Global Perspectives on Triangular Co-operation 2025

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Foreword

This report is the second joint publication of the OECD and the Islamic Development Bank (IsDB) that examines global trends in triangular co-operation. Triangular co-operation is an important modality for delivering the United Nations 2030 Agenda, and the Seville Commitment reaffirms that it is established as means of implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals. It fosters horizontal sharing of expertise, knowledge and resources contributed by all partners to deliver on a common objective. During this time of rapid transformation of the development co-operation ecosystem, the modality is attracting increased attention because of its development results and focus on partnership formation.

The OECD has been providing its members and the broader international community with regular analysis, data and evidence, dialogue, policy support, and communication on the effective use of triangular co-operation.

Since its establishment in 1975, the IsDB has championed South-South and triangular co-operation among its member countries as one of its key founding missions. By the close of 2024, its pioneering, homegrown Reverse Linkage mechanism has empowered more than 33 of its member countries to exchange knowledge, transfer expertise and share practical development solutions, thereby fostering autonomous and sustainable development.

This report is organised in four chapters. Chapter 1 explores the role of triangular co-operation in supporting sustainable development now and in the future. Chapter 2 identifies key global trends in the use of triangular co-operation using the latest available data at the global and regional levels and identifies some caveats to existing reporting practices. Chapter 3 focuses on triangular co-operation in the Asia-Pacific region. Chapter 4 provides a thematic focus on how the private sector is involved in triangular partnerships.

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The participants and speakers at the 8th International Meeting on Triangular Co-operation in Lisbon in 2024, as well as participants in two foresight workshops held in 2025, shared interesting insights and new ideas for the future of triangular co-operation, and their contributions are gratefully acknowledged.

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Editorial

Development co-operation is at a crossroads. Multiple crises, geopolitical shifts, tighter budgets and rising needs are challenging us to reimagine the way partnerships are formed. We need models that are more inclusive, resilient and fit for today's realities. Triangular co-operation is one such partnership model. It challenges conventional donor-recipient and aid dynamics, builds trust across divides, and leverages and shares financing, knowledge and innovation from diverse partners. It can create powerful platforms for co-creating solutions to global challenges.

The OECD is dedicated to delivering better policies for better lives. Working in partnership with governments, policymakers and citizens, it fosters the co-creation of evidence-based international standards and policy solutions for a range of challenges. Its Development Assistance Committee (DAC) is undertaking an ambitious review of its role in the changing development co-operation landscape. In that context, and in implementing the Seville Commitment, triangular co-operation can play a catalytic and inspirational role in reshaping the dynamics of collaboration.

The Islamic Development Bank (IsDB), a multilateral development bank with a membership comprised exclusively of the Global South, has supported the socioeconomic development of its 57 member countries for over 50 years, including by facilitating the cross-transfer among them of innovative solutions to tackle their development challenges. Guided by the principles of South-South and triangular co-operation, its homegrown Reverse Linkage mechanism enables IsDB member countries to exchange knowledge, expertise, technology and resources to build up capacities and co-create solutions to promote their autonomous development.

Following the 2023 edition of the *Global Perspectives on Triangular Co-operation* Report and based on our continuing strong partnership, the OECD and IsDB decided to join forces again on this second edition to respond to the increasing global interest in triangular co-operation. Even as this report was being developed between September 2024 and August 2025, many of the trends and signals of change identified in our foresight scenarios were fast becoming a reality. The key messages of the foresight exercise were also clear: Be ready to change, be flexible, embrace new partnerships and transform the way we have been operating. This report benefits from the inclusion of fresh and dynamic perspectives of private sector partners, bringing in technical expertise and scalable solutions and serving as bridge-builders that expand markets, foster long-term partnerships and accelerate shared development outcomes.

Our hope is that this publication serves not only as a reference for the most recent analysis, trends, thematic discussions and data about the modality but also stimulates debate, inspires a rethinking development co-operation and systemic change and ensures investment in learning about and scaling up triangular co-operation and inclusive partnerships for a more sustainable world.

May Ali Babiker

María del Pilar Garrido Gonzalo,

Director, OECD Development Co-operation Directorate

May Ali Babiker,

Director, Cooperation and Capacity Development Department, Islamic Development Bank

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Abbreviations and acronyms

ADB	Asian Development Bank
AECID	Spanish Agency for International Development Cooperation
AI	Artificial intelligence
AIIB	Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank
APEC	Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation
ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
BAPA	Buenos Aires Plan of Action
BIMSTEC	Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation
BMZ	German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development
BRI	Belt and Road Initiative
CABEI	Central American Bank for Economic Integration
CRS	Creditor Reporting System
DAC	Development Assistance Committee
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization
FfD4	Fourth International Conference on Financing for Development
GIZ	Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit
GPEDC	Global Partnership for Effective Development Co-operation
GPI	Global Partnership Initiative
IATI	International Aid Transparency Initiative
IFAD	International Fund for Agricultural Development
IndoAID	Indonesian Agency for International Development
ILO	International Labour Organization
IsDB	Islamic Development Bank
ITFC	International Islamic Trade Finance Corporation
JICA	Japan International Cooperation Agency
KazAID	Kazakhstan Agency of International Development
KOICA	Korea International Cooperation Agency

LAC	Latin America and the Caribbean
LDC	Least developed country
MENA	Middle East and North Africa
MDB	Multilateral development bank
MDG	Millennium Development Goal
ODA	Official development assistance
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
OIC	Organisation of Islamic Cooperation
PIFCSS	Ibero-American Program for the Strengthening of South-South Cooperation
PPP	Public-private partnership
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
SEGIB	Ibero-American General Secretariat
SICA	Central American Integration System
SIDICSS	Ibero-American Data System on South-South and Triangular Cooperation
SIDS	Small island developing states
TİKA	Turkish Cooperation and Coordination Agency
TOSSD	Total Official Support for Sustainable Development
TrC	Triangular co-operation
UN CEB	United Nations Systems Chief Executives Board for Coordination
UNCTAD	United Nations Conference on Trade and Development
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNESCAP	United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific
UNOSSC	United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation
WHO	World Health Organization
USD	United States dollar

Executive summary

The global development co-operation landscape is undergoing a period of profound and accelerating transformation. Polycrisis, budget cuts, widening inequalities and other challenges demand that more be done but with fewer resources. Different reform processes aim to reshape development co-operation following calls in the Seville Commitment and the Pact for the Future for a new era of partnerships.

In a rapidly shifting development co-operation landscape, triangular co-operation can chart the path to a new partnership paradigm

Thinking strategically about the future and critically assessing past lessons from the triangular co-operation community can inform the current reform processes and inspire change towards more horizontal, mutually beneficial ("win-win-win") partnerships where everyone contributes, everyone has a stake and everyone learns. Prioritising partnership results over institutional visibility or control; accounting for contributions of all partners, not just the provider(s) of financing; and promoting win-win-win models of triangular co-operation are elements of this new era of partnerships. It is also crucial to stay abreast of trends and signals of change to proactively prepare for different future scenarios. Through a foresight journey, this report identifies good bets drawn from four fictional but plausible scenarios: 1) rise of regions, 2) nations first, 3) corporate dominion, and 4) sustainability leads.

Investing in flexible and adaptive co-operation structures, experimenting with new governance models, and creating agile, network-based partnerships can contribute to building resilient systems that adapt faster to a changing ecosystem. Alternative financing mechanisms also are needed including impact, social or green bonds, Islamic finance, and blended finance. Co-creating instruments helps test horizontality and the partnership readiness. Artificial intelligence (AI) features in all four of the scenarios, highlighting the potential for smart investments in digital tools, provided the risks and indirect effects are carefully considered. Moreover, building capacities for interregional triangular co-operation today will facilitate partnerships tomorrow.

Triangular co-operation can mobilise and value resources from all partners

The growing prominence of triangular co-operation in global development is increasingly reflected in data frameworks and reporting. While database coverage and methodologies have improved, persistent challenges remain in terms of the regularity, accuracy and completeness of data. Total Official Support for Sustainable Development (TOSSD) offers the most comprehensive dataset on triangular co-operation, yet reporting is still partial and inconsistent. Regional efforts have demonstrated the value of coherent and consistent data collection. National innovations show the potential of tailored approaches to improve data quality, though comparability also remains a challenge.

Triangular co-operation leverages more than just financial resources; it can also leverage resources such as sector-specific expertise, in-kind contributions, and access to new markets and networks, which are often not monetised or reported in official statistics. To foster horizontality, trust, mutuality and a wider understanding of development co-operation beyond conventional financial flows, in-kind and financial contributions from partner countries in triangular co-operation must be officially recognised. However, without improvements at the national level and without inclusive reporting of all partners involved, key aspects of this modality will continue to be overlooked. AI tools offer potential solutions to identify unreported or mislabelled projects and improve data consistency. The aspiration for interoperable, open data platforms presents an opportunity to strengthen the evidence base. To fully understand and enhance triangular co-operation, data collection must go beyond inputs to include insights on partnership formation, governance, resource integration, best practices and peer-learning outcomes.

The great diversity of the Asia-Pacific region is reflected in its triangular co-operation

Triangular co-operation in the Asia-Pacific region has a long history, based on the spirit of solidarity displayed at the 1955 Bandung Conference and evident in the array of Southern-led funds and forums that emerged in the Asian century and anchor triangular co-operation projects today. Asia-Pacific is home to a complex, highly dynamic ecosystem of development actors, paths, policies and partnerships based on the region's diverse experiences, cultures, traditions and innovations.

This report looks closely at the diverse approaches to triangular partnerships in Asia-Pacific as well as the various motivations for turning to the modality. Some triangular co-operation initiatives capitalise on regional integration efforts and use these as platforms to strengthen co-operation; others aim to create bridges connecting Asia with other regions. Business-driven partnerships have emerged alongside locally led approaches that draw on indigenous knowledge and innovations developed by community groups and civil society. Triangular co-operation in the region frequently also has an economic and business orientation, and there is increasingly a focus on sharing digital and technological innovations and successful homegrown initiatives. This diversity is mirrored in different development narratives, priorities and mechanisms across the subregions, as shown by examples of projects spanning Central Asia to the Pacific.

Reimagining traditional co-operation frameworks can unlock the opportunities offered by triangular partnerships with the private sector

The private sector has become an increasingly attractive partner in triangular co-operation in recent years – as a technology provider; as a critical driver of innovation, efficiency and sustainability; and as funder and co-designer of solutions that align commercial objectives with development goals. Development co-operation actors and the private sector, however, are guided by different principles and motivations. Triangular partnerships with the private sector can help bridge this apparent divide: They flourish when both actors invest in mutual learning and when the relationships are transformational and based on mutual respect, sustained dialogue and a shared vision of a better future. This report identifies six models for triangular partnerships with the private sector: 1) knowledge sharing and capacity building; 2) supporting innovations, technology transfer and localisation; 3) market access and expansion; 4) public-private partnerships; 5) industry ecosystem and regulatory frameworks; and 6) local private sector development.

Triangular co-operation is proving its value as a catalyst for a new era of partnerships. The private sector is increasingly at the table, bringing technology, finance and solutions that can scale impact and open new opportunities. Across Asia-Pacific, it builds on a rich history of solidarity and innovation, connecting regions, communities, and diverse actors. In today's rapidly changing development co-operation landscape, investing in triangular partnerships by all partners is essential to shaping a more inclusive, resilient and future-ready global architecture.

1 The future of triangular co-operation

This chapter explores the future of triangular co-operation within the rapidly evolving geopolitical context. Using foresight methodologies, it suggests how development co-operation actors and partners can best prepare for these potential futures and proposes strategies to adapt to four scenarios so that triangular co-operation can continue to contribute effectively to achieving sustainable development.

1.1. How to think about the future of triangular co-operation

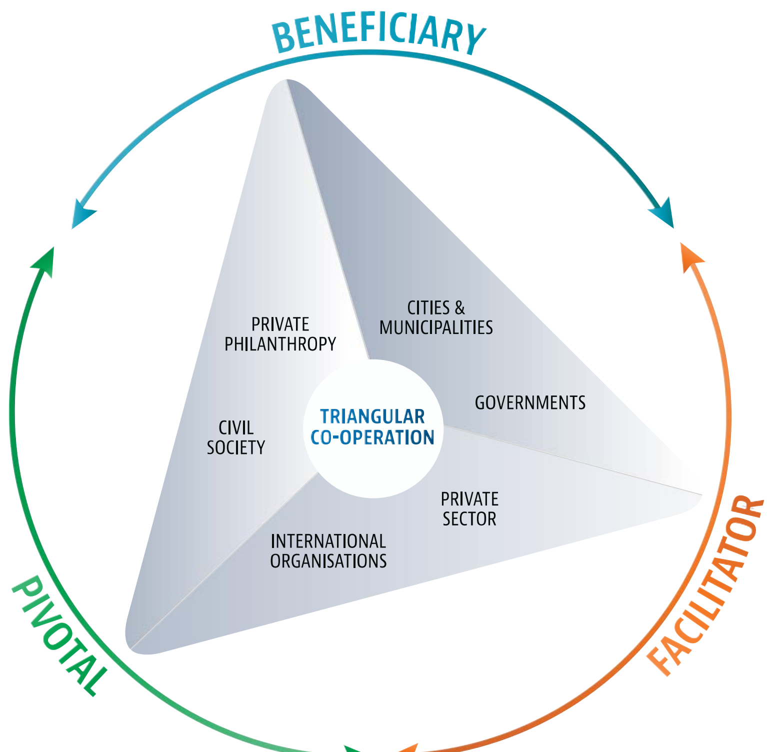
Triangular co-operation is based on the principle that each country has something to learn, and each has something to offer and share. While there is no globally shared and agreed definition of triangular or trilateral co-operation,[1] a common understanding has evolved over time. Initially it was approached as supporting South-South co-operation by involving a Northern partner or international organisation. A broader understanding has since emerged that aligns with the move towards more collaborative and circular ways of working while respecting existing commitments and responsibilities. The mix of actors involved in triangular partnerships may take a variety of forms. In any case, triangular co-operation is understood as co-operation to address a development challenge by involving three or more partners that take on three different roles and encouraging the flow of knowledge between and among them.

