
03	Fishing and aquaculture
05	Mining of coal and lignite
06	Extraction of crude petroleum and natural gas
07	Mining of metal ores

Reporting Items	Description
12.1 – Additional sector(s)	Multiple codes identifying the sector(s) that the resource transfer is intended to foster (ISIC 2-digit codes).

EXAMPLE

Select relevant activities from the drop-down menu: *03; 10*

ISIC_code	ISIC_Label
...	...
03	Fishing and aquaculture
...	...
10	Manufacture of food products
11	Manufacture of beverages

Reporting Items	Description
13 - Modality	Unique code specifying the South-South modality of co-operation used to implement the activity.

EXAMPLE

This action refers to training, that can be monetized: *B.5.*

SSCFramework_code	SSCFramework_label
A.3.3	Capital paid-in to IFI and Regional/Multilateral Fun:
A.4.0	Direct cash transfers under social development pu
B.1.0	Infrastructure projects
B.2.0	Goods and materials
B.3.0	Scholarships
B.4.1	Donations of food, medicine, medical supplies and
B.4.2	Assistance to refugees
B.4.3	Dispatch of humanitarian missions: health profess
B.5.0	Training
B.6.0	Participation in Peace Keeping Operations
B.7.1	Experts - technical hours / opportunity costs

Reporting Items	Description
14 - Observation	Additional Information and keywords to identify activities of specific policy interest such as #COVID-19 (limit of 500 characters).

III - Financial data

Reporting Items	Description
15 - Currency	ISO code for the currency in which the transaction has been undertaken. Data reported in currencies other than USD to be converted to USD using IMF annual average exchange rates[10], where possible.

EXAMPLE

When national reporting allows, the currency for reporting should be USD. When this is not available, the reported values are to be reported in other relevant national currencies, e.g., for an activity in Zambia, in their national currency, Zambian Kwacha, hence the reported value is: *ZMW*.

Currency_code	Currency_label
YER	Yemeni Rial
ZAR	Rand
ZMW	Zambian Kwacha
ZWG	Zimbabwe Gold

Reporting Items	Description
16 - Amount Disbursed (in thousands)	Amount disbursed (expenditure) by the provider partner during the reporting year.

EXAMPLE

$500,000 disbursed by the provider during the reporting year, reported in thousands: *500*.

IV - Non-financial Data

Reporting Items	Description
17.1 - Non-financial Delivery unit	Unit group as one from the following main categories: hour, individual (by gender), unit, sq.metres or tonnes, as in Table 5.

EXAMPLE

Directly benefiting 250 individuals with reported activity is to be reported with selecting the unit: *2.1*.

NonFinUnit_code	NonFinUnit_label
1.1	Number of hours worked/reported
2.1	Number of individuals directly benefited **(# by Gender)**
2.2	Number of volunteers dispatched **(# by Gender)**
2.3	Number of disaster relief personnel dispatched **(# by Ge**

Reporting Items	Description
17.2 - Non-financial Delivery quantity	Amount of inputs provided by the reporting partner or outputs (deliverables) attributable to the beneficiary partner during the reporting year. Wherever applicable (with the #ByGender tag in 17.1), and available, the number of female individuals is to be reported additionally.

EXAMPLE

Directly benefiting 250 individuals with reported activity is to be reported as: *250*.
Additionally, if applicable (***#byGender***) and available, also to report number of female individuals directly benefited; in this example, from the 250 reported above, 100 were females, hence: *100*.

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[10]   IMF exchange rates are available at: https://www.imf.org/external/np/fin/data/param_rms_mth.aspx.

Eligible information for data collection:

- SSC initiatives from the reporting country with actual budgetary/ financial disbursements in the year reported (*either initiatives started in the year reported, or started in previous years but limited to disbursements made during the year reported);*

- SSC initiatives from the reporting country with actual physical mobilization/ deployment/provision of non-financial inputs and outputs in the year reported *(either initiatives started in the year reported, or initiatives started in previous years, but limited to the non-financial inputs and outputs recorded during the year reported).*

Non eligible information for data collection:

- SSC initiatives approved in the year under reporting, with financial and/ or in-kind resources scheduled to be disbursed/mobilized in the following year.

- Data on accumulated disbursements and/or in-kind inputs referring to many years in a roll;

- Data on development cooperation received by foreign partners by reporting country;

- Data related to cultural exchanges, trade, private philanthropy, and tourism flows.

The following figures illustrate the process of understanding what actions are to be reported and how. A detailed flowchart, covering all fields, is provided in Annex 2.

Choosing the cooperation framework determines how to fill in the fields related to recipients, namely, if bilateral framework is applied, then no data are filled for additional partners.

The SSC modality as per the *Framework refers to* the specific elements within the three groups, A, B, and C, each has further requirements for reporting quantified values. This includes monetary valuation (amount) for both financial (group A) and non-financial (group B) support, or non-monetized non-financial contributions (group C). It is important to note that reporting to the modalities within groups B and C is independent. A reporting country has the flexibility to report solely on group C modalities without including group B. See Figure 4 for guidance.

Figure 2.
Eligibility Criteria for reporting activities as SSC in the framework
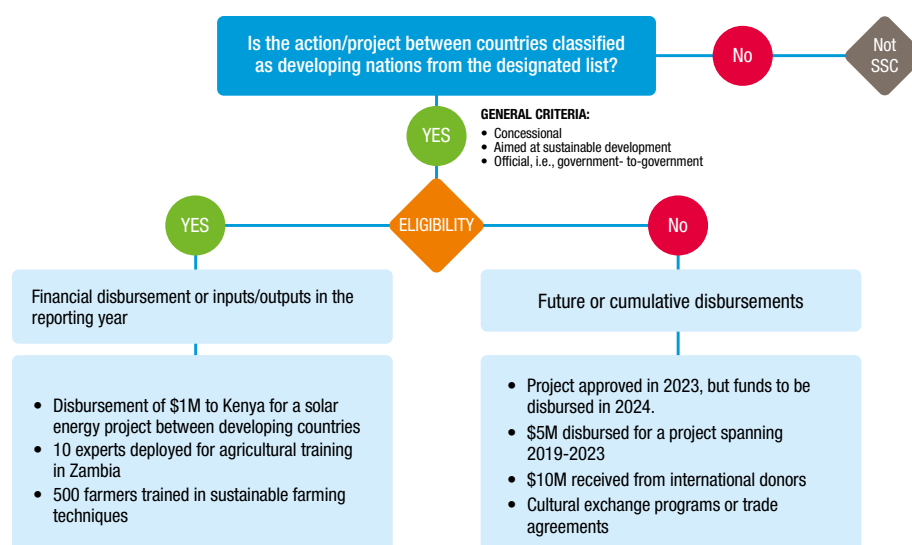
Source: Authors' deliberations

Figure 3.
Guidelines for completing recipient fields based on cooperation framework
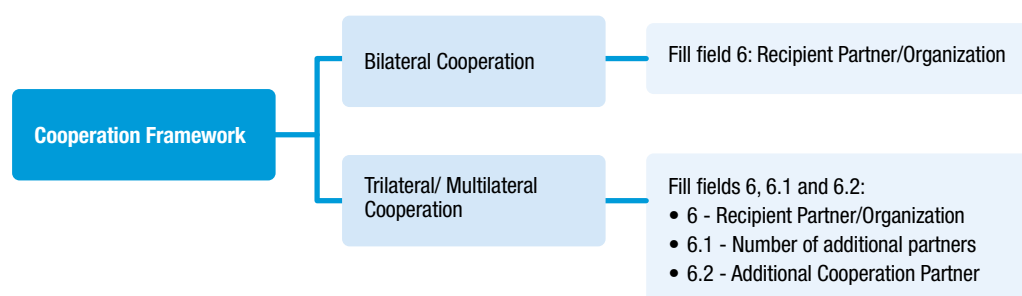
Source: Authors' deliberations

Figure 4.
Valuation guidelines for financial and non-financial data of SSC based on selected modality within Groups A, B, and C

Source: Authors' deliberations

3.4 Reference tables

The *Framework* includes six reference tables facilitating filling the table to collect data, as follows:

- Country list providing names of countries or areas, including regions, as per M49 classification (UNSD, 2023). For South-South cooperation, not all providers or recipients are relevant; rather, only developing economies are included for the purposes of SSC measurement. These developing economies are based on UNCTAD country classification (UNCTAD, 2024), and directly related to the purposes for SDG reporting, hence relying on the M49 historic and updated list of developing economies (UNSD, 2024) (see external Annex 2 in data reporting table). Organization list from OECD Development Assistance Committee (DAC) and Common Reporting Standards (CRS) code list is available online at OECD (2023c) and also used in Annex 2.

- SDGs and SDG Targets list from IAEG-SDGs (United Nations, 2023a) - see external Annex 2 in data reporting table.

- Sector of activity is defined using the International Standard Industrial Classification of All Economic Activities (ISIC) (United Nations, 2024). Depending on national circumstances and requirements, different levels can be used. Annex 2 shows ISIC at its section level (letter), which can be either broken down to a 4-digit code or aggregated suiting national reporting needs. Although the new version, ISIC Revision 5, is published, for consistency it is advised that the previous version, i.e., ISIC Rev. 4, is used. For the reporting, it is recommended that a 2-digit ISIC level be used.

- SSC Modality (groups A, B and C) - see Table 1 for group A, Table 2 for group B, and Table 3 for group C.

- ISO alphabetical codes for currencies, following ISO 4217 standard (ISO, 2024) – see external Annex 2 in data reporting table.

- Non-Financial Delivery (Hour/Individual/Unit/Volume) – see Table 5.

Chapter 4

National institutional set-up for quantifying South-South cooperation

> **The BAPA outcome document highlights the need for member States to strengthen national capacities through mechanisms, legislative arrangements, and institutions, fostering a comprehensive SSC ecosystem. This involves leveraging existing systems to foster an environment conducive to effective national SSC initiatives.**

While progress has been made in developing SSC regulatory frameworks, appointing specialized personnel, allocating financial resources, and establishing monitoring and evaluation systems, there is still variation in the interpretation of SSC. Some countries focus on technical aspects, while others consider broader developmental dimensions (UNDP et al., 2019).

The next section provides more specific details into the crucial elements for formalizing and institutionalizing SSC.

4.1 The institutional ecosystem for quantification of South-South cooperation

Effective measurement of SSC requires the establishment of a robust institutional ecosystem able to ensure precision in data collection, meticulous analysis, and reliable reporting. Agencies in charge of international development cooperation in developing countries are in a good position to lead the institutional ecosystem of agencies with mandates and data relevant to SSC. National statistical offices can play a central role with their strong mandate for data collection and coordination of agencies work in the collection, systematization and reporting of data on SSC flows. The composition of national ecosystems for SSC will vary according to the institutional set up of the governments of developing countries.