The Global Partnership Initiative (GPI) on Effective Triangular Co-operation (2019[1]) describes triangular co-operation as a collaborative model of co-operation that involves three dynamic roles:

- beneficiary – requesting support to tackle a specific development challenge
- pivotal – sharing relevant domestic experience in addressing the challenge as well as financial resources, knowledge and expertise
- facilitator – connecting and supporting the partners financially and with technical expertise.

As illustrated in Figure 1.1, potential partners can include governments at national and subnational level as well as international and regional organisations, international financial institutions, development banks, civil society organisations, private philanthropy, the private sector, and academia. All three partners often take up the roles at the same time or change their roles throughout the lifespan of a triangular co-operation project, enabling genuinely horizontal partnerships.

Figure 1.1. Understanding triangular co-operation



Source: OECD (2022[2]), *Triangular Co-operation with Africa*, https://triangular-cooperation.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/10/OECD_Triangular-co-operation-with-Africa.pdf.

Triangular co-operation cannot be seen in isolation. It is embedded in the broader context of geopolitical changes, global challenges and development co-operation. When thinking about the future of triangular co-operation, it is important to consider how the modality has evolved over time and in which geopolitical context. This evolution can be divided into roughly four phases: first, starting with the 1955 Bandung Conference, where newly independent African and Asian states gathered to discuss South-South co-operation based on solidarity and post-colonial development; second, expanding triangular co-operation after the end of the Cold War; third, consolidating triangular co-operation with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development; and fourth, continuing into the 2020s with Brazil's G20 Presidency featuring triangular co-operation as one of the priorities of the G20 Development Working Group and with the Fourth International Conference on Financing for Development (FfD4) in 2025. Table 1.1 elaborates the four phases in greater detail.

Table 1.1. Triangular co-operation emerging in different political contexts

Phase and rough time period	Characteristics of triangular co-operation	Political context
First triangular co-operation projects (1970s-1980s)	After the Bandung Conference (1955), the first projects were launched in the 1950s and 1960s and triangular co-operation grew in visibility and connected with technical and South-South co-operation during the Cold War and post-colonial period.	Buenos Aires Plan of Action (BAPA), Cold War, Non-Aligned Movement
Expanding triangular co-operation (1990s-2010)	With the rise of the Global South, triangular co-operation grew in prominence into the first decades of the 2000s with the Monterrey Consensus calling for more triangular partnerships and with economic liberalisation, globalisation and the start of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) driving its growth. Emphasis was often on training and expert exchanges.	End of Cold War; expanding globalisation and liberalisation; MDGs; HIPC debt relief; G8 Gleneagles
Consolidating and institutionalising triangular co-operation (since 2010s)	Triangular co-operation became more structured and strategic, with the 2019 BAPA+40 Conference highlighting it as a distinct modality. Partners search for dialogue opportunities, starting with the Global Partnership for Effective Development Co-operation (GPEDC); follow-up to BAPA+40 in the UN context (UNOSSC, UNDP, UNDESA); and regular international meetings organised in Lisbon by Portugal and the OECD. There was a shift from small initiatives to projects and some umbrella programmes for triangular co-operation and an increase in policy frameworks and strategies such as the Islamic Development Bank's Reverse Linkage mechanism.	Global power shifts; 2030 Agenda and Sustainable Development Goals; global financial crisis; BAPA+40
Global processes include triangular co-operation (2020s)	By the 2020s, triangular co-operation increasingly appeared in global processes such as the G20 Presidencies of Indonesia, India and Brazil and in discussions at the UN, including in the process of FfD4, that emphasise the need for partnerships and Southern-led solutions amid geopolitical tensions. The COVID-19 pandemic response was proof of concept in that deep, trusting relationships contributed to tackling joint challenges.	Growing geopolitical tensions and conflicts; global challenges; rise of rhetoric of national interest; official development assistance cuts; Southern-led approaches; rise of AI G20 meetings

Note: HIPC = highly indebted poor countries. G8 = Group of Eight. UNOSSC = United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation. UNDP = United Nations Development Programme. UNDESA = United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs. G20 = Group of Twenty. BAPA+40 = the Second United Nations High-level Conference on South-South Cooperation.
Source: Authors' own compilation; Islamic Development Bank (2019[3]), https://www.isdb.org/sites/default/files/media/documents/2019-03/RL%20Policy.pdf.

In today's global context, any country can share its experiences through triangular co-operation regardless of the region it is in or its income level. Circularity of learning – meaning that all partners learn and that this learning is absorbed by all institutions involved – cannot be easily planned for in project documents. Therefore, if triangular co-operation is to achieve its potential to foster mutual learning and horizontal partnerships, actors will need to change their mindset to become better listeners and sharers, to foster innovation, and to leverage local knowledge and expertise.

1.2. Anticipating the future through a foresight lens

The global development co-operation landscape is undergoing a period of profound and accelerating transformation, driven by shifting geopolitical dynamics, evolving financing ecosystems and mounting systemic pressures. The first edition of this report published in 2023 introduced foresight methodologies as a tool to explore potential opportunities and challenges for triangular co-operation in four very different future scenarios: a new sustainable world, a fragmented world, a conflicted world and an unsustainable growth world (OECD/IsDB, 2023[4]). Several of the signals and trends anticipated across the four scenarios have not only materialised but intensified, pointing to a deepening of systemic shifts. These include growing geopolitical fragmentation; the weakening of multilateral norms; the rise of regional blocs as dominant actors; the accelerating pace and impact of climate-related risks, vulnerabilities and impacts; and a marked shift in development co-operation towards more nationally driven agendas. Triangular co-operation seems to be gaining increased political traction as a strategic modality to bridge diverse actors, facilitate technical exchange and reinforce collaborative approaches to development.

Foresight methodologies offer a structured and analytical approach to exploring a range of logical and plausible futures (Box 1.1). Recognising this, the OECD launched a dedicated foresight process to strategically explore and harness the future potential of triangular co-operation, building on previous work for the first edition of this report. This process was initiated at the 8th International Meeting on Triangular Co-operation in Lisbon (7-8 October 2024) and advanced through a series of virtual foresight workshops held in February and March 2025.[2]

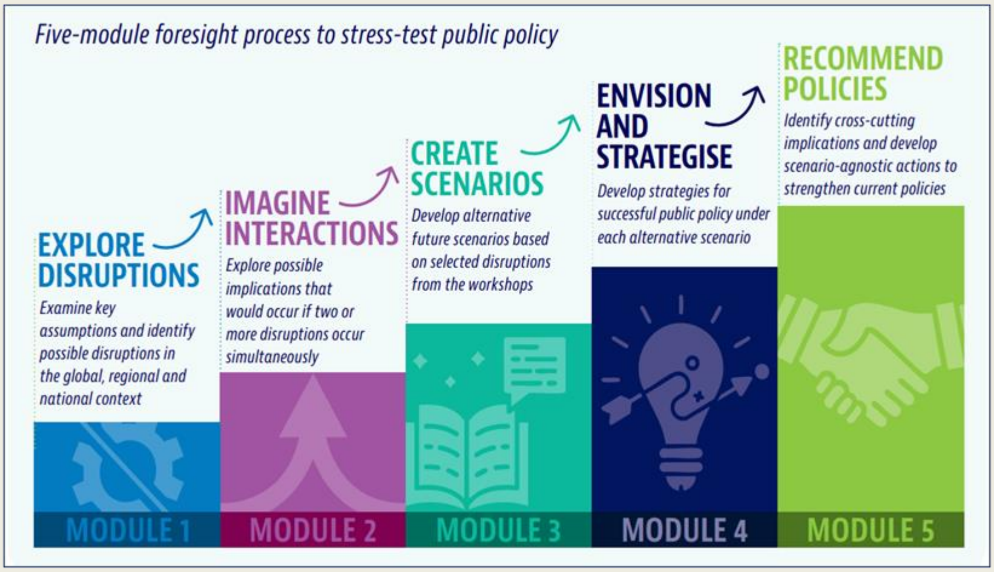
Box 1.1. Why and how to use foresight tools to think about the future of triangular co-operation

By systematically integrating critical uncertainties, foresight methods support more robust decision making and strategic planning under conditions of complexity and change. Through the early identification of emerging trends, potential disruptions and transformative drivers of change, foresight enables decision makers to anticipate and prepare for future challenges and opportunities before these fully materialise. Traditional planning approaches typically depend on linear extrapolations of historical trends, assuming continuity and stability over time. In contrast, foresight methodologies explicitly acknowledge and incorporate uncertainty and complexity by systematically exploring multiple, divergent, yet internally consistent and logically plausible future pathways. This allows for the structured integration of uncertainty into strategic analysis, enhancing the robustness and adaptability of policy and planning processes (OECD, 2025[5]).

The OECD Strategic Foresight Unit’s methodology offers five modules (Figure 1.2) for a structured exploration of the future:

- **Identify assumptions** about the future of triangular co-operation and critically examine how these might be challenged by emerging disruptions.
- **Explore possible implications of different disruptions** to create scenarios for the future.
- **Construct a set of reference scenarios**, each representing a distinct and plausible alternative future for triangular co-operation beyond 2030 based on different interactions of disruptions.
- **Derive scenario-specific strategic considerations** to inform the roles, partnerships and decision-making frameworks of partners in triangular co-operation should any given scenario unfold.
- **Formulate actionable steps and strategies** that stakeholders in triangular co-operation can implement today to enhance resilience and readiness under each alternative future.

Figure 1.2. Five-module foresight process to stress-test public policy



Source: OECD (2025[5]), *Strategic Foresight Toolkit for Resilient Public Policy: A Comprehensive Foresight Methodology to Support Sustainable and Future-Ready Public Policy*, https://doi.org/10.1787/bcdd9304-en.

Following the approach summarised in Box 1.1, four fictional yet plausible future scenarios were developed based on emerging trends and uncertainties identified in the foresight exercises: rise of regions, nations first, corporate dominion and sustainability leads. Structured discussions around these scenarios pointed to strategic considerations to increase preparedness and adaptability across multiple potential futures. The disruptions are meant to lie outside the comfort zone and move beyond extrapolating from current trends, considering how to address radical changes in global systems (OECD, 2025[5]). Therefore, these scenarios are not forecasts; they are tools to explore possibilities, not predict them. They aim to trigger strategic thinking about the future of triangular co-operation and are not the future that the authors envision or desire.[3]

1.2.1. Exploring disruptions and identifying key assumptions about the future of triangular co-operation

As this report was being prepared, the development co-operation ecosystem experienced strong disruptions and a remarkably rapid intensification and shift of both signals and trends. Some of the weak signals that were identified through horizon scanning exercises have become realities. Some trends have withered away. In the October 2024 foresight exercise, participants identified a growing acknowledgement of diverse worldviews as critical to shaping plural and sustainable development futures. By mid-2025, however, the foresight dialogue had shifted, with participants more rapidly highlighting constrained development budgets, the development co-operation system in flux, the reorientation of finance towards narrowly defined national interests and the erosion of trust as strong signals of systemic change with potentially disruptive implications for the future of international co-operation.

One of the trends is the emphasis on the dynamics of a multipolar world order, marked by the rising influence of the Global South and a gradual rebalancing of global power from West to East. Other trends include converging pressures, such as growing strain on natural resources; escalating climate-related shocks; and the rapid acceleration of transformative technologies such as AI, big data and digitalisation, which are anticipated to fundamentally reshape the priorities, actors and delivery modalities of development co-operation in the years ahead. All these trends are already affecting the development co-operation community, and their implications are changing rapidly.

Another emerging trend, or strong signal of change, is the perception that traditional multilateral institutions are losing ground amid growing criticism from the Group of 77 (G77) and China that developing countries' interests are not sufficiently represented and that the institutions' decision-making lacks balance as development budgets continue to shrink. The strategic relevance of actors such as the private sector, regional alliances and groups of countries in driving sustainability and innovation is growing, as are hybrid finance models.

The authors have included the mapping of the signals and trends derived from the foresight exercise in Annex A as evidence of the need to regularly assess the process, follow trajectories of trends and signals, and also assess the preparedness of the systems to adapt and respond in an agile way. These are organised into six thematic clusters based on the OECD's Strategic Foresight Toolkit for Resilient Public Policy as a guiding framework: geopolitics, development co-operation modalities, economy and financing, technology, governance, and environment and social. These six dimensions are also used to structure possible actions for the future of triangular co-operation in each of the scenarios.

1.3. Four scenarios and possible actions for the future of triangular co-operation

The aforementioned signals of change, emerging trends and critical uncertainties are used to derive four fictional but plausible scenarios. These scenario narratives provide a structured basis for stress-testing current assumptions and formulating adaptive action plans tailored to a range of possible futures. The possible scenarios are not mutually exclusive, and some trends and factors might be present in more than one scenario but with different shapes, intensities and paths. This section reviews the key features of each of the four scenarios, summarised in Table 1.1. For each scenario, it also discusses proposals that the triangular co-operation community could consider in the future. These scenarios are presented not as desirable possibilities or options for the future; rather, they can stimulate further reflection and debate on a range of different possible futures, including good and worst cases.

Table 1.2. Overview of the four scenarios: rise of regions, nations first, corporate dominion and sustainability leads

Scenario	Summary	Key features of triangular co-operation
Rise of regions	Multilateralism declines and regional and subregional blocs rise, shifting from global to interregional collaboration.	Triangular co-operation is strong and established within different regional blocs and over time expands across regions, with countries evolving to undertake different roles.
Nations first	Rising geopolitical tensions, polarised narratives and increased defence spending push development co-operation lower in the list of priorities, leading to smaller budgets; remaining development finance is concentrated around projects that serve providers' national agendas.	Triangular co-operation either steadily declines in scale, scope and influence and is perceived as complex, soft power-oriented and misaligned with narrowly defined national interests. Or it is used as a strategic foreign policy tool to work with geopolitical allies in countering competitors for influence and markets.
Corporate dominion	The private sector dictates key policies and takes control of global development priorities. Governments retreat and struggle to regulate. AI, big data and digitalisation reshape governance, and the shift in power leads to wider global inequalities and signals nationalism and authoritarianism.	Space for triangular co-operation shrinks, and trust-based partnerships diminish. On the other hand, triangular partnerships emerge as a potential bridge with the possibility to continue through private-public partnerships.
Sustainability leads	By conviction or as a result of shocks and crises, a new world order prioritising sustainability is in place. Multilateralism gains traction. Climate adaptation, resource management and intergenerational equity become central to global co-operation.	Triangular co-operation thrives by fostering climate partnerships and facilitating knowledge sharing on sustainable practices. Innovative financial solutions start emerging, and countries with vulnerabilities have access to finance and knowledge.

Source: Authors' own compilation.

Scenario 1: Rise of the regions: Power blocs fuel a new era for triangular co-operation

In the 2023 edition of this report, the *fragmented world* scenario described growing competition between nations and regions alongside the weakening of the rules-based multilateral system. This edition elaborates that trajectory, envisioning a future where multilateralism continues to erode and regional and subregional blocs, groupings and organisations become the primary arenas for negotiation and co-operation.

As global institutions struggle to reach consensus, regional initiatives step in to fill the gap. In some cases, they complement global efforts; in others, they replace them entirely. The shift is most pronounced in regions with strong institutional depth and political cohesion. Yet even these integrated regions remain internally diverse, with differing priorities that can produce competing regional governance systems and fragmented standards established at the regional rather than global level.

In this multipolar world, the focus shifts from universal solutions to regional collaboration and localised development agendas. National and regional actors assume a greater share of responsibility, tailoring initiatives to their own contexts. In light of the vulnerabilities and risks exposed by geopolitical changes, the new norm is diversifying funding sources across multiple regions. This approach reduces reliance on a single partner, counters power imbalances, and fosters a more resilient and adaptable development framework.

The vacuum left by weakened multilateralism fuels the rise of plurilateral and minilateral groupings such as BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China, South Africa) including its expanded membership, the G20, and MIKTA (Mexico, Indonesia, Korea, Türkiye, Australia). These coalitions, often spanning more than one region, emerge as influential spaces for policy co-ordination and serve as bridges for interregional exchange.

In this scenario, triangular co-operation becomes a frequently used modality inside regional blocs. Over time, curiosity and mutual interest drive countries to extend these partnerships across regions, using triangular arrangements to facilitate knowledge sharing and technical diplomacy (OECD/IsDB, 2023[4]). In an era of competing blocs and geopolitical uncertainty, countries seek to maintain regional ties while at the same time diversifying their partnerships and funding sources across regions. Triangular co-operation helps maintain channels of exchange at the technical level, bridging regions, aligning with local priorities and building new alliances. In doing so, it not only supports regional development strategies but also makes development strategies more resilient and mitigates the risks of fragmentation, keeping collaboration alive in turbulent times.

Potential actions for triangular co-operation

Geopolitics. Regional organisations, platforms and hubs will play a crucial role in strengthening capacities for partnership formation and facilitating triangular co-operation within regions. New opportunities arise by focusing primarily on finding resources – i.e. expertise, knowledge, technology and funding – at the regional level. Development practitioners will need to sharpen cultural skills to partner better with regions and international organisations; matchmaking platforms and initiatives to map resource centres could act as intermediaries between global institutions, regional blocs and individual countries. These regional actors could act as enablers to support learning, scalability and preparedness for future triangular co-operation, while also recognising the inherent differences between countries in the same geographic region.

Building trust among partners across different regional blocs also will be crucial to deepening exchanges beyond regions. Small triangular initiatives to build trust between countries within the same region and between different regions are a useful starting point to allow partners to get to know each other on a technical level. Once the partnership is solid and mutual trust is established, it could be scaled up to include additional partners, countries, regions and/or financing. In this scenario, institutions with cross-regional membership can act as bridge-builders by deploying catalytic capital and technical support across blocs to enable interregional triangular partnerships. The ability of such institutions to convene diverse actors, de-risk investments and embed solutions in public systems positions them as key enablers of interregional co-operation infrastructure.

Development co-operation modalities. Development co-operation agencies and multilateral organisations and banks could strengthen their regional offices, making them hubs and platforms for exchange. Polycentric collaboration frameworks might become the new normal for triangular co-operation, addressing power asymmetries in development co-operation in constructive ways and ensuring circular exchange among all triangular partners. These frameworks could also ensure that more time and effort are devoted to forging new partnerships. For triangular partnerships to be embedded in the overall co-operation context of a country and region, they can be linked to regional and local development co-operation programmes and institutions.

Economy and financing. The role of regional and South-South development banks in triangular co-operation as co-investors and partners for local and regional financial institutions could be strengthened in this scenario to provide alternative funding sources. Triangular co-operation, particularly through regional and Islamic finance institutions, can offer trusted platforms in politically sensitive contexts where neutrality and technical diplomacy are critical. Leveraging trust capital and shared development narratives becomes a strategic asset in re-fragmented global governance settings.

Technology. Innovation incubators and hubs for co-developing technical solutions with regional experts could be established through triangular partnerships and brought to scale, including through regional centres of excellence and cross-regional exchange, after successful pilot projects. Regional organisations could play a key role in regulating digital governance and technical standards, which are increasingly being established at the regional level. These could also offer standardised technology diplomacy curricula and train partners in digital diplomacy and technical negotiation skills. In this and other possible futures, the benefits of using AI throughout the whole triangular co-operation project cycle can be enormous.

Governance. Balancing locally led development and regional initiatives, pilot projects that evolve based on community feedback could be tested and locally defined monitoring and evaluation frameworks created at the local level. Regional knowledge-sharing networks could take up the results of these and other local initiatives and share them within and between regions. In interregional triangular partnerships, peer review systems with rotating evaluation responsibilities to monitor success and results for all partners could be introduced and reinforced.

In addition, creating hybrid governance models that blend formal institutions with agile network-based partnerships to adapt to shifting geopolitical dynamics could facilitate structured dialogue, even when one partner withdraws due to geopolitical changes.

Environment and social. Triangular co-operation can help share valuable experiences in climate change adaptation and mitigation, protection of biodiversity, and environmental sustainability at the regional level. To date, green triangular co-operation and exchange initiatives among small island developing states (SIDS) from different regions are delivering promising results (OECD, 2024[6]). In this scenario, alongside the increase in local and regional co-operation, consolidated lessons in socio-environmental triangular co-operation could be shared through local and regional hubs. Furthermore, carbon offset-linked co-operation could be promoted as an element for new triangular partnerships.

Scenario 2: Nations first: The erosion of multilateralism puts triangular co-operation at risk

In the previous edition of this report, the *conflicted world* scenario showed development co-operation being instrumentalised for national security, with the result that engagement in triangular co-operation stalled. The *nations first* scenario in this edition takes that trajectory further: Multilateralism weakens as countries place self-interest above collective action.

Rising geopolitical tensions and increased defence spending push development co-operation lower on countries' priority lists. Shrinking budgets and domestic pressures in turn drive providers to consolidate scarce official development assistance (ODA) and development finance around projects that serve their own national agendas, often at the expense of partner country priorities. Growing criticism from the Global South over of the domination of the Global North in international organisations accelerates the creation of alternative institutions, further eroding the authority of traditional multilateral bodies.

In this environment, smaller or more experimental initiatives lose funding, while large-scale projects with lower transaction costs are favoured. Countries requiring strong, sustained support to achieve equality and sustainability risk being left behind. At the same time, calls to decolonise development gain momentum, reshaping power dynamics and opening new – but often fragmented – spaces for collaboration outside traditional multilateral channels.

For triangular co-operation, the outlook may be either bleak or promising as a foreign policy tool, depending on the context. Underfunded and perceived as complex, soft power-oriented and misaligned with narrowly defined national interests, in a bleak outlook triangular co-operation steadily declines in scale, scope and influence. By the early 2030s, it risks disappearing altogether, not least due to a dominant anti-development discourse, though the experience of recent decades suggests that when used strategically, triangular co-operation can pool resources efficiently and stretch government budgets further – a potential that could be rediscovered if political priorities shift. However, triangular co-operation is a promising strategic tool to work with geopolitical allies in combating the reach of competitors for influence and markets. Middle powers in each region act as pivotal partners to bridge divides.

Potential actions for triangular co-operation

Geopolitics. Prioritising issue-based partnerships and focusing on cross-cutting challenges such as climate resilience, disaster response and digitalisation can break through geopolitical boundaries and help overcome nationalist divides. This issue-based approach could also stimulate multi-stakeholder triangular partnerships among governments as a parallel effort during turbulent times.

Development co-operation modalities. Creating flexible and adaptive co-operation structures would allow for dynamic participation based on evolving national interests. (Box 3.13 in Chapter 3 presents more ideas for easing the administrative burden in triangular co-operation.) Sharing non-Western development models and integrating indigenous knowledge can contribute to decolonising both knowledge production and knowledge sharing in triangular co-operation. Decentralised and participatory financing mechanisms could organically emerge if central government institutions are retreating, helping empower communities to influence how funding for development projects and partnerships is distributed. Furthermore, triangular initiatives can benefit if they envision the continued strengthening of relationships among people and communities for long-term partnerships even after project funding stops.

Economy and financing. In this future, funding sources beyond the multilateral system and national governments need to be explored so that triangular co-operation demonstrates its ability to leverage resources from different partners and potentially attract seed public funding. For example, hybrid public-private partnerships (PPPs) and blended finance approaches that combine public, private and philanthropic funding for triangular co-operation can foster co-investment between governments, businesses and social enterprises for long-term partnerships. With the decline of multilateral funding, countries in the Global South can turn to alternative financial instruments such as *sukuk*, *waqaf* and other forms of Islamic finance.

Scenario 3: Corporate dominion: the privatisation of triangular co-operation

In the 2023 edition of this report, the *unsustainable growth* scenario highlighted the incentives for engaging the private sector to harness its resources and expertise, thereby driving growth in the absence of sustainability. Building on this trend, *corporate dominion* envisions a world where governments retreat from development co-operation and the private sector increasingly dominates both funding and implementation. Private wealth, philanthropy, investment funds and corporate entities set global development priorities, often advancing their own interests, which can be tied to corporate goals, self-promotion, personal affinities or the agendas of their networks. Less visible, less bankable or experimental approaches – particularly in social sectors – receive little or no funding, hitting partner countries that once relied heavily on ODA the hardest. In some cases, states fall under de facto corporate rule, with private entities dictating key policy choices while governments struggle to regulate corporate influence.

As the public sector weakens, regulatory frameworks erode, and governments offer partnerships to de-risk private investment in neglected sectors. Technologies such as AI, big data and digitalisation reshape governance, with AI-driven systems fostering nationalism and authoritarianism and often used to control populations and suppress dissent. Corporations hold the keys to AI and digital tools in the absence of strong global regulation, creating a form of digital imperialism. Technological elites consolidate control over knowledge, widening the digital divide, particularly in partner countries, and deepening inequalities that governments and multilateral institutions cannot redress.