4.1.1 Mapping of agencies to be involved in SSC quantification

Before starting to pool data together, it is important to identify and categorize national and subnational institutional actors involved in SSC initiatives to pinpoint data sources and understand mandates to define roles of agencies, based on criteria that best suit the country's context. Examples of identification criteria could include:

i.   Sectors: categorize institutions based on the sectors they operate in (e.g., health, education, agriculture).

ii. SDGs: determine institutions contributing to different SDGs' achievement.

iii. Cooperation modality: based on the type of SSC they engage in (e.g., technical assistance, knowledge sharing, academic or financial cooperation, etc.).

The mapping should consider responsibilities of each institutional actor and assign roles that facilitate data collection, sharing, and management. All actors should have a clear understanding of their role and expected contributions.

The mapping of national agencies involved, in various tasks, roles, or SSC identification features, is supported through the tabular schematic approach in Annex 1. This can serve as a visual aid for a clear representation and can be utilized both for visualization support and the maintenance of diverse information, including contacts, as well as other entity-specific details and SSC relevant features.

It is necessary to identify all the line ministries, secretariats and/or directorates that work with international cooperation within their domain and/or that may work with international cooperation. A mapping of relevant agencies should also consider subnational entities, whenever relevant for the country. Mapping of agencies should be annually updated to identify new institutions or any changes in previously identified institutions.

> Effective measurement of SSC requires the establishment of a robust institutional ecosystem able to ensure precision in data collection, meticulous analysis, and reliable reporting

For example, the following entities may be involved in the measurement of SSC:

- A development cooperation agency or another agency with the mandate;

- A national statistical office, or an entity responsible for official statistics;

- Public entities responsible for socioeconomic studies and research;

- Line ministries, public agencies, public enterprises and other public offices involved in the provision of SSC within their sector or domain (including experts, infrastructure, goods and materials, financial resources, vacancies, scholarships, volunteers, etc.). They will provide the main source of data;

- In developing countries with federative system of state organization, the data collection may include inputs from public entities from regional and other subnational level;

- Entities from the civil society or the private productive sector working in partnership with public entities, under non-profit or business arrangements, providing supplementary information to official flows. While they are not the primary focus of the measurement framework, they can provide additional context or insights on the impact of these flows.

Designation of responsibilities in SSC quantification

A desirable institutional ecosystem for such task should encompass the following basic elements (Figure 5):

a) Official reporting entity

Assign a responsible entity to oversee data collection, analysis, and reporting related to SSC. Depending on national context, such entity could be a designated authority responsible for official statistics, a development cooperation agency, another public office or coordination unit with the relevant mandate, public entities responsible for socioeconomic studies

and research, or line ministries and public agencies involved in SSC provision.

The designated entity must possess sufficient capacity and competence, as well as a mandate, to assume a leadership role in SSC quantification activities.

b) Supporting entities

While the official reporting entity serves as the national focal point and leader of the SSC ecosystem, other supporting entities of SSC reporting are as equally important. These encompass entities involved in or responsible for data collection within the national setting, data verification/validation, coordination of data collection and their consolidation; data analysis, including drafting or formulating policy recommendations, and international liaison on the analysis side; and reporting. Their roles include reporting SSC data at both national and international levels, including public dissemination and internal reporting for monitoring and decision-making within the national context.

Supporting entities may also provide technical or logistical support to either of the stages of SSC collection, analysis, or reporting, such as infrastructure, IT development and support, or other related tasks. Additionally, supporting entities may cover training and development of methodologies, standards, and guidelines.

4.2 Data sharing, collaboration and communication

A comprehensive institutional ecosystem for SSC quantification should include the development of clear and standardized guidelines in line with the principles of effective data sharing and collaboration. These guidelines should consider the principles, scope, objectives, cooperation modalities, measurement methodologies and key terms for a country's international development cooperation. They should provide direction, ensure alignment with

national goals, and promote a shared understanding among institutional actors and other stakeholders. Each agency should identify items of the *Framework* for which they have data.

Maintaining and enhancing the national network for effective collaboration and delivery on SSC data collection and reporting requires efforts and inputs on various levels and from various aspects (Figure 6).

Figure 5.

Official reporting and supporting entities for SSC measurement and reporting
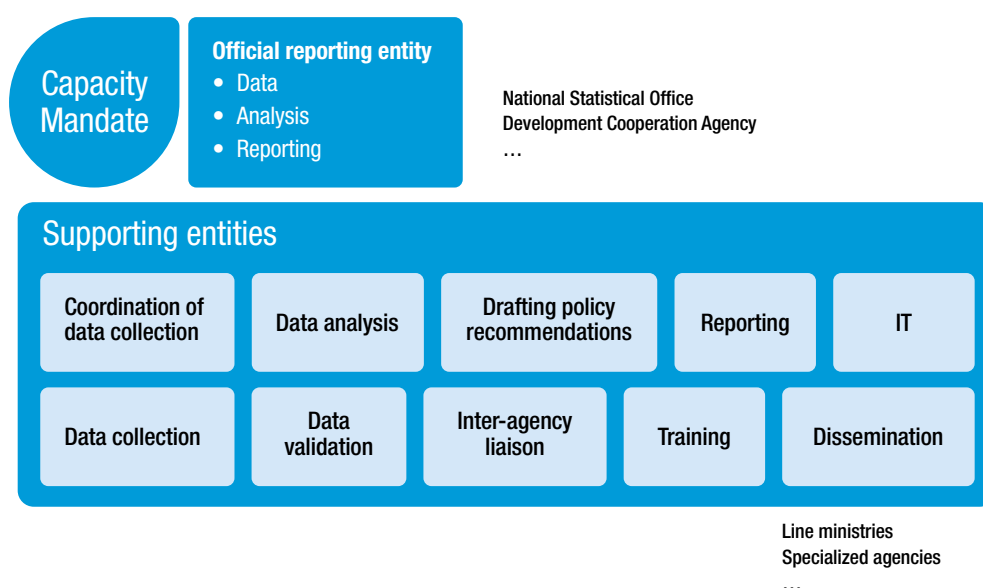
Source: Authors' deliberations

Figure 6.

Data sharing, collaboration and communication of the network for South-South cooperation
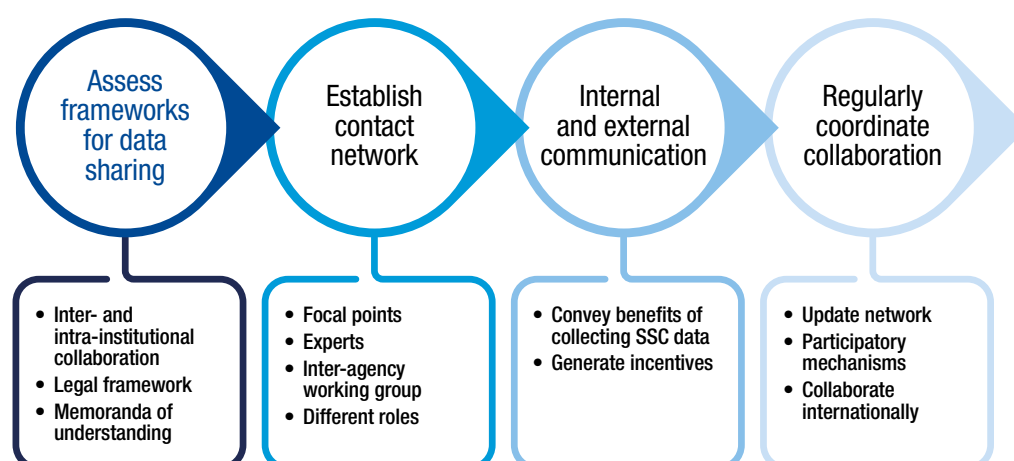
Source: Authors' deliberations

Assess frameworks for data sharing and plan needed changes

Data sharing through inter- and intra-institutional collaboration is a prerequisite for quantifying SSC. Typically, some legal and institutional barriers need to be solved to enable data sharing. National statistical offices may have a strong mandate to acquire necessary data from different actors, which could be crucial for progress. They typically have a legal framework to ensure confidentiality of individual data, and the framework to access data from all agencies.

However, SSC data may also be compiled by other agencies than the statistical authority, which may call for new legislation or memoranda of understanding to enable data sharing.

Establish the contact network

After completing the stakeholder mapping process, each entity should be invited to nominate a focal point and, if needed, other experts to contribute. The responsible agency for SSC measurement should establish communication with decision-makers with the authority to approve and facilitate the exchange of information and the formulation of collaboration agreements.

Building and maintaining a skilled team for SSC measurement and management is of paramount importance, as it ensures methodologically sound data. Such team should comprise skilled individuals in data collection and management, and development cooperation. It would be useful to set up an inter-agency working group on SSC quantification, including a focal point from each relevant agency with clear roles and responsibilities, such as data reporter, coordinator, IT expert, statistical expert etc. This group will oversee data collection, sharing, validation and training, as well as further refining national work.

The lead agency should ensure regular training, and updates with global work and changes to methodologies, to maintain the competence of this team.

Communicate within the SSC ecosystem and with stakeholders

Effective communication is key to a well-functioning SSC ecosystem where everyone understands their roles and the common goals. This could be supported by establishing terms of reference for the inter-agency working group clarifying the objective, tasks, and timelines in the short and medium terms.

External communication with stakeholders of the benefits of collecting data on SSC and being able to manage the flows more strategically and inform the public of SSC is key to creating a supporting environment. Some key points to consider in conveying benefits could be:

1. **Data repository**. Information collection allows institutions to have access to a comprehensive database, which compiles their cooperation initiatives over the years.

2. **Visibility.** Having systematically collected data on SSC flows gives visibility to the efforts of agencies and the government to contribute to sustainable development and international cooperation.

3. **Improved decision-making**. Data serves as a critical tool for evidence-based decision-making, such as more informed choices regarding SSC strategies, resource allocation, and prioritization.

4. **Resource optimization and cost efficiency.** Data on SSC can lead to better resource optimization, particularly through data sharing on cooperation initiatives among agencies. This can help identify synergies and efficiencies.

5. **Continuous improvement.** Data can promote sharing of successful practices and lessons learned among institutions to enhance their SSC initiatives.

6. **Data confidentiality.** Data are shared and collected in secure environments ensuring confidentiality of private and sensitive information, and data are only published and analysed at a level agreed by the government.

On the other hand, the generation of incentives may enhance institutional participation. This can include:

1. **Capacity-building workshops.** Offer workshops on International Development Cooperation and its quantification methodologies to enhance overall understanding on the subject and the implementation of data collection processes. Exchange best practices to enrich learning and foster collaborative growth.

2. **Participatory processes and decision-making.** Institutions may be more motivated to share data when they are involved in how cooperation is conducted and how information is used and applied.