In this environment, the space for triangular co-operation contracts as trust-based partnerships become harder to sustain. Yet, triangular co-operation can play a critical role in connecting actors that are still committed to sustainable development, offering a platform for building trust where government-led channels have weakened. Partnerships involving civil society, local communities and public-private alliances have the best chance of surviving, especially when they leverage the comparative advantages of diverse actors. Triangular partnerships can also help mediate between corporate and public interests, providing a neutral platform where priorities can be aligned and power asymmetries corrected. AI will be decisive in shaping how such partnerships are designed, implemented and monitored, offering opportunities to map partners, match resources and scale solutions but also reducing face-to-face interaction and making trust building more complex. In a corporate-dominated world, triangular co-operation may not be widespread but where it persists, it can act as one of the last spaces for horizontal collaboration and shared benefit.

Potential actions for triangular co-operation

Development co-operation modalities. Unlocking the opportunities offered by partnerships with the private sector requires a reimagining of traditional co-operation frameworks, including creating flexible spaces where private firms can join not only as contractors or suppliers but also as co-creators and peers in the pursuit of customised development solutions (Chapter 4). In this future, triangular co-operation could be positioned as a space that connects governments, the private sector and civil society in multi-stakeholder platforms to collectively address development challenges. Win-win-win triangular partnerships with the private sector could achieve the most sustainable development results as each partner has an inherent interest in achieving the agreed project goals.

Finance and economy. New governance models could be supported by novel financing mixes in triangular co-operation in this scenario – for instance by encouraging blended finance approaches where philanthropy partners with governments and the private sector to de-risk investments in development. To build mutual trust and confidence, it will be important to secure the long-term commitment of new partners, demonstrate effectiveness and transparency in the use of philanthropic funds, and ensure alignment with strategic development objectives and long-term sustainability.

Technology. Given the potentially divisive impact of AI, opportunities and risks need to be assessed carefully. While AI systems can perpetuate existing biases, potentially reinforcing inequalities, it may also act as equaliser in contexts where access to digital tools is available for everyone. The digital divide between high- and low-income countries and regions could widen further if access to AI and big data tools is unequal. There is also a risk that AI models and big data applications could be used in ways that conflict with local cultural norms and social values or be used in support of surveillance or authoritarian measures. AI could support matching partners and solutions in triangular co-operation, ease reporting burdens, and identify innovative solutions, e.g. in areas that are now underserved and funded.

Governance. Different forms of multi-stakeholder and PPPs will become the new normal. If documented and evaluated, lessons from initiatives could offer ample learning to position partners in triangular co-operation in this corporate world. Collaborative global and/or regional regulatory bodies with sustainability standards could attempt to guide corporate involvement in development and triangular co-operation initiatives.

Scenario 4: Sustainability leads: Greening triangular co-operation

This scenario builds on two opposing futures from the 2023 edition of this report: a *new sustainable development world*, in which countries commit to and implement far-reaching measures for sustainable production and consumption, and an *unsustainable world*, where most countries fail to shift away from growth models that harm the planet. In the *sustainability leads* scenario presented in this edition, a new world order emerges, either through conviction or in response to economic crises triggered by severe environmental shocks, that prioritises sustainability. Climate adaptation, resource management and intergenerational equity become central pillars of global co-operation. Increasingly frequent humanitarian crises underscore the urgency of systemic change, spurring innovative financing solutions such as debt-for-nature swaps, blended finance and sustainability-linked investments. A cultural shift towards sustainable futures influences decision making worldwide, reorienting development strategies around environmental and human resilience. Yet, tensions persist between advocates of rapid economic growth and those prioritising long-term environmental stability, with balancing immediate needs and future resilience proving a constant challenge.

The outcomes of the UN Summit of the Future and the Pact for the Future gain momentum, embedding intergenerational approaches in development policy and framing public spending as an investment in long-term resilience. While ageing populations in developed economies increase fiscal pressures, they also drive investment towards fast-growing, often developing economies as a means to sustain global growth.

By fostering sustainable investment frameworks, triangular co-operation plays an increasingly promising role in ensuring a just transition to a greener future. It provides a trusted framework for aligning public, private and civil society actors around shared climate and sustainability objectives. Triangular co-operation thrives in this scenario by fostering climate partnerships and facilitating knowledge sharing on sustainable practices. By connecting partners across regions, triangular co-operation accelerates the diffusion of sustainable technologies, climate-smart agriculture, renewable energy solutions and resource-efficient production models. It enables vulnerable developing countries to access both finance and know-how for climate mitigation and adaptation and to contribute their own locally rooted solutions to the global knowledge base and thus to global public goods.

Potential actions for triangular co-operation

Development co-operation modalities. Partners in triangular co-operation can establish platforms for regional and cross-border exchange of best practices, climate data and innovative adaptation solutions, thereby strengthening local capacities for long-term resilience, providing capacity building and facilitating knowledge sharing. New triangular partnerships can support localised adaptation strategies that help empower local communities by providing them with tools, resources and decision-making power to develop and implement adaptation solutions tailored to local climate challenges. Similarly, strengthening local knowledge systems and investing in indigenous and traditional knowledge can enhance long-term sustainability of projects.

Economy and financing. Existing climate-responsive financing models can be made more flexible to connect and amplify triangular co-operation exchanges in the horizontal approach that characterises partnerships with multiple actors. For example, the conservation programmes that emerge from debt-for-nature swaps or the climate-resilient projects that emerge from green bonds can explicitly include triangular exchanges in the form of comprehensive knowledge sharing, co-ordinated action, and support between actors with similar ecosystems or transborder ecosystems.

Especially in the area of resilience to climate and challenges around ageing populations and health care, innovative financial instruments can be complex. Triangular partnerships have proven useful for learning and building trust in advance of the launch of bigger initiatives. This modality can also facilitate knowledge sharing on how to mobilise resources and adapt financial mechanisms to address goals linked to resilience that are agreed and served through horizontal partnerships, for example through interregional and globally integrated approaches to public finances.

Technology. Partners in triangular co-operation can deploy AI and big data for climate risk mapping and to direct resources and interventions to the most vulnerable areas. They can also invest in creating regional early warning systems to improve climate disaster preparedness and response.

Governance. Fostering cross-sectoral collaboration, partners in triangular co-operation can engage the private sector for expertise in green technologies, academic institutions for research on climate impacts, and indigenous communities for locally adapted solutions to drive integrated, resilient development. They can also develop financial instruments, such as micro-insurance and dedicated adaptation funds, to address climate vulnerabilities and increase resilience in high-risk areas. Furthermore, triangular partnerships could facilitate developing countries' access to emissions reduction markets, enabling them to generate financial resources for climate mitigation projects through triangular initiatives. Triangular co-operation projects should aim to align national policies with regional and global sustainability goals.

Environment and social. In this future, it will be crucial to mainstream climate action across all triangular co-operation initiatives, prioritising projects with environmental goals including protecting biodiversity and ecosystems. Partners in triangular co-operation could address climate resilience as a central goal by incorporating adaptation measures and strategies into their planning and execution and embedding climate resilience and sustainability as core criteria in project design, implementation and evaluation. Partners in triangular co-operation can align their project design with nationally determined contributions and national adaptation plans to ensure that efforts contribute to national and local climate goals and are consistent with long-term resilience strategies.

1.4. Reflections for the future of triangular co-operation

Foresight exercises and scenario development are strategic tools used to explore plausible futures, anticipate risks and opportunities, and inform the design of more robust and adaptive actions and policies. The next step is to pose and answer the question, so, what now? A group of experts[4] convened in a focus group to identify what were called strategic "good bets" and "no regret" actions – that is, interventions deemed beneficial across a wide range of plausible futures. Drawing on insights from the four scenarios, the group developed overarching, scenario-independent recommendations that are presented in this section.

The scenarios are a clear call to prepare to partner in more creative ways, including catering to the national and mutual interests of partners (OECD/IsDB, 2023[4]). Multiple crises, budget cuts, widening inequalities and other challenges demand that more be done with fewer resources. The FfD4 Seville Commitment (*Compromiso de Sevilla*) also calls for a new era of partnerships. Triangular co-operation can lead the way in fostering more genuine partnerships where all partners are learners and knowledge sharers and are not boxed in by traditional assigned roles. Prioritising partnership and lasting results over institutional visibility or control; accounting for the contributions of not just the provider(s) of financing but all partners; and promoting win-win-win models of triangular co-operation are elements of this new era of partnerships. Especially in the scenarios where there was less co-operation, there was strong interest in building bridges and strengthening bonds between regions and stakeholders to help uphold norms and standards in a conflictual or fragmented world. In other scenarios, co-operation was a mainstream element, with triangular partnerships being part of the normal toolkit.

Geopolitics: Connect past achievements, emerging global discussions and future pathways for the development co-operation system. The Second UN High-level Conference on South-South Cooperation (BAPA+40) in 2019 alongside G20 discussions and the FfD4 this year firmly established triangular co-operation on the global development agenda. The essence of triangular co-operation also is embedded in Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 17. Still, better triangular action is needed to live up to the narrative, and the narrative needs to reflect all the benefits that triangular co-operation generates, both through and beyond the specific expected outcome of a project. It will be important to take stock and critically assess lessons from the triangular co-operation community to inform the current reform process and inspire change towards more partnership-oriented approaches. Mechanisms such as the IsDB's Reverse Linkage and regional programmes and centres of excellence can serve as hubs for foresight-informed triangular co-operation, anchoring future-oriented planning in regional systems by adapting to different cultural contexts.

Development co-operation modalities: Forge strong interregional triangular partnerships. In the more fragmented and regional scenarios, triangular co-operation is a tool to build bridges, invest in technical diplomacy (OECD/IsDB, 2023[4]), and continue peer exchange. Investing in interregional triangular co-operation now will foster strong partnerships for the future and increase the likelihood that these projects will be continued across different scenarios, making interregional triangular co-operation another "no regret" recommendation.

Prepare to learn and change and remain flexible and adaptable. In every future scenario, innovations, flexibility, and new mechanisms and instruments are proposed to produce even more ambitious results. Benefitting partners often regard flexibility and adaptability as key strengths of triangular co-operation. They have seen how slowly institutions change and how reluctant national and multilateral organisations are to let go of the business-as-usual mindset. Amplifying channels of triangular co-operation, creating new mechanisms and instruments, bringing in actors that are not traditional to the triangular co-operation ecosystem, and engaging with AI effectively and responsibly – these all require trust among partners. Investing in foresight units or inter-agency task forces can help systematically scan risks, identify inflection points and prepare for long-term development transitions, including in triangular co-operation.

Governance: Expand the network of partners. All four scenarios feature the following elements: "different forms of multi-stakeholder and PPPs will become the new normal", "participatory financing mechanisms", "de-colonising", and "polycentric collaboration frameworks". Also in each scenario, new partners in triangular co-operation, ranging from the private sector to local community groups, are likely to gain in importance. Closely observing how these actors engage in triangular co-operation will help in shaping inclusive triangular partnerships, as will building on their momentum and dynamism and adapting lessons in a bottom-up way to inform policies and strategies. In triangular co-operation, even if one actor shuts down, others will have been empowered; indirectly strengthening individuals can also strengthen the ecosystem. Cross-sector networks of "public entrepreneurs" could support individuals across governments, civil society, the private sector, philanthropy and multilateral development banks to drive innovation in triangular co-operation.

Economy and financing: Spotlight new and innovative supporting mechanisms. Resources for development co-operation are under stress and increasingly scarce, and ODA budgets are one but not the only space to monitor (OECD, 2025[7]). Triangular co-operation drives efficiency gains by pooling resources from several partners. These partnerships leverage additional resources such as sector-specific expertise, in-kind contributions, and access to new markets and networks. Thinking beyond financing, a smart mix of resources and small amounts of funding can go very far in creating both impact at the local, national and regional levels and sustainable practices that lead to mutual-win situations with the private sector.

The different scenarios show that funding mechanisms for triangular co-operation need to be diversified rather than rely mainly on financing provided by governments or international organisations and should include for example impact, social or green bonds; blended finance; microfinance models; and risk insurance, among others. Co-creation of instruments by and among not only financial providers but also potential partners in all roles contributes to testing the partnership readiness of the instrument and horizontality in practice.

Technology: Invest in digital tools, platforms and AI. While Scenario 3 touches on the trend of including AI and other digital tools as “new partners” in triangular co-operation, their growing prominence also features across all scenarios – a new reality that was not as strong when the first edition of this report was being prepared. Investing in digital tools is a “no regret” action. However, unlocking AI’s benefits requires mitigating its risks: Biased algorithms, misuse, and lack of transparency in AI can harm human rights, erode accountability, deepen digital divides and weaken public trust in government (OECD, 2025[8]).

Potential advantages include boosting productivity, responsiveness and accountability of government use of AI. New digital skills need to be developed, regulatory frameworks established, and practices tested with constant learning and feedback loops. Digital tools could help in mapping reforms, policies and innovative solutions to development challenges (see Chapter 4 and Boxes 4.4 and 4.5). These tools could also help in finding partners and projects. But to use their full potential, it is necessary to address the issues of triangular co-operation being underreported (see Chapter 2), under-resourced and understaffed. Triangular partnerships could contribute to the adaptation of AI and digital tools to different contexts, ensuring that technology is not treated as the immediate solution but rather analysing what tool or technology is adequate to respond to and resolve problems in useful and empowering ways. Innovation accelerators could support the spotting, scaling, funding and sharing of (digital) innovations through triangular partnerships.

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Notes

[1] This publication uses the terms triangular and trilateral interchangeably.

[2] The participants of the foresight exercises were from many different countries and multilateral organisations. As with any exercise of this kind, issues around representativeness and inclusivity arose since the participants were triangular co-operation policy makers, experts and practitioners who travelled to Lisbon to participate in person in discussions around the future of the modality. The participants were then also invited for the follow-up virtual workshops.

[3] The scenarios and analysis do not represent the corporate views of the OECD or the IsDB.

[4] The community of triangular co-operation practitioners who met in Lisbon in October 2024 co-created the scenarios and the considerations for actions to prepare for each possible future. In the discussions, it proved challenging to separate out the scenarios and come up with considerations that would be specific to triangular co-operation as most possible actions apply to other modalities of development co-operation as well. Another challenge is to avoid falling back on wishful thinking when anticipating future policies; this is because evidence to underpin the scenarios is scarce and it is difficult to imagine the full implications of each scenario without slipping into normative thinking of what *should* be done to uphold the value system of today's world. In this regard, participants bring into the conversation their particular biases from where they stand in the global triangular co-operation system, and such biases are also inherent in the process of creating the four scenarios. A focus group discussion of the co-authors of this report with key triangular co-operation and foresight experts was organised to constructively work with biases and reflect on best bets for the future of triangular co-operation.

2 Global data trends on triangular co-operation

This chapter analyses global data trends in triangular co-operation, examining who engages and in which regions and sectors by drawing on global, regional and national reporting initiatives. It also identifies caveats to existing reporting practices and underscores the importance of capturing the distinctive features of triangular co-operation, including how to value in-kind contributions.

In the Seville Commitment issued at the Fourth International Conference on Financing for Development (FfD4) in 2025, the international community pledged:

> *… to enhance triangular cooperation by fostering deeper collaboration and partnerships, ensuring knowledge exchange, aligning efforts with the Sustainable Development Goals, and leveraging innovative financing mechanisms to enhance its sustainability and impact. (UN, 2025, p. 18[1])*

This commitment rests on the assumption that the international community will have the data and evidence from the results and impacts of partnerships from which to draw lessons about their implementation. Having, and adequately using, the necessary data also help shape policy, bridge the gap between development needs and knowledge, make informed decisions, and use resources more effectively. Indeed, how data are managed is a key question, argued Australia's Minister for International Development Anne Aly, speaking at a side event at FfD4. "Because in development," she said, "data is power, but only when it is usable, when it is inclusive and when it is connected" (Aly, 2025[2]).

All three of these requirements are important challenges for data collection on triangular co-operation. The first edition of this report published in 2023 highlighted that no single, consistent and comprehensive database exists that gives a clear overview of the who, what, where, when and how of triangular co-operation across the globe (OECD/IsDB, 2023[3]). But different databases, as discussed in this chapter, offer insights into different parts of the big picture. Significant blind spots exist in data on triangular co-operation regarding the composition of partnerships and the contributions made to the initiative by all partners involved. A key function of effectively used data is to drive smarter policy decisions. In the case of triangular co-operation, there is a risk that policymaking and data are not connected. Data gaps may make decisions more difficult and costly because the full scope of triangular co-operation by all three or more partners – pivotal, facilitating and benefitting partners, public and private partners, and in-kind and financial contributions, etc. – is not being captured. Furthermore, the different existing databases are not yet connected, which generates reporting burdens.

A significant outcome of FfD4 in terms of increasing interoperability was the launch of the Bridging Data Systems for Financing for Development initiative under the Sevilla Platform for Action, co-led by the International Forum on Total Official Support on Sustainable Development (TOSSD), the OECD, the International Aid Transparency Initiative (IATI) and the United Nations (UN) Systems Chief Executives Board for Coordination (UN CEB) Secretariat. This new partnership aims to reduce reporting burdens and improve interoperability across international data systems; it is a sign that enhanced collaboration among key data initiatives, a new UN measurement on South-South co-operation and more solid reporting in TOSSD are changing the data ecosystem.

This chapter focuses on how to better understand the existing data on triangular co-operation, identifies information that is still missing in the monitoring of global trends of triangular co-operation and pinpoints the considerations specific to triangular co-operation that should be reflected in regard to interoperability of statistical frameworks.

2.1. Advances in data on triangular co-operation

A range of measurement initiatives to identify and disaggregate triangular co-operation data have been put in place over the last decade at the international and regional levels (Table 2.1), alongside national efforts by some countries to improve, develop or adjust their data systems and procedures. Reporting on triangular co-operation is steadily improving as a growing and diverse set of governments and international and regional organisations are using TOSSD, the only database with global information on triangular co-operation and the primary source of information for this chapter. This improvement contrasts with persistent data gaps, among them one-sided inputs in the form of financial contributions mainly by providers for beneficiaries, differences in granularity and quality, the predominance of financial flows over in-kind contributions, and under-represented regions and actors.

Created in response to the Addis Ababa Action Agenda, TOSSD encompasses ODA flows, other official flows (OOF), South-South co-operation, triangular co-operation, spending for international public goods and private finance mobilised by official interventions that support the SDGs (International Forum on TOSSD, 2024[4]). There are intersections between those categories; for example, the funding reported by DAC members on triangular co-operation in TOSSD may also be ODA.

The OECD Creditor Reporting System (CRS), which is used to report ODA, relies on disbursement data reported by the provider. Of the 33 OECD DAC members, 18 reported triangular co-operation activities at least once between 2016 and 2023, together totalling more than 3 000 activities.

In 2022, the UN Statistical Commission and the UN General Assembly adopted the initial voluntary Framework to Measure South-South Cooperation (Box 2.1). It was an important advance in South-South co-operation measurement, and followed several years of analysis, debate, proposals and diverse practices by different national, regional and international institutions on how best to measure South-South co-operation.

Box 2.1. UN Framework to Measure South-South Cooperation

The *United Nations Framework to Measure South-South Cooperation* was developed by the countries of the Global South and welcomed by all countries at the United Nations Statistical Commission in 2022. It is specifically designed to capture all intricacies of South-South co-operation and includes financial flows, monetised non-financial flows and non-financial flows that are not monetised. The Framework is based on a detailed typology of different South-South co-operation flows to ensure that all countries can capture flows relevant to their collaboration.

In 2023, UNCTAD jointly with UN Regional Commissions, UNDESA and the UN Office for South-South Cooperation (UNOSSC) launched a global project to pilot test the UN Framework and build capacities in the countries of the Global South to collect and report data. The first five countries reported preliminary data in the UN Framework by mid- 2025. Preliminary data from pioneering countries like Brazil, Colombia and Mexico reveal the importance of in-kind flows, underlining the importance of a tailored, detailed approach for their reporting. For these countries, 90% of South-South co-operation flows are delivered through non-financial modalities. These flows related to infrastructure projects, goods and materials delivered, scholarships, humanitarian assistance, and technical co-operation and joint research, among others, are captured in the UN Framework based on comparable methods, alongside financial resources such as grants and concessional loans.

Data reporting in the UN Framework also provides detailed information on reported triangular co-operation activities with Southern country engagement. In the early data, bilateral frameworks remain the most common form of South-South co-operation, particularly in sectors like health and education. At the same time, trilateral and multilateral co-operation frameworks are gaining traction as they allow countries to pool expertise, share risks and scale impact.

Source: Authors' compilation based on exchanges with UNCTAD.

The framework is designed to inform SDG indicator 17.3.1 (additional financial resources mobilised for developing countries from multiple sources) and to capture the different types of South-South co-operation activities. It is currently being piloted with Ecuador, Jordan, Malaysia, Namibia, Nigeria, Peru and Qatar. The framework focuses on the contribution reported by the Southern provider beyond financial flows, which is the conventional metric to measure development co-operation efforts. Countries will be able to report the following items: financial contributions, monetised non-financial contributions and contributions measured through non-monetary units (UNCTAD, 2025[5]).

The reporting manual for the UN framework, published in 2025 by the UN Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), also indicates that trilateral and triangular co-operation is considered a type of South-South co-operation. This can be identified with a specific code for the co-operation framework and by adding the number of additional partners. The manual also notes that South-South co-operation:

> *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. (UNCTAD, 2025, p. 8[5])*

TOSSD has adopted the same conceptual framework, which follows UN agreements, since 2022, allowing countries, territories and multilateral institutions to report their triangular co-operation without financial flows by providing information such as the project title and activities. The Dominican Republic, Indonesia and Mexico are doing this.

Regionally, the Ibero-American General Secretariat (SEGIB) runs the most comprehensive database on South-South and triangular co-operation. Its Integrated Ibero-American Data System on South-South and Triangular Cooperation (SIDICSS) uses the number of initiatives as the main reference for the analysis of trends in triangular co-operation over the past 15 years, and is the only framework focused on the initiative as a whole rather than the input of the providers (Box 2.3). All Ibero-American countries, regardless of whether they participated as providers, pivotal partners or beneficiaries, report and update the information on their South-South and triangular co-operation projects and activities during the reporting period (SEGIB, 2025[6]). Through the SIDICSS, SEGIB also allows countries participating in the same project to complement any reported information and resolve information discrepancies. With 15 years' worth of information, SEGIB has been able to produce specific analyses on triangular co-operation trends, including analyses on sectors, supporting mechanisms, strengthened capacities, and the distribution of initiatives by roles and partners within and outside the region.

The SEGIB evidence (Box 2.3) highlights the relevance of having structured mechanisms to catalyse triangular co-operation initiatives (SEGIB, 2024, p. 105[7]), among them Germany's Regional Fund for Triangular Cooperation with Partners in Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC); the European Union (EU) ADELANTE programme; Japan's Third Country Partnership Program; and Spain's funds (Chapter 4).

Another database, the OECD's online project repository,[1] is also based on the number of projects shared on a voluntary basis by partners in triangular co-operation (Table 2.1) (OECD/IsDB, 2023[3]; OECD, 2023[8]).

Table 2.1. Overview of databases on triangular co-operation

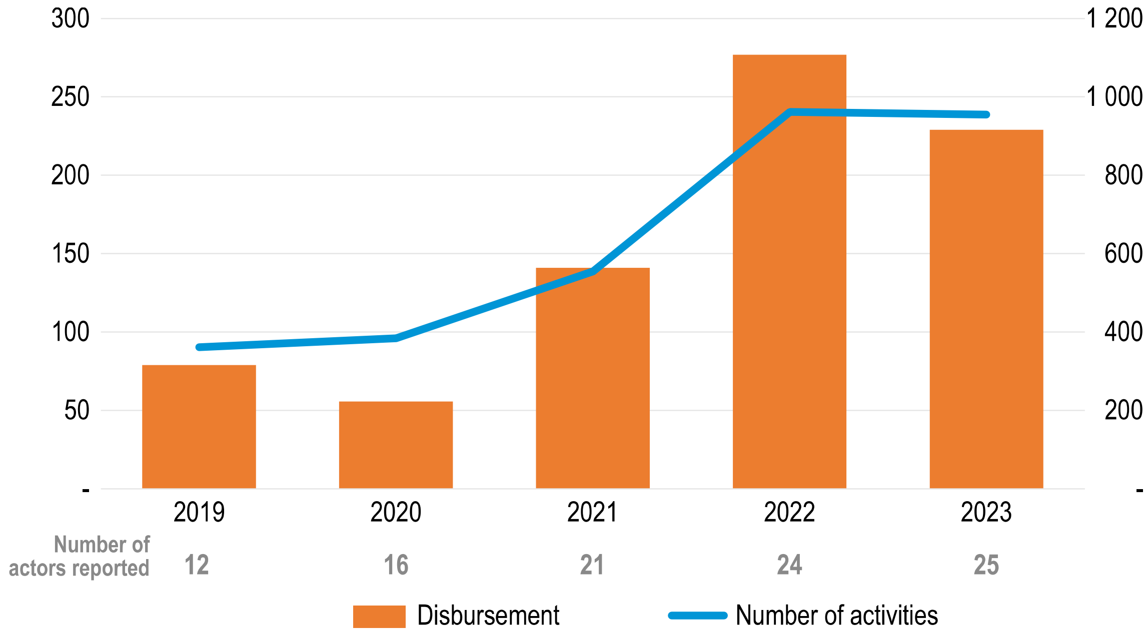
Database	OECD CRS	TOSSD	UN Framework to Measure South-South Cooperation	Ibero-American Integrated Data System on South-South and Triangular Cooperation (SIDICSS)	OECD triangular co-operation project repository
Scope	OECD DAC members, international organisations and other interested reporting official providers of development co-operation	International organisations, DAC members and other official providers (including 17 SSC providers)	Southern providers	Ibero-American region (22 member countries of SEGIB) reporting on initiatives they participate in and those with their partners	All countries, international organisations, civil society organisations (CSOs), think tanks, etc.
Time frame	2016 to present	2019 to present	Pilot phase	2007 to present	2000-2022
Main unit of measurement	Disbursement (ODA only)	Disbursement (international public finance)	Contribution (financial, monetised or non-financial units)	Project (information on financial flows and in-kind contributions not published but captured on a voluntary basis)	Project (public information on financial flows and monetised in-kind contributions)

Note: SSC = South-South co-operation.
Source: Authors' compilation based on (OECD/IsDB, 2023, p. 23[3]), *Global Perspectives on Triangular Co-operation*, https://doi.org/10.1787/29e2cbc0-en.