3. **Progress reports.** Disseminate the results of the overall data collection process, demonstrating the tangible outcomes of participation and national development efforts.

4. **Technical support**. Provide technical assistance during data collection to alleviate burden and encourage participation.

5. **Recognition.** Share success stories to bring recognition and build support and enthusiasm for ongoing data sharing and collaboration efforts.

6. **Funding opportunities.** Proactively share internal and external funding and scholarship opportunities to incentivize participation in international development cooperation projects.

Regularly coordinate inter- and intra-institutional tasks

1. **Sustain an updated contact network**: To mitigate the challenges stemming from personnel rotation.

2. **Underscore benefits for everyone:** Create incentives that are both enticing and illustrative of the value of institutional participation and data on SSC. Emphasize the potential for heightened visibility, data accessibility and resource optimization.

3. **Cultivate participatory mechanisms**: Encourage a culture of open dialogue where institutions have the latitude to proffer suggestions for refinement, share best practices, and partake in the decision-making processes that pertain to SSC measurement.

4. **Empower focal points in continuous enhancement:** Provide opportunities for improvement of joint work creating a sense of ownership and dedication within the network.

5. **Institutional experience:** The overseeing entity must remain ever cognizant of the institutions reporting experience. It is imperative to possess an acute understanding of the requisites and impediments encountered by institutions entangled in SSC measurement. Offering bespoke capacity-building sessions and tailored support to bolster the adept application of the *Framework* methodology is imperative. Addressing concerns with alacrity augments overall satisfaction and engenders efficacious SSC measurement.

6. **Collaborate internationally:** Communicate needs for improvement to global work to encourage global sharing of experience and keep national counterparts up to date with new developments, tools, training opportunities and enhanced methodologies.

Chapter 5

Data collection process
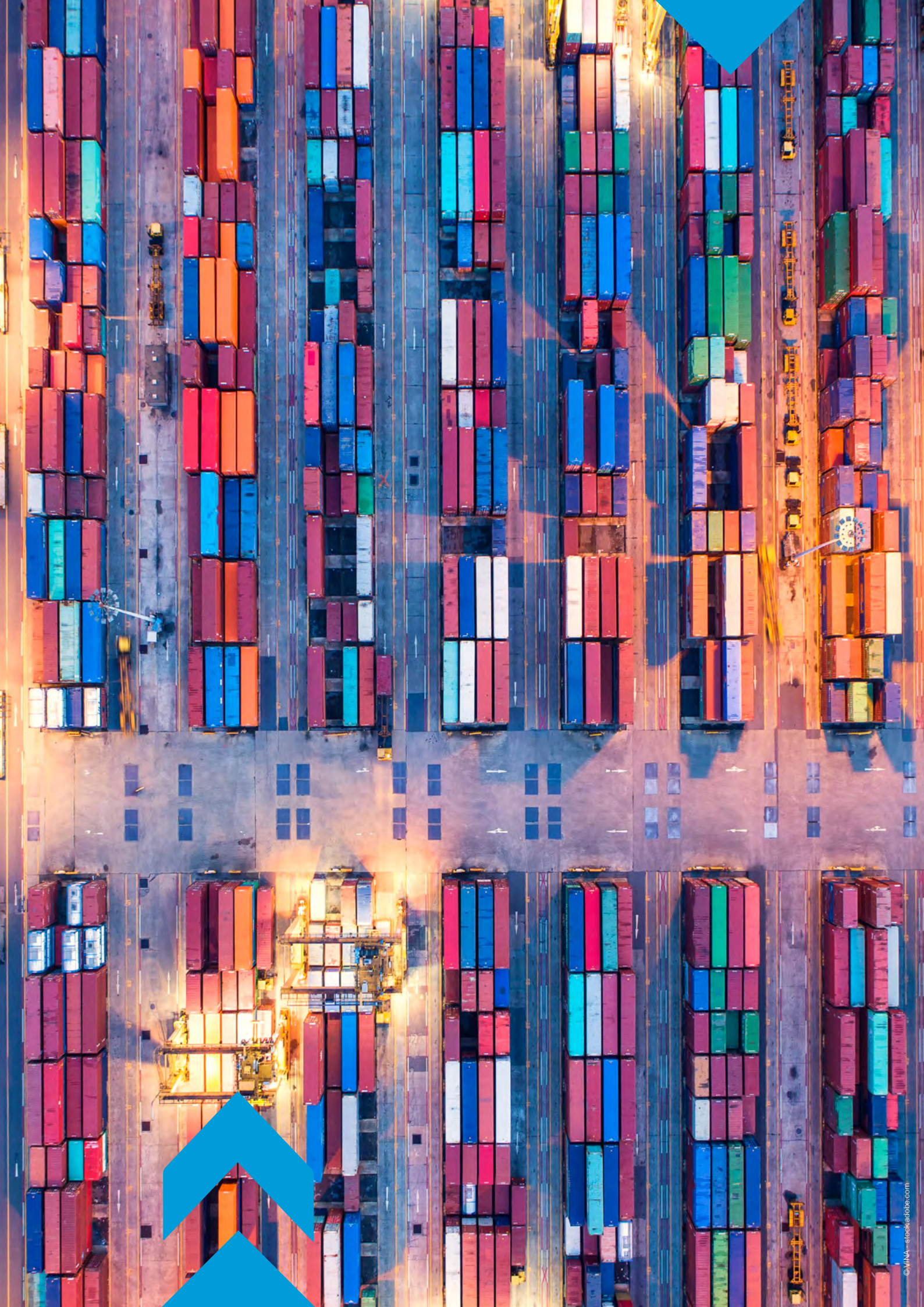
Data collection process can be divided into three parts:
1. Planning and preparing for collection;
1. Data collection;
2. Data validation.

5.1 Planning and preparing for data collection

Stemming from identified institutions and their respective roles in national setting on the SSC, the data collection process starts by identifying relevant institutions based on their roles in either data collection, validation, and support, in line with their respective mandates. All elements of establishing the national institutional collaboration for SSC data (see Chapter 4) are relevant, such as establishing and maintaining the contacts, ensuring effective communication and collaboration, are essential to ensure a cohesive data ecosystem.

It is recommended to structure a centralized repository for all SSC-related documents, organized by year and categorized by institution. It should include standardized files or directories for storing agreements, financial records, data collection forms, and reports, as well as tracking documents such as invitations sent, follow-up status, and any other relevant documentation.

Additionally, creating a dedicated web platform (open standard, creative commons-type) to disseminate information on SSC, SDGs, and Agenda 2030 can enhance accessibility. This platform can feature online courses, manuals, supporting guides, explanatory videos, important and relevant links, case studies and examples, including also frequently asked sections. Furthermore, contact details for the teams responsible for data collection plus an email address to send questions, schedule meetings and send documents regarding the initiatives should be displayed for ease of communication. The *Framework* can also be available for download from the website. Regular maintenance and updates of this web space and the repository

will ensure the availability of accurate information and promote transparency in the SSC measurement process.

5.2 Data collection

The actual collection process begins upon sending communication and invitations to the institutions with the request for their participation, by sharing their cooperation initiatives with the team responsible for data collection and analysis.

The process is supported directly by the data collection table (see Chapter 3, and Annex 2) to ensure standardization of inputs received for further manipulation and use.

Additional aspects are also to be considered for a clear and defined process for data collection, such as:

i. **Calendarization:** Establish a clear timeline for data collection and reporting, typically on an annual basis. A consistent timeline favours planning, participation, efficiency and credibility.

ii. **Data Sources:** Identify primary data sources through inter- and intra-institutional collaboration. Government reports, project documents, and relevant databases, as well as regional and international databases, could serve as secondary sources.

iii. **Data Collection Methodology:** Define the methods and tools for data collection, such as surveys and databases and ensure that data collection is harmonized and consistent across institutions. Existing methodology only focuses on the data collection tool (Annex 2), while leaving space for further work as referred to in Chapter 8.2.

5.3 Data validation

The national official reporting entity should determine mechanisms for data validation to ensure accuracy and reliability and further improve stakeholder's understanding of the elements of SSC. This is to be done

> Data collection is iterative, evolving, integrating feedback for planning, validation, and continuous improvement

in line with the validation aspects within the data collection table (Annex 2).

As soon as the first SSC data comes in from the institutions, the collection team should perform a thorough analysis of the submissions, assessing accuracy, completeness, and level of details, while also comparing against previous reporting[11] to identify gaps and inconsistencies. At the end of this phase, information can be used to generate internal SSC follow-up reports as well as reports to support the design of public policies in each country (see Chapter 7) or submitted to international organisations (see Chapter 8).

In instances of uncertainty regarding the data, the team should reach out to the data submitters for clarification. Moreover, follow-ups with respondents are important for enhancing robustness and validity of responses. While various methods can be employed, telephone calls are, despite being resource-intensive, a very practical and highly efficient way of ensuring higher response rates.

Further conceptual considerations on data validation with specific respect to ensuring quality assurance are presented in Chapter 6.

The data collection process is an ongoing and evolving process, complemented by the use of collected and validated data. This iterative approach incorporates feedback through evaluation and adjustments, enhancing each subsequent cycle of planning, data collection, and validation (Figure 7).

Figure 7.

Planning, data collection, and data validation are part of the evolving cycle of data collection process
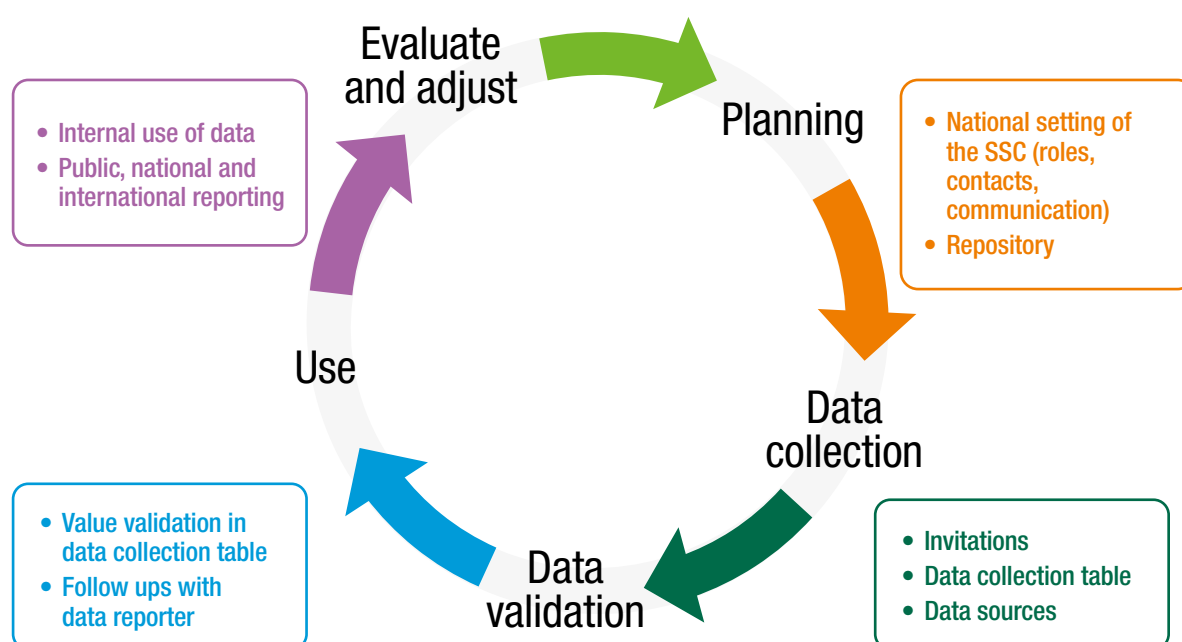
Source: Authors' deliberations

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[11]   Whenever possible cross-checking reported data sent by the institutions within SSC data collection process with expenditure data from the Ministry of Economy/Finance's systems may also be performed.

Chapter 6

Quality assurance and validations

6.1 Quality principles

Quality assurance is key to building trust in numbers and promoting their wider use. It also includes international comparability, which makes statistics more useful at the national level as it ensures that all national entities work using agreed-upon, harmonized methods and concepts that meet high quality standards.

To ensure high quality of official statistics among member States, the United Nations defined the Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics, adopted in 2014 at the highest political level as a General Assembly resolution (A/RES/68/261) (United Nations, 2014b). The *Principles* emphasize the significance of relevance, impartiality, and equal access in its first principle, and require professional standards and ethics to be applied, including transparency and accountability in statistical activities. They stress the importance of upholding the professional independence of statistical production, so that statistics are compiled free from external interference to maintain credibility and trust. They welcome the use of all data sources to be selected based on scientific considerations only and emphasize the importance of confidentiality of individual data. The *Principles* call for robust and public legal frameworks, national coordination of statistical activities for consistency and efficiency, and international cooperation, as well as the use of international standards. The United Nations provides guidance and documentation[12] to support statistical authorities in upholding high-quality principles.

The importance of quality in statistics lies in its power to transform raw data into information, insights, and knowledge. High-quality statistics are the bedrock based on which informed decisions are made, and they can empower people, inform action, drive progress, innovation, and understanding of complex realities.

As defined in the United Nations National Quality Assurance Framework (UN-NQAF), *"Quality is the degree to which a set of inherent characteristics of an object fulfils requirements. In the context of statistical organizations, and in this* [UN-NQAF] *Manual, the object is the statistical output or product, the process, the institutional environment, or the whole statistical system."* (United Nations, 2019c)

> Quality assurance is key to building trust in numbers and promoting their wider use

Figure 8.
Quality dimensions

| SYSTEM QUALITY | INSTITUTIONAL QUALITY | OUTPUT QUALITY | PROCESS QUALITY |
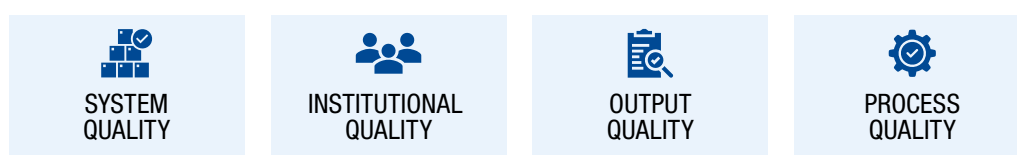
Source: United Nations (2019c)

The following figure identifies several quality components that make up each quality dimension. For instance, system quality entails effective coordination, communication, and adherence to statistical standards; and output quality includes relevance, accuracy and reliability, timeliness and punctuality, coherence and comparability, accessibility and clarity, as well as managing metadata. Institutional quality is divided into statistical confidentiality and data security, professional independence, impartiality and objectivity, transparency, commitment to quality, and adequacy of resources; process quality consists of cost-effectiveness, sound methods and statistical procedures, and managing the respondent burden.

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[12]   See for example National Quality Assurance Framework for Official Statistics (United Nations, 2019c, 2023b) or the United Nations Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics, Implementation Guidelines (United Nations, 2015a).

Figure 9.
Quality components per each dimension
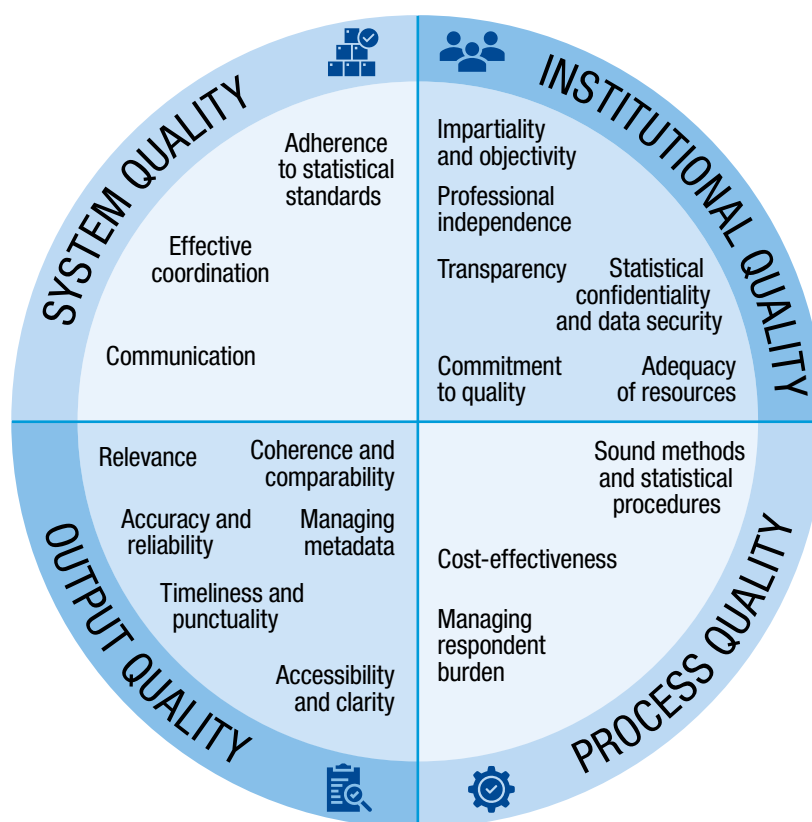
Source: Adapted from United Nations (2019c)

Without stringent quality control measures, the information provided by institutions may be subject to biases, errors, or inconsistencies, leading to misguided decisions and public mistrust. Ensuring the highest standards of quality entails meticulous attention to quality in all phases of data collection, validation, compilation, analysis and dissemination.

6.2 Quality assurance

Quality assurance procedures are designed to safeguard the trustworthiness of statistical products, enabling policymakers, researchers, and the public to make informed choices and assessments based on sound, credible data. The above quality dimensions and components propose a quality assurance framework that aligns

with the Generic Statistical Business Process Model (GSBPM) (United Nations, 2014a), which should be applied in most, if not all phases of statistical production, from data collection through data processing, analysis, and dissemination.

The GSBPM provides a structured approach to managing statistical processes, ensuring that each phase, from specifying needs to evaluation, is subject to appropriate quality checks. For instance, during the Collect, Process, and Analyse phases, specific validation steps ensure the accuracy and consistency of data, while the Disseminate phase ensures that results are released in a clear and timely manner. The GSBPM also supports a feedback mechanism through its Evaluate phase, where data quality issues can be reviewed for future improvements.

Figure 10.

Generic Statistical Business Process Model: statistical production process and quality management

Overarching processes (including quality management and metadata management)							
SPECIFY NEEDS	DESIGN	BUILD	COLLECT	PROCESS	ANALYSE	DISSEMINATE	EVALUATE
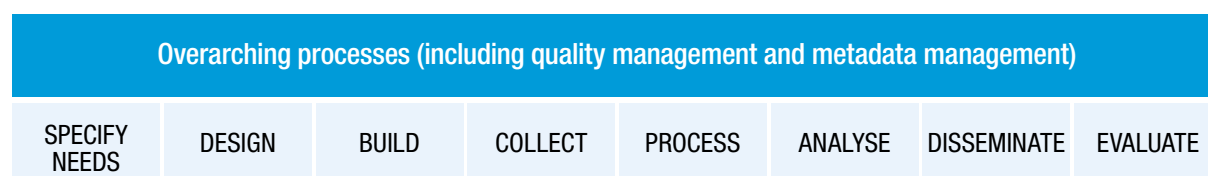
Source: United Nations (2014a)

One of the primary goals of quality assurance in statistics is to ensure that data is representative of the population or phenomenon under study. This involves the use of scientifically sound sampling methods and the elimination of any potential sources of bias that could distort the results.

Rigorous data collection and validation procedures are needed to prevent errors and inconsistencies, and sound methods to identify and rectify anomalies.

In practice, quality assurance can be built in through check points within the GSBPM at which the output or process phase is compared against set criteria. Persisting risks and quality challenges should be taken up in quality improvement efforts during the Evaluate phase for the next round of data collection and compilation. Some quality improvements may require additional resources and should be presented to senior management for their attention.

In the case of SSC data, all partners involved in collecting and processing data should be aware of the shared quality requirements and plan regular quality improvement efforts. In this regard, transparency and communication are key. Clear documentation of methods applied, and related assumptions, and limitations as emphasized in the GSBPM Disseminate phase will enable users to understand, critique, and interpret data correctly.

South-South cooperation data analysis

The *Framework* empowers countries to systematically compile SSC data according to national priority areas, and it will enable reporting of data on SSC to SDG indicator 17.3.1. The outcomes will be compared to existing data on SSC, where applicable. The *Framework* helps countries to collect and organize data on SSC into a comparable and systematic data frame. Initially, it may focus on selected sectors where data exist but will eventually facilitate a more comprehensive understanding of the types and scale of SSC flows in each country, and enable analysis of SSC by sector and SDG, including with insights into the destinations of flows.

The analysis of SSC data can be approached from two perspectives: a country-specific viewpoint, and a global and regional perspective. This section provides some examples to illustrate data analysis potential of the *Framework* and will be refined after the pilot testing of the *Framework*. While at this stage the chapter does not present a very concrete set of examples due to lack of SSC data reported, it builds on early testing of the *Framework* by selected countries (hence with limited reported data) and makes reference to other relevant reports on SSC, namely the SEGIB (2023a) report, the IsDB (2023b), or the work by UNOSSC (2023b). This chapter and use of preliminary data in the form of a dashboard is therefore meant to serve purely illustrative purposes. After pilot testing of the *Manual*, the chapter will be refined and enhanced.