2.2. Global trends in triangular co-operation

Since 2019, when TOSSD started monitoring triangular co-operation, the number of providers reporting engagement in this modality has doubled and reported disbursements have increased more than fourfold (Figure 2.1). Between 2019 and 2023, 36 countries and organisations reported over 4 800 triangular co-operation initiatives to TOSSD. While the volume of funding reported as disbursements is increasing, it remains low compared to overall flows of development co-operation.

Figure 2.1. Triangular co-operation disbursement and activity reported to TOSSD

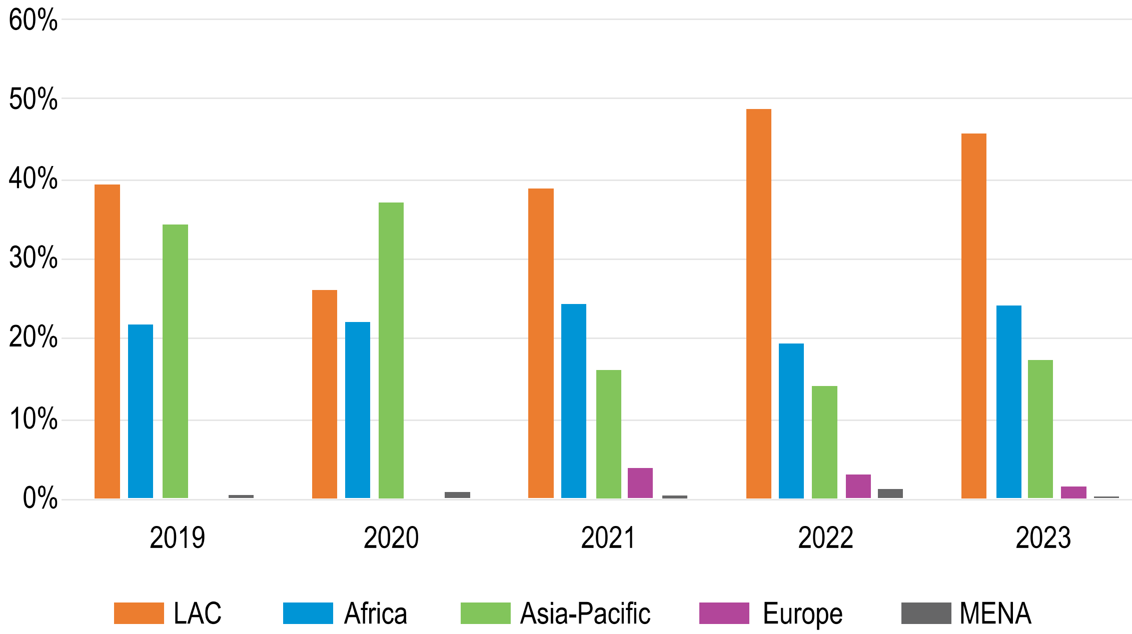


Note: The bar shows disbursement in USD million constant 2023 prices. The line shows the number of activities.
Source: TOSSD (2025[9]), *Data Visualisation Tool* (database), https://tossd.online/.

2.2.1. What the data show about the regional distribution of triangular co-operation

Historically, reported triangular co-operation engagement has been largely concentrated in LAC. Nearly half of the disbursements reported in TOSSD in 2022 and 2023 (47%) went to this region, followed by Africa (22%) and Asia-Pacific (16%),[2] which is in line with the findings of the previous edition of this report. Considering only CRS data from DAC members, Africa surpassed LAC in 2021 as the leading region benefitting from triangular co-operation disbursements (39% on average from 2022 to 2023), followed by LAC (22%), Asia-Pacific (18%), Europe, and the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) (1% each); 19% of reported activities did not specify the beneficiary country or region[3] (Figure 2.2).

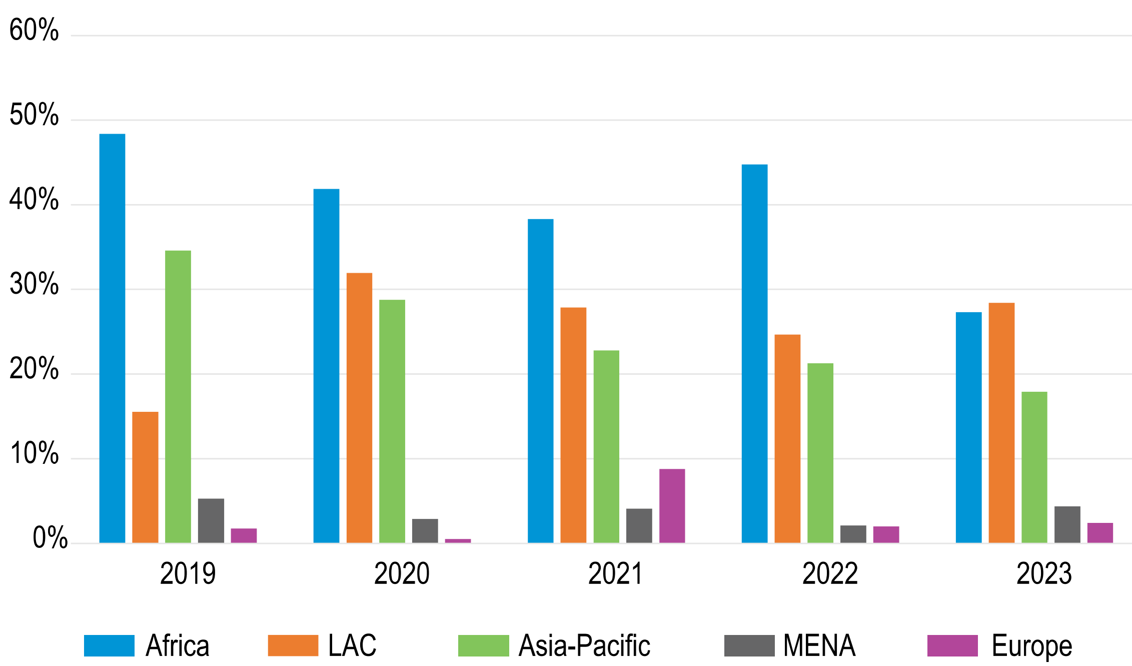
Figure 2.2. Regional distribution of disbursements through triangular co-operation in TOSSD



Note: The percentages do not add up to 100% because a small share of reported activities does not specify the beneficiary country or region.
Source: TOSSD (2025[9]), *Data Visualisation Tool* (database), https://tossd.online/.

A different regional distribution picture emerges from data on the number of TOSSD projects reported. In 2022, Africa hosted the greatest number of triangular partnerships with LAC edging into first place in 2023. The number of reported projects with the Asia-Pacific region dropped slightly over 2019-2023 (Figure 2.3).

Figure 2.3. Regional distribution of the number of triangular co-operation projects in TOSSD



Note: The percentages for each year do not add up to 100% because a small share of reported activities does not specify either the beneficiary country or region.
Source: TOSSD (2025[9]), *Data Visualisation Tool* (database), https://tossd.online/.

Deeper analysis of the data to identify the main actors and their roles in triangular co-operation requires some methodological disclaimers:

- The reporting country or entity does not always identify the pivotal country in TOSSD. The pivotal partner (see Chapter 1 and Figure 1.1) can be identified in the channel of delivery or in the description field, though generally it is not. Nevertheless, some pivotal countries, in their capacity as Southern providers, directly report their engagement in triangular co-operation to TOSSD. In 2024, a new field was included in the TOSSD methodology to identify the pivotal partner (and other partners) of triangular co-operation activities. The field will be applicable to the reporting for 2024 activities and data included in the next edition of this report.
- Southern providers that perform the role of pivotal partner often have bilateral agreements with a facilitating partner, such as an ODA provider, to engage in triangular co-operation with third partners. The funding from the facilitating partner is channelled in some cases to and through the pivotal partner. However, this pivotal partner is not the actual beneficiary, though in many instances that is how it is reported in TOSSD, potentially skewing the picture of benefitting partners shown in Table 2.2 and Table 2.3.
- In TOSSD and the CRS, only one beneficiary can be reported in the recipient country field, resulting in incomplete information about the composition of triangular partnerships. If two countries from the same region benefit from a project, the activity will appear as a regional activity in TOSSD and the names of all beneficiary countries can be included in the title and/or description fields. When two or more countries from different regions benefit, the triangular co-operation is reported as global, which is also imprecise.
- Particularly among DAC members, internal practices to record disbursements may limit the disaggregation of data. For example, some countries record the whole budget approved to a fund or programme as one data entry even if the programme supports dozens of projects, each with a different set of triangular partners. In other cases, triangular projects are considered components of bilateral or regional co-operation programmes, which are reported separately in TOSSD. It is often difficult to identify and report the information that is only specific to the trilateral partnership.
- Some providers have reported data for just one year or have focused on commitments without including disbursement figures, and few included monetised in-kind contributions. In some cases, if the provider is reporting commitments to a fund, it might not be possible to report on partners as the projects are still in the process of being proposed or selected. Current rankings based on data reported for triangular partnerships are often a sign of the quality of reporting rather than engagement of partners in triangular co-operation. Many partners in triangular co-operation do not report their engagement regardless of whether it is through a financial contribution or through monetised and non-monetised in-kind contributions.
- As providers in the same project report independently of one another, some projects may have been reported by more than one partner. There is no duplication in terms of disbursement, as each partner reports its own contributions. However, there is likely duplication when using the number of projects to analyse beneficiaries, regions and sectors, etc. In this regard, the clear identification of the project or activity would help data users better count the number of projects, thus reducing duplication.

2.2.2. What the data show about partners in triangular co-operation

Keeping in mind the abovementioned caveats, TOSSD data from 2022 and 2023 show that the countries reported as primary beneficiaries of triangular co-operation disbursements were (in descending order) Nicaragua, Indonesia, South Africa, Ethiopia, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Uganda, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Colombia, Tanzania and Peru (Table 2.2). The disbursements in Nicaragua largely relate to major triangular infrastructure projects with the Central American Bank for Economic Integration (CABEI) in the water and sanitation sector. In general, support from a financial institution to a triangular partnership for an infrastructure project increases the volume of finance considerably, which is why Nicaragua became the top beneficiary, CABEI was the top provider, and water and sanitation was the largest sector for triangular co-operation in TOSSD disbursement data.

Table 2.2. Top 20 beneficiaries of triangular co-operation in TOSSD, by disbursements, 2022-2023

Disbursements, USD million, in constant 2023 prices

Top beneficiaries	2022	2023
Nicaragua	115.51	82.45
Developing countries, unspecified[1]	33.68	20.12
America, regional[2]	3.34	10.87
Africa, regional[2]	5.59	8.38
Indonesia	7.84	4.25
South Africa	5.13	6.85
Ethiopia	5.78	6.09
Democratic Republic of the Congo	6.19	4.09
Uganda	5.41	3.35
Asia, regional[2]	4.87	3.78
Oceania, regional[2]	3.24	5.06
Lao People's Democratic Republic	3.40	3.92
Colombia	4.18	2.62
Tanzania	4.22	2.54
Peru	3.67	1.82
Ukraine	3.96	1.40
Sudan	0.49	4.58
Senegal	2.22	2.72
Viet Nam	2.33	2.61
Burkina Faso	2.75	1.95

Note: 1. The category "developing countries, unspecified" means the activity benefited at least two countries from different continents. 2. Africa, America, Asia, and Oceania "regional" mean that two or more countries from these regions benefited in a triangular co-operation project.
Source: TOSSD (2025[9]), *Data Visualisation Tool* (database), https://tossd.online/.

In terms of the number of triangular projects, Bolivia and Ethiopia ranked highest among individual country beneficiaries and America and Africa ranked highest in terms of regional projects in 2022-2023 (Table 2.3).