7.1 Country-level analysis

At the country level, the data analysis focuses on understanding and interpreting the specifics of SSC. This involves examining the type, scope, and magnitude of SSC initiatives, providing valuable insights for domestic policymakers, stakeholders, and development practitioners. The analysis should provide in-country decision-making with the necessary tools to aid governments in optimizing SSC strategies, allocating resources effectively, and fostering collaboration based on identified patterns and trends within the context of the country's unique economic, political, and social conditions. Listed below are potential[13] types of analyses that can be derived from the *Framework*, offering insights at different levels of granularity to inform SSC policies and strategies.

Financial analysis

One critical aspect of the analysis involves financial considerations. The aim is to understand the proportional composition, scale, efficiency, and trends in financial SSC modalities. This involves determining the volume of inward and outward SSC flows, calculating disbursement rates, and identifying areas of growth or decline in financial cooperation over time.

Through dynamic visualizations, decision-makers gain a comprehensive view, aiding in the optimization of financial strategies and addressing challenges for the effective pursuit of the SDGs. Stacked bar charts can provide a clear representation of the relative contributions of each modality, whereas a line chart is more suitable for illustrating trends over the years.

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[13]   During pilot testing the *Manual*, these types may be changed or enhanced.

Non-financial analysis

Beyond financial transactions, non-financial aspects of SSC are equally crucial. This entails evaluating the types and quantities of non-financial resources exchanged through SSC (group C of the *Framework*, see Table 3). SSC contributions, regardless of their group (A, B, or C), could also be categorized and analysed by modality, such as economic cooperation, technical cooperation, humanitarian assistance, and joint research, which allows for a more nuanced understanding. The below figure, an initial version of the dashboard, includes an element of non-financial delivery, as well as SSC modality.

Alignment with the Sustainable Development Goals

The alignment of SSC initiatives with the SDGs is a crucial aspect of global development. In this section, countries can highlight specific SDGs where SSC has made significant contributions, offering an insightful evaluation of the collective impact of these initiatives on the broader agenda of sustainable development. A radar chart or a bar chart can visually emphasize the significant contributions of SSC to specific SDGs (for example, see panel on Main SDG in Figure 11).

Figure 11.
South-South cooperation data dashboard
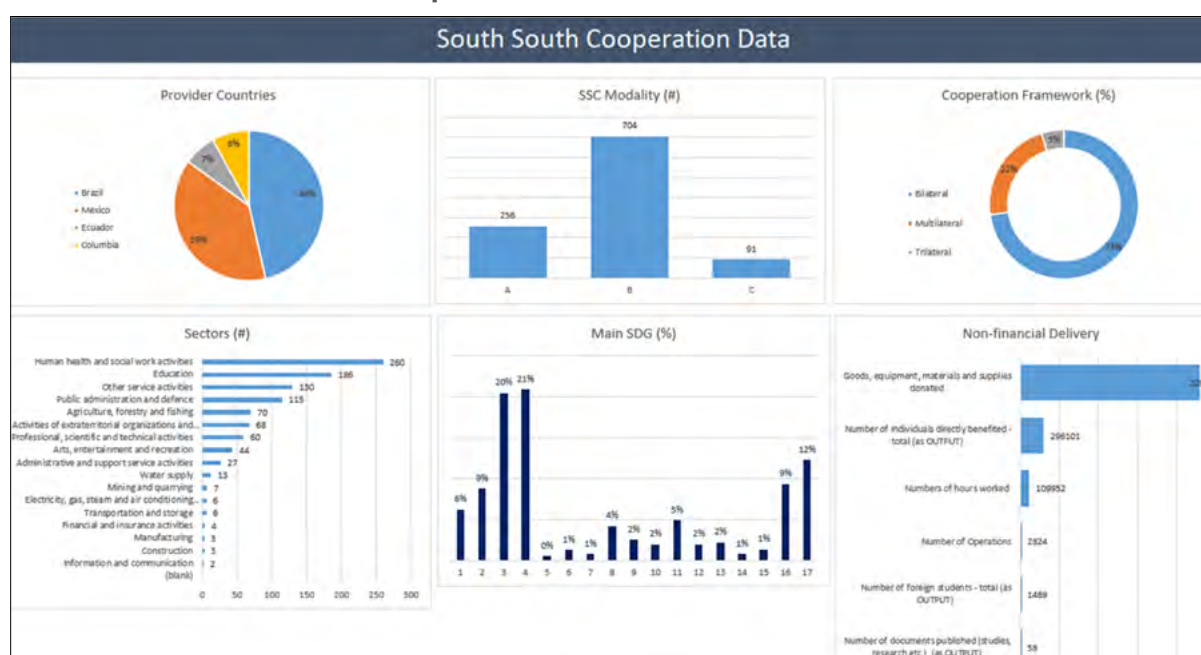
Source: UNCTAD

Note: This example is based on the SSC Framework and early pilots by selected countries. It does not aim to comprehensively capture SSC of the countries, nor to indicate any comparison among the countries, or elements of the SSC (e.g., modality, SDGs). It is meant at this point to be used solely and purely for illustrative purposes.

7.2 Global and regional analysis

While national analysis can serve specific national (only) goals, and it can be either internal for a specific agency or the government, or publicly available and analysed. Nationally, the data collected for the *Framework* are instrumental in fulfilling international commitments, particularly in reporting on SDG indicator 17.3.1 (see Chapter 8). On a global scale, the same dataset assumes a broader significance. The data reflects the overall landscape

of SSC, addressing questions such as how different regions contribute to SSC, which financial modalities are more prevalent globally, what is the volume of and how the collective efforts of countries influence the achievement of the SDGs.

Global analysis enables the comparison of SSC data across countries, fostering a deeper understanding of shared challenges, successful models, and areas that may require additional attention among partner countries. Countries can then capitalize on each other's experiences and strategies to advance sustainable development and share good practices from one cooperation initiative to another.

A global or regional profile offers a comprehensive view of SSC initiatives, capturing aggregated data across all countries. It delves into the directional flow of SSC, identifying top recipients and providers on the global/regional level. It can offer insights into the total number of projects, cross-regional partnerships and the diverse roles played by participating countries—whether as providers, recipients, or engaging in dual capacities, in addition to main sectors and top SDGs targeted. Once more countries start reporting data on their SSC flows, they will receive information on SSC inflows entering their country and complement their national data and analysis. Figure 11 offers early considerations for a dashboard-type representation for analysis of SSC data, but to be complemented and enhanced using other visualization and analysis tools.

Sectoral and geographic distribution

Understanding the sectoral and geographic distribution of SSC is crucial for gaining insights into the volume of SSC based on sectors or locations. This involves visualizing the sectoral distribution of SSC activities among participating countries using pie charts or stacked bar charts, for instance.

To provide a more visual understanding of SCC flows, an interactive map can be created to showcase inflows and outflows, providing a vivid representation of regions with varying levels of cooperation, as depicted below in a case by SEGIB (2023a).

Role of participating countries

In the assessment of SSC, the number of participating countries can be visualized by using a simple bar chart or a world map. To delve deeper into the analysis, it is crucial to examine SSC contributions based on cooperation frameworks, distinguishing between bilateral, trilateral, or multilateral arrangements. This approach offers a nuanced understanding of the diverse collaboration modalities among countries. Additionally, identifying the primary SSC providers and recipients becomes crucial, shedding light on the most influential contributors and beneficiaries.

7.3 Integration of SSC perspectives in SDG Voluntary National Reviews

The *Manual* for SSC provides a structured approach for countries to collect and analyse data, which can be instrumental in informing Voluntary National Reviews (VNRs) of progress toward achieving the SDGs. These reviews are a central component of the comprehensive global follow-up and review framework established for the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

The VNR report should highlight the availability of data and progress on SSC, particularly related to specific SDG targets. This includes reporting on the scope, type, and allocation of development cooperation flows, the quality of South-South development cooperation, analysing elements such as conditionality, channels of assistance, predictability, flexibility, and alignment with program country priorities.

While many countries report on broader SSC initiatives, linking them explicitly to specific SDGs can enhance the relevance of the data. The report can highlight how different countries utilize SSC to accelerate progress

toward all 17 SDGs. More guidance can be found in a Handbook of integrating SSC into VNRs (UNOSSC, 2023b).

VNRs provide insights into lessons learned and actions taken to address existing gaps. It supports the identification of solutions, successful practices, synergies, and trade-offs. The assessment also highlights areas requiring advice and support from other countries or institutions, fostering a collaborative approach to address complex developmental challenges.

7.4 Leveraging external initiatives for robust South-South cooperation analysis

To create a more comprehensive and integrated understanding of SSC, it is important to leverage other initiatives that contribute to the measurement of SSC. To that end, specific indicators could be drawn up for alleviating analysis and the efficient use of SSC data. The IsDB (2023b), for instance, designed a composite index to serve as a benchmark for analysing the progress of SSC activities at the country level. It aims to provide a standardized measurement across various dimensions related to the scale, diversity, and maturity level of a country's SSC ecosystem. Mature SSC ecosystems will help set up data collection systems and coordination mechanisms leading to high-quality data on SSC.

The Index covers nine dimensions, including political will, national strategy, information bases, stakeholder participation, technical cooperation agency profile, financing mechanisms, inward and outward SSC activities, and monitoring mechanisms.

Within the voluntary SSC *Framework*, two dimensions, namely inward and outward SSC activities, are relevant. Inward SSC encompasses the receipt of expertise, technologies, and resources from other global South countries to tackle national developmental challenges. Conversely, outward SSC activities entail the provision of expertise, technologies, and resources to other countries of the global South to address their respective developmental challenges.

The assessment of both types focuses on volume, growth, alignment, and diversity. Inward activities assess volume based on the size of the beneficiary country's population and economy and the scale of its developmental challenges. In contrast, outward activities consider the technical capacities of the providing country and its targets set in its national SSC strategy. Both types of SSC activities underscore the importance of effective, demand-driven, and aligned cooperation for mutual benefit. Diversification is also encouraged across sectoral coverage, knowledge-recipient countries, and activity types.

Figure 12.
IsDB SSC Index: inward SSC activities
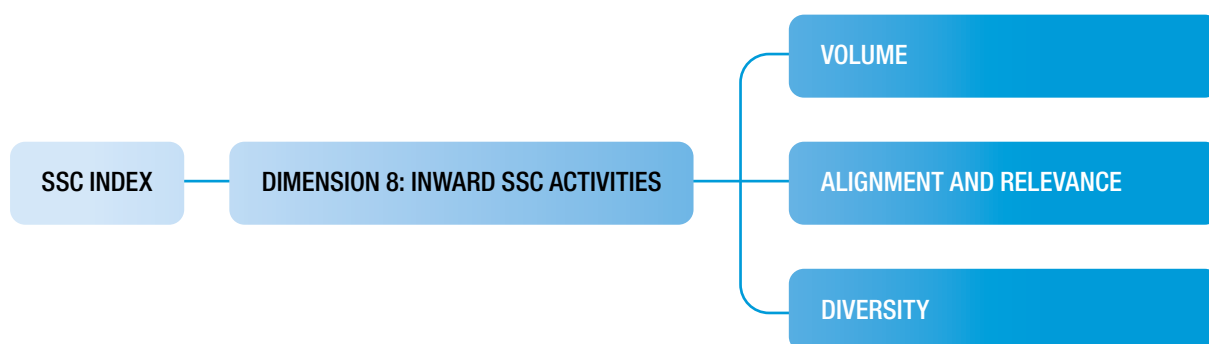
Source: IsDB (2023b)

Leveraging existing, and future data on SSC, incorporating statistical methods to allow for the aggregation of quantitative indicators providing a more data-driven perspective on the scale, diversity, and maturity level of a country's SSC ecosystem, and accounting for the full spectre of SSC, i.e., both financial and non-financial support, would provide crucial basis for effective decision-making and policy formulation. This approach remains to be developed.

Chapter 8

Towards reporting South-South cooperation data to the SDGs

> **While national authorities differ in their circumstances, processes, requirements, and capacity to design, develop, and implement solutions for national data collection and dissemination, commonalities are present and parallels drawn to other similar exercises, either nationally, regionally, or internationally. These refer to the processes of data collection and cleaning, analysis, and dissemination.**

National data collection is the initial step in disseminating data on SSC. After data have been collected, consolidating and validating these data on SSC take place to ensure relevant and proper data are processed and ultimately reported or disseminated. Nationally collected data on SSC adhering to the *Framework* may capture more than needed or intended for different use(r)s. For example, they may need to undergo aggregation before dissemination or reporting. To that end, the table to collect data at national level (Table 6) is a required initial step, which is processed at the detailed level. Such data may be shielded for confidentiality from the public access.

Reporting the SSC activities in the next stage would depend on reporting guidance or requirements. E.g., internal reporting and analysis may be conducted on granular (and confidential) data, whereas public dissemination will be aggregated to a certain level. For reporting on SDG indicator 17.3.1 on SSC, national authorities are required to provide inputs into a data-collection tool by the custodian agency, UNCTAD, referred to here as a reporting table. Accordingly, relevant and applicable fields from the data collection table that is aligned with the *Framework* and encompasses a wider range of SSC features, are selected (and aggregated) (Figure 13).

Figure 13.
Nationally collected data serve as input into more aggregated and filtered data reported to SDG indicator 17.3.1.
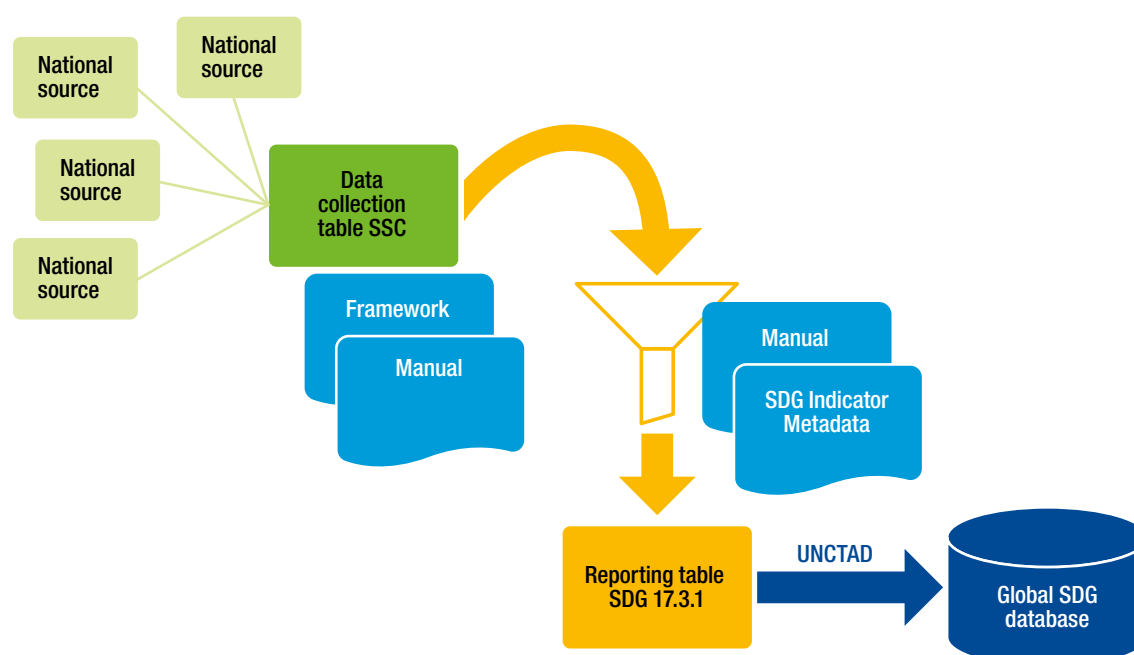
Source: Authors' deliberations

8.1 Populating the Framework with data

This section focuses on reporting to SDG indicator 17.3.1 is, as per the above figure, following a three-step process. The first two, data collection and validation, are aligned with the processes outlined in Chapter 5. Detailed guidance is provided below on inputting the collected data via data collection table (Table 6) into the reporting table (Annex 3).

Step 1: Collect data from nationally relevant stakeholders

a) Engage with national stakeholders to gather data using the data collection form (Table 6) and then solicit inputs for selected year(s) (see Chapter 5).

b) Ensure that data is reported at the action level for all required fields (see Chapter 3.3).

c) Use Table 6 as a reference for examples on completing the data collection table.

Step 2: Verify and consolidate collected data

a) Consolidate collected data from all national providers into a centralized database to allow further analysis and use. In its basic form, this conforms to Table 6, but can vary in its integration in other national systems by country, and will be further developed within the *Manual* (see Chapter 8.2).

b) Assign unique identifiers to each project activity to complete and verify data inputs, e.g., address duplication of entries, consolidation under the same project activities, projects, programmes,

or other nationally relevant categories (if applicable).

c) Conduct data validation and quality assurance checks as per national guidelines and standards set out in Chapter 6.

Step 3: Aggregate data for SDG indicator 17.3.1 reporting to UNCTAD

a) Aggregate nationally reported data for SDG indicator 17.3.1 on SSC, categorized by recipient country and year among other relevant factors.

b) Follow the established data structure for SDG indicator 17.3.1, which includes categories for different types of support: concessional loans, grants, and non-financial contributions.

The existing data structure definition (DSD) for SDG indicator pertains to three elements relevant to SSC, namely:

a. DC_OSSD_GRT (Gross receipts by developing countries of official sustainable development grants [17.3.1]); and

b. DC_OSSD_OFFCL (Gross receipts by developing countries of official concessional sustainable development loans [17.3.1])

c. DC_OSSD_OFFNL (Gross receipts by developing countries of official non-concessional sustainable development loans [17.3.1])

As per the Framework, only financial (group A, Table 1) and monetized non-financial support (group B, Table 2) can be reported to the SDG indicator 17.3.1 in its current form. This is done according to the following table.

Table 7.

Reporting South-South cooperation flows to SDG indicator 17.3.1 in its current form

Series Code	Values of field *#13* of Table 6: *Modality* to be included
DC_OSSD_GRT	A.2.1, A.2.2, A.4, B.1-B.10
DC_OSSD_OFFCL	A.1.1., A.1.2
DC_OSSD_OFFNL	not applicable to SSC (not concessional)

Source: Authors' deliberations based on SDG indicator 17.3.1 metadata and Framework.

Further Steps:

- The SDG indicator 17.3.1 currently supports the reporting of financial and monetized non-financial support. However, ongoing efforts, together with pioneering countries, IAEG-SDGEs, co-custodian of the indicator, are focused on expanding the inclusion of non-monetized non-financial support to fully capture the contributions of Southern Providers.

- Where possible, provide additional disaggregation of SSC statistics by SDGs, activities, recipient countries etc. Other features of disaggregation may also be considered in the future, such as by group of SSC; by type of SSC (bilateral, regional, triangular).

- On a provisional basis, UNCTAD will compile reports, tables, and dashboards that incorporate data collected from all groups A, B and C modalities.

Nationally consolidated data is submitted annually to UNCTAD by the national focal points, using the reporting table in Annex 3. Future updates will align with improvements to data dissemination and the broader information system, as outlined in Section 8.2 below.

8.2 Information system and technology development

As projects multiply in number and complexity, so do the challenges of accurately capturing, registering, validating, analysing, and disseminating data. To streamline these processes and alleviate the burden on national stakeholders, while ensuring flexibility for analysis and dissemination, it is ideal to develop a national information system that integrates all phases seamlessly. Figure 14 outlines considerations for such a system. At this stage, this work in progress is not described in further detail but will be elaborated upon in future versions of the *Manual*.

UNCTAD, with partners, aims to design an information system that could be applied in national settings, where useful, to facilitate data collection, validation, compilation, dissemination and reporting to SDG indicator 17.3.1. Pending such developments, Table 6 provides a table for current use and guidance for national authorities in collecting SSC data at a national level, and Table 7 for SSC reporting to SDG indicator 17.3.1.

Figure 14.
Phases of the information system on SSC

Collection	Validation	Analysis	Dissemination
National Focal Point Data provider 1 Data provider 2 Data provider 3 ...	Cleaning Quality assurance Consolidation Update	Country-level (public/internal) Global/Regional Specific user needs	National SDG indicator 17.3.1 Other international, Regional (e.g., SEGIB)
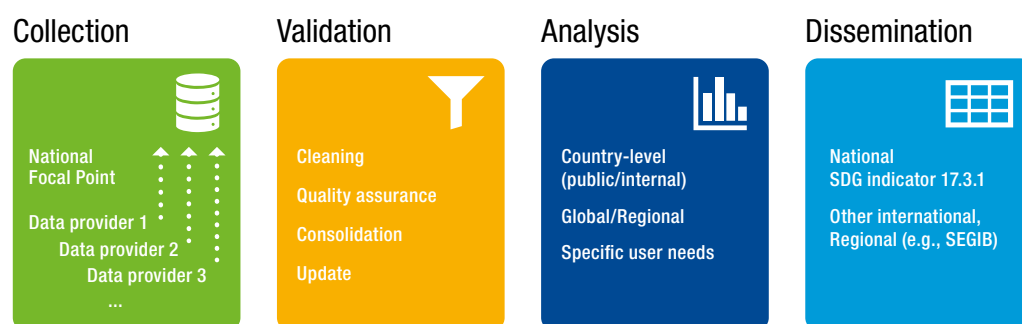
Source: Authors' deliberations

Chapter 9

Glossary
of terms

1. **Loans** – Loans are transfers for which the recipient partner incurs legal debt (and the resulting claim is not intended to be traded). These loans can be concessional or non-concessional.