Table 2.3. Top 20 beneficiaries of triangular co-operation in TOSSD, 2022-2023

By number of projects

Beneficiaries	2022	2023
Developing countries, unspecified	*98*	*93*
Bolivia	36	54
Ethiopia	57	31
America, regional	*21*	*47*
Africa, regional	*28*	*31*
Senegal	21	24
Democratic Republic of the Congo	20	23
Colombia	21	22
Uganda	30	11
Burkina Faso	17	22
Indonesia	22	16
Ghana	21	17
Tanzania	31	5
Nicaragua	17	15
Caribbean, regional	*5*	*27*
Oceania, regional	*11*	*19*
Chad	11	16
Mauritania	15	11
Mozambique	7	19
Peru	15	10

Note: The category "developing countries, unspecified" means the activity benefited at least two countries from different continents.
Source: TOSSD (2025[9]), *Data Visualisation Tool* (database), https://tossd.online/.

CABEI and Switzerland started reporting to TOSSD in 2021 and now rank among the top five providers, together with the Global Green Growth Institute, Canada (reporting since 2019) and Germany (reporting since 2022) (Table 2.4).

Table 2.4. Main providers reporting triangular co-operation to TOSSD, 2022-2023

Disbursements, USD million, in constant 2023 prices

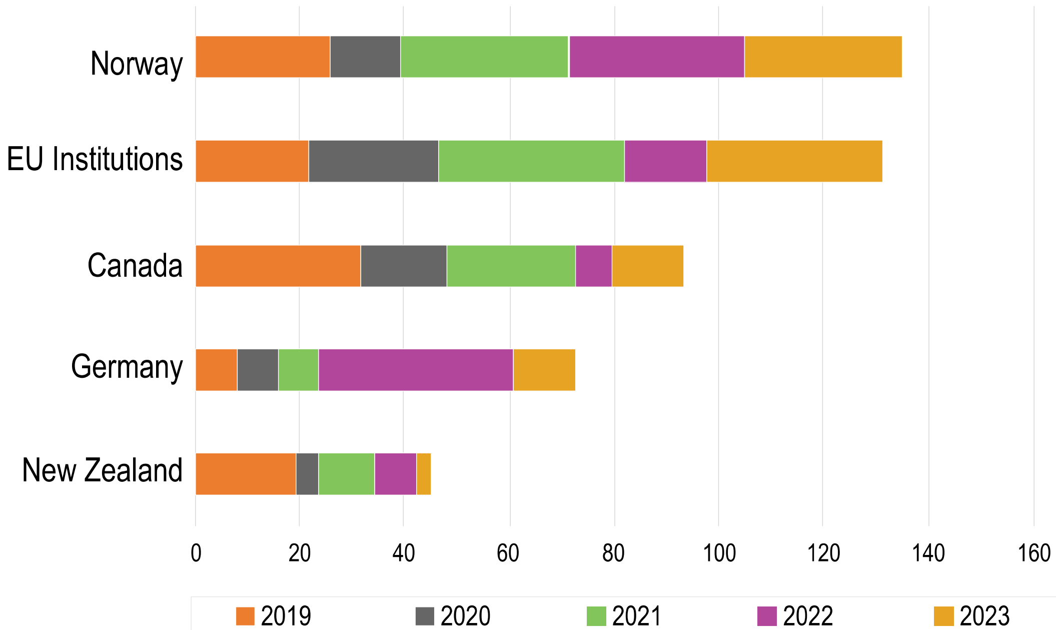
Provider	2022	2023
Central American Bank for Economic Integration	114 965	82 069
Global Green Growth Institute[1]	52 111	62 163
Switzerland	36 270	33 954
Germany	34 663	12 068
Brazil	7 232	11 995
Norway	19 006	-
Canada	5 613	12 008
Islamic Development Bank	3 637	2 495
Saudi Arabia	-	4 580
Organization of American States	1 188	1 791

Note: 1. Data related to the Global Green Growth Institute are under verification.
Source: TOSSD (2025[9]), *Data Visualisation Tool* (database), https://tossd.online/.

CRS data show Canada, the EU Institutions, Germany and Norway consistently among the top five DAC members reporting triangular co-operation to the CRS since 2019 in terms of both disbursements and the number of activities (Figure 2.4). Since the first edition of this report, it is also worth noting relevant reporting from Czechia, Greece, Korea and New Zealand, all among the top ten providers in 2022 and 2023.

Figure 2.4. Top five providers of triangular co-operation (CRS), 2019-2023

Disbursement, USD million, in constant 2023 prices



Source: OECD Creditor Reporting System available at OECD Data Explorer: http://data-explorer.oecd.org/s/1mx.

Analysis of TOSSD data on the number of projects shows Brazil, Ecuador and Chile were the top Southern providers in 2022-2023 (Table 2.5). It is worth noting that these three countries have a tradition of data management based on projects, and that for each project all partners are recorded with their specific role. This differs from the statistical systems of DAC members, which are mainly structured around ODA reporting based on disbursements. To gain a more comprehensive picture of global triangular co-operation, efforts to encourage interoperability of the different databases will have to address the frameworks' different focuses.

Table 2.5. Top ten providers of triangular co-operation in TOSSD, 2022-2023

By number of projects

Top providers	2022	2023
Global Green Growth Institute	171	225
Islamic Development Bank	130	184
Canada	106	171
Norway	235	0
Switzerland	101	91
Brazil	36	104
Germany	48	19
Organization of American States	14	24
Ecuador	15	18
Chile	11	20

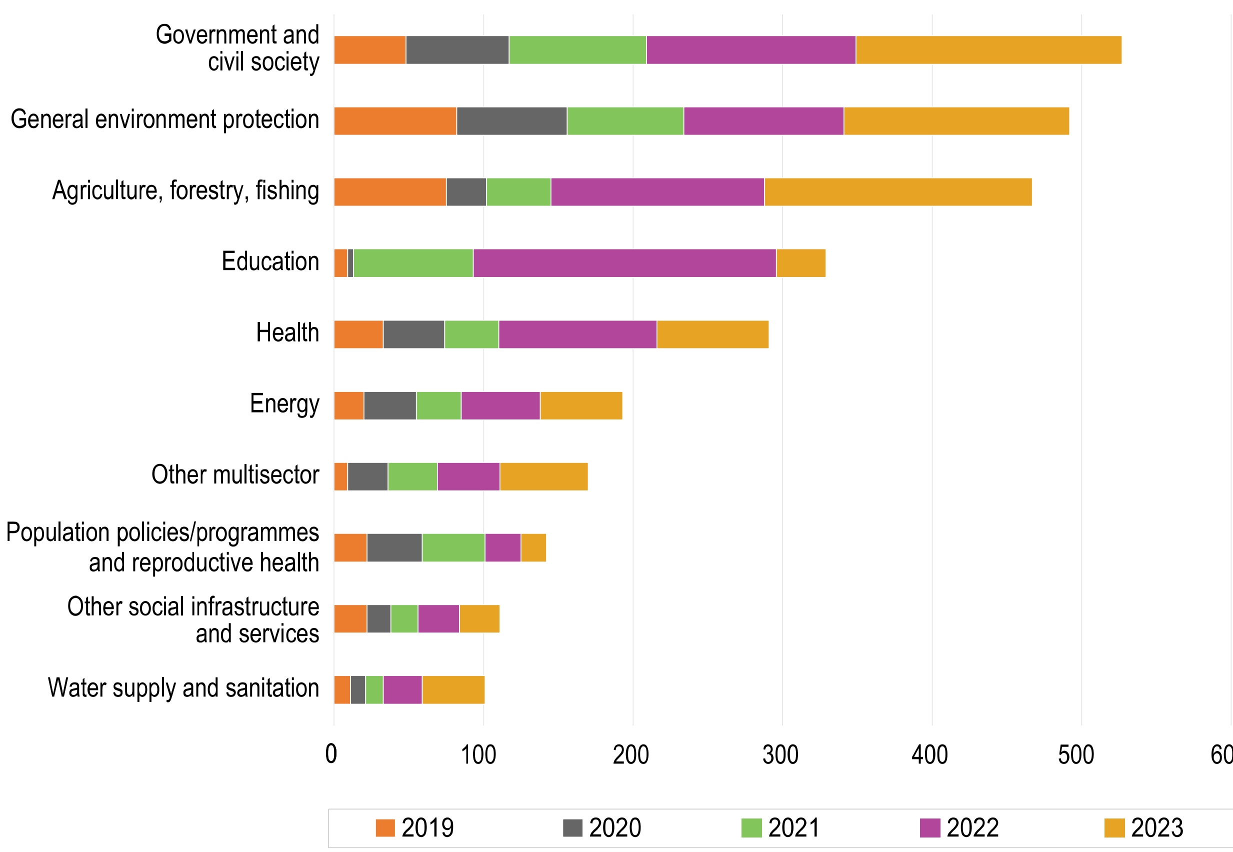
Source: TOSSD (2025[9]), *Data Visualisation Tool* (database), https://tossd.online/.

2.2.3. What the data show about sectors in triangular co-operation

The triangular co-operation reported in the CRS shows continuing strong support for advancing gender equality, with 73% of projects reported using the gender marker – a much higher proportion than the 46% of overall ODA targeted towards gender in 2022 and 2023 (OECD, 2025[10]). In terms of the Rio markers, 29% of triangular co-operation during this two-year period contributed to the environment, 26% to climate mitigation, 23% to climate adaptation and 18% to biodiversity. The leading sectors for triangular projects in the previous edition of this report and according to other analyses were government and civil society (OECD/IsDB, 2023[3]; GPI on Effective Triangular Co-operation, 2019[11]); that sectoral distribution to government and civil society remained stable in terms of the number of projects (Figure 2.5). The 2022 and 2023 data reported to TOSSD show that an increasing number of projects were directed to water supply and sanitation, mainly reflecting the large infrastructure CABEI projects in Nicaragua. Reporting to the CRS showed a spike in 2022 in projects on health and a noteworthy increase over the past three years in projects focused on education, a break from the historical focus on government and civil society.

Figure 2.5. Top sectors targeted in triangular co-operation in TOSSD, 2019-2023

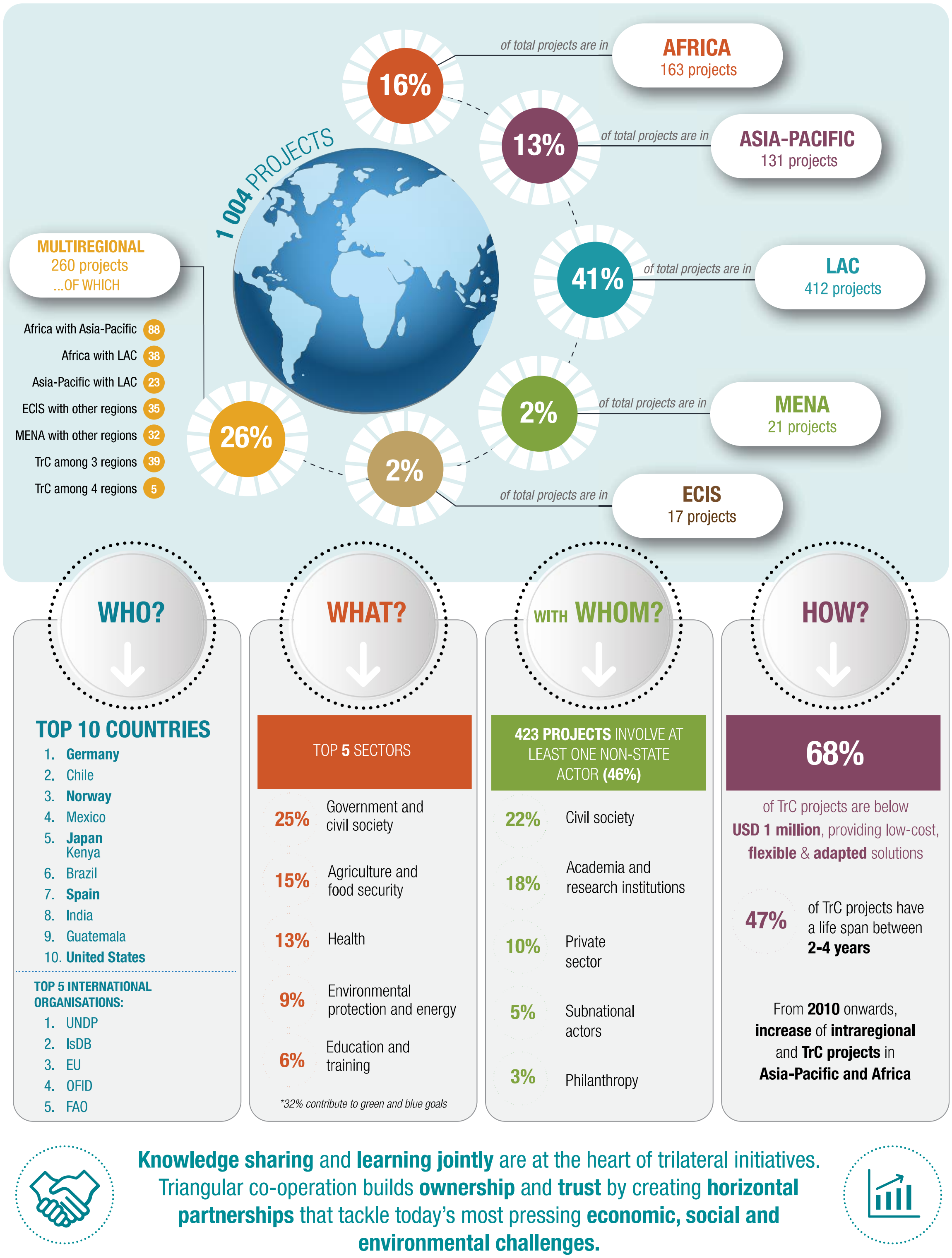
By number of projects



Source: TOSSD (2025[9]), *Data Visualisation Tool* (database), https://tossd.online/.