2. **Concessional loans** – Concessional financial terms typically involve more favourable conditions than market-based loans, such as lower interest rates or extended repayment periods, designed to support the economic development of the recipient. The most commonly used method for measuring concessionality is through the calculation of the "grant element". Loans are considered concessional if they include at least a 35% grant element, calculated using a 5% discount rate, in accordance with the definition of the IMF (2018).

3. **Interest-free loans** – Interest-free loans are loans to a partner without interest charges.

4. **Grants** – Grants are transfers in cash or in kind for which no legal debt is incurred by the recipient.

5. **Program** – A Program can include a portfolio of related projects that aim to achieve broader strategic objectives.

6. **Project** – A project is a temporary undertaking with a specific goal. It involves implementing a set of activities within a defined timeline and budget.

7. **Initiative/action** – An action/initiative refers to a specific activity implemented to accomplish a particular goal or objective, as a standalone effort"

8. **Regular Contributions** – Contributions to international development and humanitarian organizations. Only the value for development activities for developing economies should be reported. Each institution must report annually the percentage of direct expenditures on projects for developing economies, which reporting countries can then apply to their total contributions to those institutions. This section excludes regular contributions for

operations in international organizations that are not focused on development.

9. **Voluntary Contributions** – Occasional voluntary contributions for development projects of development banks, development funds and multilateral development organizations, excluding self-benefit activities.

10. **Capital paid-in to IFI and Regional/Multilateral Funds** – Report, in the year of payment, of the capital paid to IFI and Regional/Multilateral Funds where only developing economies are eligible for finance, and the final destination may be associated with the SDG.

11. **Direct cash transfers under social development public programs in partner countries** – Direct cash transfers expenditure benefiting individuals, in the context of public programs of sustainable development in partner countries (with the consent and support of the partner country).

12. **Expenditures in the provider country not included elsewhere** – Includes domestic cooperation expenses that can be reported to support global and regional sustainable development challenges for the benefit of developing economies, for which it is not possible to identify a specific partner country.

13. **South-South Grants and other research subsidies (and capital investment in joint research projects) (* Indicator 17.6)** – Research grants awarded to foreign researchers from countries of the global South and capital investment in joint research projects for sustainable development, supported by bilateral, triangular or multilateral agreements.

14. **Scholarships** – Includes financial awards for individual students from countries of the global South, contributions to trainees and indirect ("imputed") costs of tuition in provider partner countries to nationals of south countries.

15. **Humanitarian assistance (between developing countries)** – Humanitarian cooperation conducted by the provider partner country or through multilateral channels for the benefit of Southern countries. Includes Contributions, donations of food, medicine, medical supplies and other needed materials in case of humanitarian distress.

16. **Type: donations of food, medicine, medical supplies and or other needed materials in case of humanitarian distress** – Covers expenses with donations of food, medicine, medical supplies and or other needed materials in case of humanitarian distress.

17. **Type: assistance to refugees** – Covers expenses on the temporary sustenance of refugees and protected persons in refugee-like situations in the provider country as well as financial, material or technical support to refugees in other host countries. Also includes support to refugees returning voluntarily to their countries of origin.

18. **Type: dispatch of humanitarian missions: health professionals; first-aid workers; teachers** – Covers operational expenses, salaries and all non-salary costs of experts (including those of public officials of the reporting country) such as flights, per-diem, accommodation and other transportation costs.

19. **Training** – Includes the provision of training using internationally or locally recruited experts. All non-salary costs of experts (including those of public officials of the reporting country) such as flights, per-diem, accommodation, internal transportation within the recipient country and training, are also included. This category also covers training as well as various capacity building activities such as conferences, seminars, workshops, exchange visits.

20. **Participation in Peace Keeping Operations** – Spends related to UN peacekeeping operations and other peacekeeping operations mandated or authorised by a United Nations Security Council resolution. Operations should support the creation of conditions for lasting peace, and not have an explicitly belligerent role and approach. Moreover, they should comply with the three basic principles of UN peacekeeping operations: consent of the parties[14]; impartiality[15]; and non-use of force except in self-defence and defence of the mandate[16].

21. **Technical cooperation** – Projects with a set of interrelated activities to be carried out in order to achieve a specific sustainable development objective, within a previously established period of time, under an official legal framework between southern countries.

22. **Experts – technical hours / opportunity costs** – Expenses related to hiring specialists, technical hours of government officials and opportunity costs, directly associated with the

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[14] Consent of the parties: United Nations peacekeeping operations are deployed with the consent of the main parties to the conflict. This requires a commitment by the parties to a political process and their acceptance of a peacekeeping operation mandated to support that process.

[15] Impartiality: United Nations peacekeeping operations must implement their mandate without favor or prejudice to any party. Impartiality is crucial to maintaining the consent and co-operation of the main parties. Impartiality may be seen as playing a fundamental function in drawing the limits to the use of force and its purpose. Impartiality does not prohibit peacekeepers from using military force, but links and limits the use of force to a political process and the search for a political solution. The logic differs for counterterrorism, which requires the identification of an enemy.

[16] Non-use of force except in self-defense and defense of the mandate: A United Nations peacekeeping operation only uses force as a measure of last resort, when other methods of persuasion have been exhausted, and an operation must always exercise restraint when doing so. The ultimate aim of the use of force is to influence and deter spoilers working against the peace process or seeking to harm civilians; and not to seek their military defeat.

technical cooperation activity between the partner countries.

23. **Per Diems, daily allowances, and airfares** – Expenses related to Expenses related to per diems, daily allowances, and airfares, directly associated with the technical cooperation activity between the partner countries.

24. **Services; materials; equipment; supplies** – Expenses for the acquisition of services, materials, equipment and supplies, necessary to carry out the technical cooperation activity between the partner countries.

25. **Volunteers** – Non-salary costs of experts such as flights, per-diem, accommodation and other transportation costs.

26. **Joint research** – Disbursements with joint research projects between two or more developing countries, covering the working time of scientists/specialists from the reporting country, opportunity costs and expenses with services, materials, equipment and supplies mobilized to develop them. This consists of scientific-related infrastructure (labs, equipment, supplies) and research personnel, including working hours and opportunity costs.

27. **Administrative/Operational/ Management/Coordination** – In-kind expenses (human and physical inputs) with administrative, operational, coordination activities directly associated with SSC, but not to a specific bilateral activity. Includes human and physical inputs associated with technical cooperation projects, scholarships, volunteer's management, training, humanitarian assistance, and any other South-South cooperation modalities.

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Annexes

Annex 1:
Agency mapping

| | | Institution | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | | Statistics | | Specialized agency | | | Ministry | | | | | Other | | |
	Tasks	NSO	Central Bank	Development Cooperation Agency	Government Research and Policy Analysis	Other specialized agency	Ministry of Planning and Economy	Ministry of Finance	Ministry of Development	Ministry of Foreing Affairs	Ministry of …	Academia	NGO	Other: …
Data	Collect data													
Data	Validate data													
Data	Coordinate and consolidate data													
Analysis	Conduct analysis													
Analysis	Liaise with international partners													
Analysis	Policy recommendation													
Report	Reporting (international)													
Report	Reporting/disseminaiton (national)													
Report	Reporting (internal)													
	Roles													
	Official Reporting Entity													
	Technical/Logistical Support													
	Training and Development													
	Other: …													
	SSC identification													
	Sectors													
	SDGs													
	Cooperation modality													

Note: for SSC identification, refer to chapter 3.4 for further guidance.

This table/scheme can support identification of various national stakeholders relevant for SSC by identifying, for each of the proposed institution or entity, whether they can contribute to specific tasks outlined, identify which role(s) the institution can assume within the national ecosystem of entities, as well as how specific SSC identification areas are addressed (e.g., which SDGs it addresses). While fields can be filled visually, e.g., by colouring specific cell, they can also contain further information, such as the relevant contact information, specific notes on limitations or focus of particular cell for the institution at hand. The on-line version of the table is available at downloadable section of the document at UNCTAD's website at: http://stats.unctad.org/measuringSSC. The on-line version of the table is available at downloadable section of the document at UNCTAD's website at: http://stats.unctad.org/measuringSSC.

Annex 2:
Reporting data on South-South cooperation: data collection table

As per Figure 7, reporting SSC to SDG indicator 17.3.1 starts with data collection table to collect all relevant nationally available data on SSC. As a tool, an Excel table has been drafted to support national authorities in using it to collect such data.

The data collection table includes the following sections:

- Introduction: depicts the 18 main fields of the data collection process and their brief descriptions, as in Table 6.

- Validation: For each of the field to be inserted, validation elements, when applicable, are defined to guide proper filling in of the data.

- Lists: Lists defining allowed values to be included in the data collection (such as the M49 codes for country selection, ISIC codes, SSC Framework modalities etc.).

- Data Collection: Spreadsheet for data entry following the structure and validation rules.

The data collection table is an external annex, provided at this stage as an Excel tool. The data reporting table for SDG indicator 17.3.1 is an external annex, provided at this stage as an Excel tool. In its current form, it is available at downloadable section of the document at UNCTAD's website at: http://stats.unctad.org/measuringSSC.

The following table provides additional information on the data collection table (Table 6) with a specific focus on the validation of the fields and values. For each of the field, next to the description, a set of validation rules, including whether the field is a mandatory field for data providers to fill in, are presented. This table is also part of the data collection table as per above-mentioned external on-line annex.

Following the table is an overall flowchart, outlining filling in the data collection table.

Reporting Item	Description	Format	Input mask	List	Validation	Mandatory Field
Section I - Identification data	Fields for basic identification of the activity being reported					
0 - Database ID	Unique ID of the entry in the database.	String	Autonumber	/	/	
1 - Reporting year	Calendar year for which data is reported.	Integer	YYYY	/	value after 1950; value not more than now()	Yes
2 - Provider partner	Unique code identifying the reporting country partner.	String	AAA	M49	Bound to list	Yes
3 - Provider agency	Unique name or code identifying the agency within the provider partner that has budget responsibility and controls the activity for its own account.	String	* (125 characters)	National list	/	No
4 - Provider ID number of the project reported	Unique code for identifying the project reported in the provider's internal databases.	String	*	/	No duplication	Yes
4.1 - Provider ID number of the action reported	Unique code for identifying the action reported in the provider's internal databases (if applicable).	String	*	/	No duplication	No
Section II - Basic data	Fields for basic identification of the activity being reported					
5 - Cooperation Framework	Multiple codes identifying specific frameworks of collaboration such as bilateral, trilateral, or multilateral co-operation.	String	***C	Cooperation Framework	Bound to list	Yes
6 - Recipient Partner/Organization	Unique code identifying the recipient partner country or institution	String	AAA	M49 + List of organiza-tions	Bound to list	Yes
6.1-Number of additional partners	The count of additional partners (next to reporter/provider and partner/recipient) in case of multilateral cooperation	Numeric	*	/	if 10 is for more than bilateral. If more than 3 and cooperation framwork is multilateral	If condition
6.2 - Additional Cooperation Partner	Unique code identifying the TrC partner country or institution	String	AAA	M49 + List of organiza-tions	"Bound to list. Non-empty if cooperation framework (#10) is trilateral and number of partners (#6_1) is greater than 1"	If condition
7 - Title	Free text indicating the official title of the action reported.	String	* (250 characters)	/	/	Yes
8 - Description	Free text describing the activity, including its objectives, planned outputs and outcomes, time frame, and budget (limit of 500 characters).	String	* (500 characters)	/	/	No
9 - External link	Digital Object Identifier (DOI) or link to a web page (of the provider, recipient, or other partner) containing detailed information on the activity.	String	* (250 characters)	/	/	No
10 - Main SDG Goal	Codes identifying the goal in the UN list of SDG Goals (e.g. 2).	String	*	SDGs	Bound to list, select only 1	Yes
10.1 - Additional SDG Goals	Multiple codes identifying the target(s) in the UN list of SDG Goals (e.g. 2, 5, 13).	Multivalue	**; **	SDGs	Bound to list and not equal to main SDG	If condition

Reporting Item	Description	Format	Input mask	List	Validation	Mandatory Field
11 - Main SDG Target	Codes identifying the main target in the UN list of SDG targets (e.g. 2.1).	String	**.**	SDG targets	Bound to list; linked to field 11	Yes
11.1 - Additional SDG Targets	Multiple codes identifying the target(s) in the UN list of SDG targets (e.g. 2.1, 5, 13.3).	Multivalue	**.**; **.**	SDG targets	Bound to list; linked to fields 11 and 11_1 and not equal to main SDG	If condition
12 - Sector	Code identifying the main sector that the resource transfer is intended to foster (ISIC Codes)	String	**.**	ISIC	Bound to list	Yes
12.1 - Additional Sector(s)	Multiple codes identifying the sector(s) that the resource transfer is intended to foster (ISIC Codes)	Multivalue	**.**; **.**	ISIC	Bound to list	No
13 - Modality	Unique code specifying the South-South modality of co-operation used to implement the activity.	String	*.*	SSCFramework	Bound to list	Yes
14 - Observation	Additional Information and keywords to identify activities of specific policy interest such as #COVID-19 (limit of 500 characters).	String	* (500 characters)	/	/	No
Section III - Financial data						
15 - Currency	ISO code for the currency in which the transaction has been undertaken. Data reported in currencies other than USD to be converted to USD using IMF annual average exchange rates.	Currency	CCC	Currency	Bound to list	If condition
16 - Amount Disbursed	Amount disbursed (expenditure) by the provider partner during the reporting year.	Numeric	*	/	">0; if #13 is C.*.*, then this should be empty. non-empty if currency = value and modality is A or B"	If condition
Section IV - Non-financial Data						
17.1 - Non-financial Delivery_unit	Unit group as one of the following: hour, individual, unit, sq.metres or tonnes.	String	*.*	NonFinancialUnits	"Bound to list Non-empty if modality (#13) is C"	If condition
17.2 - Non-financial Delivery_quantity	Amount of inputs provided by the reporting partner and/or outputs (deliverables) attributable to the beneficiary partner during the reporting year	Numeric	*	/	">0; Non-empty if modality (#13) is C"	If condition
17.2 #ByGender_female	Non-financial Delivery_quantity #ByGender: number of females	Numeric	*	/	Non-empty if unit (#17.1) is from the list: 2.1, 2.2, 2.3, 2.4, 2.5, 2.6 or 3.1	If condition
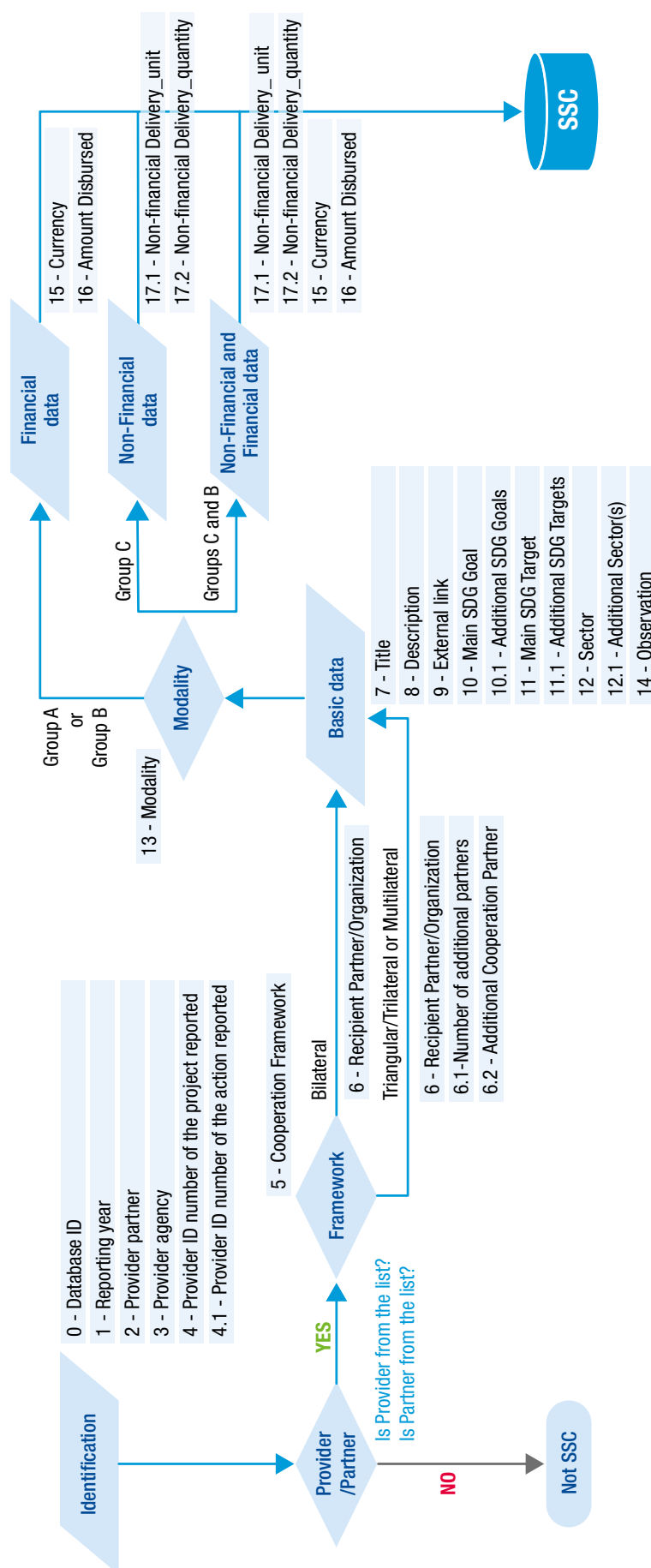
Annex 3:
Reporting data on South-South cooperation: reporting table for SDG indicator 17.3.1

The relevant SDG indicator 17.3.1 series are the following two:

- DC_OSSD_GRT – Gross receipts by developing countries of official sustainable development grants [17.3.1];

- DC_OSSD_OFFCL – Gross receipts by developing countries of official concessional sustainable development loans [17.3.1].

Table 8
South-South cooperation modalities and SDG indicator 17.3.1 series

SSC Framework code	SSC Framework label	SDG indicator 17.3.1 series to be used
A.1.1	Concessional loans (grant element) in credit operations between developing countries as per IMF definition	DC_OSSD_OFFCL
A.1.2	Interest-free loans	DC_OSSD_OFFCL
A.2.1	Grants: developmental purposes	DC_OSSD_GRT
A.2.2	Grants: humanitarian purposes	DC_OSSD_GRT
A.4.0	Direct cash transfers under social development public programmes in partner countries (approved by the partner country)	DC_OSSD_GRT
B.1.0	Infrastructure projects	DC_OSSD_GRT
B.2.0	Goods and materials	DC_OSSD_GRT
B.3.0	Scholarships	DC_OSSD_GRT
B.4.1	Humanitarian assistance : Donations of food, medicine, medical supplies and or other materials	DC_OSSD_GRT
B.4.2	Humanitarian assistance : Assistance to refugees	DC_OSSD_GRT
B.4.3	Humanitarian assistance : Dispatch of humanitarian missions: health professionals; first-aid workers; teachers	DC_OSSD_GRT
B.5.0	Training (Specialised courses)	DC_OSSD_GRT
B.6.0	Participation in Peace Keeping Operations	DC_OSSD_GRT
B.7.1	Technical cooperation: Experts/specialists deployed / opportunity costs	DC_OSSD_GRT
B.7.2	Technical cooperation: Per Diems, daily allowances, and airfares	DC_OSSD_GRT
B.7.3	Technical cooperation: Services; materials; equipment; supplies	DC_OSSD_GRT
B.8.0	Volunteers	DC_OSSD_GRT
B.9.1	Joint research: Scientific-related infrastructure (labs, equipment, supplies)	DC_OSSD_GRT
B.9.2	Joint research: Research personnel - working hours / opportunity costs	DC_OSSD_GRT
B.10	Administrative/Operational/Management/Coordination associated with the provision of SSC	DC_OSSD_GRT

All other SSC modalities are in the current version of SDG indicator 17.3.1 not assigned for reporting.

The following fields from data collection table (Annex 2) are considered for the data reporting on SSC to SDG indicator 17.3.1:

Reporting Item	Field to be used for SDG indicator 17.3.1	Note
1 - Reporting year	Yes	
2 - Provider partner	Yes	
6 - Recipient Partner/Organization	Yes	
10 - Main SDG Goal	Optional	
12 - Sector	Optional	
13 - Modality	Yes	Used to assign to SDG indicator 17.3.1 series
15 - Currency	Yes	Convert to USD
16 - Amount Disbursed (in thousands)	Yes	Aggregate value

The data reporting table for SDG indicator 17.3.1 is an external annex, provided at this stage as an Excel tool. In its current form, it is available at downloadable section of the document at UNCTAD's website at: https://unctad.org/publication/manual-framework-measure-south-south-cooperation-technical-and-procedural-aspects-pilot.

The data reporting table for SDG indicator 17.3.1 is an external annex, provided at this stage as an Excel tool. In its current form, it is available at downloadable section of the document at UNCTAD's website at: https://unctad.org/publication/manual-framework-measure-south-south-cooperation-technical-and-procedural-aspects-pilot.