These project-related data differ significantly from data prior to 2022 in the OECD online triangular co-operation project repository. Infographic 2.1 shows the global picture of triangular co-operation over 2020-2022 based on data shared to the OECD project repository.

Infographic 2.1. Triangular co-operation worldwide, 2000-2022 (according to data shared to the OECD project repository)



Note: ECIS = Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States; UNDP = United Nations Development Programme; IsDB = Islamic Development Bank; OFID = OPEC Fund for International Development; FAO = Food and Agriculture Organization; TrC = triangular co-operation.

Source: OECD/Islamic Development Bank (2023, p. 25[3]), *Global Perspectives on Triangular Co-operation*, https://doi.org/10.1787/29e2cbc0-en; OECD (2023[8]), *Triangular co-operation repository of projects* (database), https://web-archive.oecd.org/2019-10-07/420179-triangular-co-operation-repository.htm.

2.3. What elements are missing to complete the picture of triangular co-operation?

Today's most comprehensive global database on triangular co-operation, TOSSD, shows how much money has been disbursed for triangular partnerships. A comparison with data derived from different databases, qualitative information on active projects and partners in triangular co-operation, and the concept of what it is intended to measure shows a different picture – and one with pieces missing.

Type of contributions. Disbursements and financial flows are not the main currency of triangular co-operation. Financing flows are usually just one type of resources contributed by partners for triangular co-operation. Many partnerships are built around the unhired knowledge shared between actors, a dynamic especially prevalent among Southern partners. Countries lend technical resources such as national experts working in specialised institutions for the purpose of sharing their knowledge with and/or providing guidance to peers from other countries. Partners may contribute in the form of in-kind inputs – for instance sharing their physical workspace, laboratories, substances and technical equipment, among other things – that foster learning for all partners. In-kind and unhired knowledge contributions are harder to quantify than monetary contributions, but not impossible. TOSSD allows for reporting in-kind contributions using non-financial units, though this option has not yet been used. Most Southern partners report monetised in-kind contributions as part of their overall TOSSD reporting, and a few report in-kind contributions with qualitative information on the project title, description, sector or other aspect without the financial information. The UN framework, still in a pilot stage, considers this dynamic, and the recently published manual for the measurement framework suggests it will allow for reporting quantifiable items in a way that fits different country contexts (UNCTAD, 2025[5]). SEGIB includes items such as costs and other contributions in its framework; data on this information are not public, however, and challenges persist regarding quality, completeness and comparability. Box 2.2 discusses further the challenges of measuring non-financial contributions.

Box 2.2. Triangular co-operation and data reporting: How to measure non-financial contributions

Knowledge sharing is integral to triangular co-operation, which leverages not only financial but also technical in-kind resources from all partners that are often not monetised and thus not captured in available datasets. For example, deployment of government officials to provide technical support to triangular co-operation projects is covered through the salaries they are paid by the public institution that employs them. Those payments often are not accounted for as part of the contributions to the project.

As in-kind resources are central to triangular partnerships, there has been a long-standing interest in standardising how these contributions are measured in different systems. A range of options have been discussed at country, regional and global levels for several decades (PIFCSS, 2016[12]; PIFCSS, 2016[13]).

In TOSSD, the methodology allows for reporting of in-kind technical co-operation, which is understood as the use of public officials in the reporting country. Each reporting country monetises and reports the incurred salary costs in its local currency, and the Secretariat of the International Forum on TOSSD applies the purchasing power parity conversion factor for private consumption to those amounts, ensuring that salary costs are comparable among countries fairly (TOSSD, 2025[14]). In addition, TOSSD includes a dedicated field to report non-monetary quantifications, allowing for the reporting of activities without any financial information.

The new UN framework proposes a structure based on three groups: financial contributions; non-financial contributions that are monetised (such as technical hours and equipment); and non-financial contributions measured through non-monetary units that quantify the outputs (such as the number of scholarships awarded or of people trained). Establishing a non-monetary measure would increase the visibility of development co-operation beyond financial transfers (UNCTAD, 2025[5]).

The evolution of Brazilian co-operation reporting

Brazil regularly publishes a statistical report called Brazilian Cooperation for International Development, or COBRADI, that sets out both resources spent (financial and in-kind) and Brazil's co-operation practices (type of activities and projects). In the past two decades, there has been a noteworthy effort to improve statistical accuracy and methodological consistency, including by quantifying non-financial contributions. As an example, in-kind contributions are monetised by measuring mission costs and related technical hours (including opportunity cost) based on each government employee's gross salary.

Brazil has been active in international discussions on measuring South-South and triangular co-operation, both at the UN level and in the TOSSD framework. It also has worked to harmonise the COBRADI and TOSSD methodologies, having first reported part of its South-South and technical co-operation to TOSSD in 2020. The following year, Brazil reported ten times more activities and three times more amounts disbursed to TOSSD. The increased data on Brazilian triangular partnerships alone included a threefold increase in the number of activities reported and double the disbursements reported and monetised in-kind contributions. Brazil's overall submission to TOSSD includes nearly 60 public entities at both national and subnational levels.

Source: PIFCSS (2016[13]), "Valorización de la cooperación Sur-Sur Estudios de Caso: Brasil, Chile y México" [Monetisation of South-South Co-operation Case Studies: Brazil, Chile and Mexico], https://www.cooperacionsursur.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/11-DT10.pdf; PIFCSS (2016[12]), "Valorización de la cooperación Sur-Sur: Avances y retos en Iberoamérica" [Monetisation of South-South Cooperation: Progress and challenges in Ibero-America], https://www.cooperacionsursur.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/12-DT09.pdf; TOSSD (2025[14]), *TOSSD Reporting Instructions 2025*, https://tossd.org/docs/reporting_instructions.pdf; UNCTAD (2025[5]), *Manual for the Framework to Measure South-South Cooperation: Technical and Procedural Aspects for Pilot Testing*, https://unctad.org/system/files/official-document/tcsstatinf2025d1_en.pdf; Shleicher and Barros (2022[15]), "Medindo o gasto externo brasileiro para a implementação da Agenda 2030: o novo COBRADI 2021-2024" [Measuring Brazil's external expenditure for the implementation of 2030 Agenda: The new COBRADI 2021-2024], http://dx.doi.org/10.38116/bepi33art5.

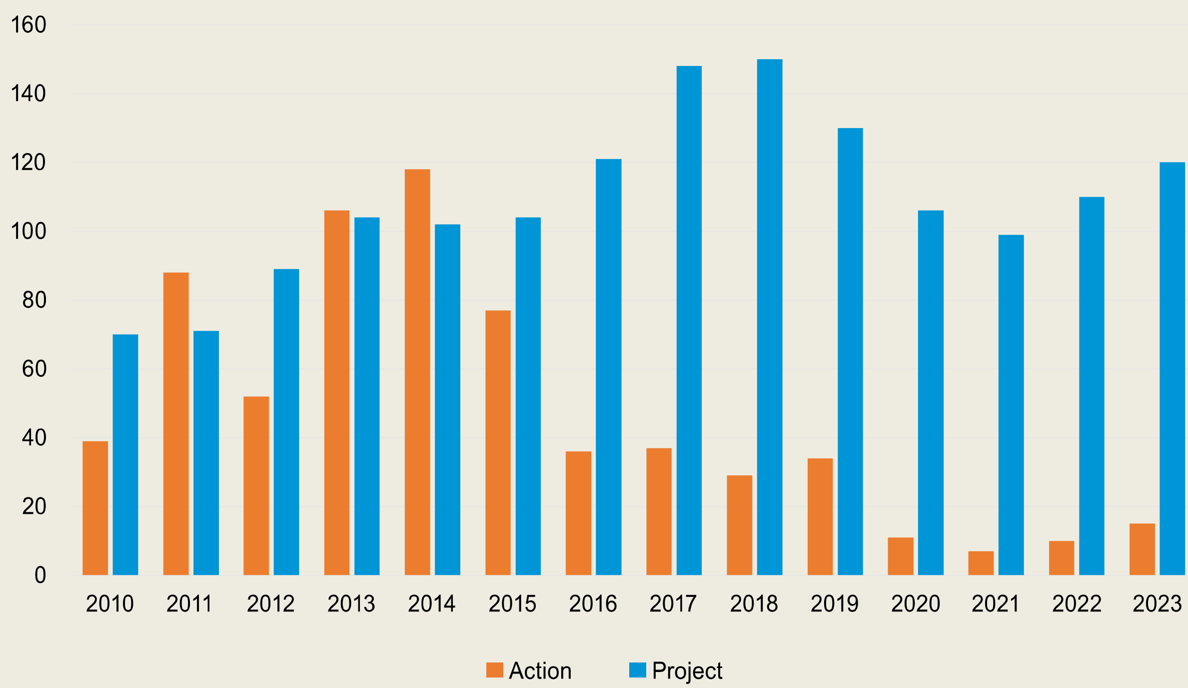
Partnership dimension and horizontality. Global databases are designed for the provider to report its contributions to one beneficiary or a group of beneficiaries, regardless of the how the co-operation is channelled. This approach overlooks what partnership looks like in triangular co-operation as well as the horizontal features of the triangular modality. The regional process agreed by the Ibero-American countries takes a different approach that itself is deliberately horizontal as these countries report as equals. All of them, regardless of their roles in bilateral, regional or triangular co-operation, are expected to report on the initiatives they are participating in and indicate their role, the type of co-operation and various characteristics of the initiative. Thus, the reporting framework is not designed for reporting by providers but is focused, as previously noted, on the initiative. This allows each triangular partnership to be cross-checked. The reporting process as such motivates dialogue among actors participating in one initiative to enhance the quality of information (SEGIB, 2024[7]). In TOSSD, as noted, pivotal partners are not systematically identified,[4] and if two or more countries benefit, the activity is reported as regional or global co-operation since the system does not allow for multiple beneficiaries to be reported.

Box 2.3. Ibero-American data collection

Since 2007, SEGIB, with support from the Ibero-American Program for Strengthening South-South Cooperation (PIFCSS), has been working with a conceptual and methodological framework to register data on South-South and triangular co-operation in Ibero-America. In 2015, a regional online platform was established where countries share data on their South-South and triangular co-operation in and with Ibero-American countries and their partners. It collects information on triangular partners outside the Ibero-American region such as African and Asian countries that act as pivotal and benefitting partners[1] and facilitating partners. The 2022-2023 data on triangular co-operation show that 68% of the initiatives reported are concentrated with four partners (in descending order): Spain, Germany, the EU and Japan. The other 32% are spread across about 30 different facilitating partners, among them Belgium, Canada, France, Italy, Korea, the Netherlands, Switzerland, the United States and international organisations (SEGIB, 2024, p. 112[7]).

In the past 15 years, SEGIB gathered information from 1 431 triangular co-operation initiatives involving Ibero-American countries between 2007 and 2023. Figure 2.6, which is based on these data, shows how triangular co-operation in the Ibero-American region has evolved since the beginning of data collection in 2010. Especially noteworthy is the drastic decline in the number of actions, which could be seminars, workshops, training sessions or other actions (SEGIB, 2024[7]) relative to the increase in the number of initiatives with entire project designs. This is a sign of triangular co-operation moving towards a next step of maturity in the region.

Figure 2.6. Triangular co-operation actions and projects in Ibero-America, 2010-2023



Source: SEGIB (2024[7]), *Report on South-South and Triangular Cooperation in Ibero-America 2024*, https://informesursur.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/12/informe-final-ingles.pdf; SEGIB (2025, p. 103[6]), *Ibero-American cooperation figures* (database), https://informesursur.org/en/ibero-american-cooperation-figures/.

Triangular co-operation as a modality has gained more prominence in the exchanges than bilateral South-South and regional co-operation. Another notable finding is that the thematic profile of triangular co-operation, with environmental protection the top concern, differs from that of bilateral exchanges. Analysis of the roles performed by countries also showed that the same country may take on different roles in different initiatives depending on the thematic area and degree of specialisation (SEGIB, 2024[7]).

Note: The Ibero-American framework uses different terminology than this publication to identify the roles of actors in triangular co-operation partnerships: *primer oferente* (Southern partner), which could be the role of the pivotal; *segundo oferente* (non-Southern partner), which is the term used to identify the facilitating partner; and *recipient* to identify beneficiary.

Source: Exchanges with SEGIB and SEGIB (2024[7]), *Report on South-South and Triangular Cooperation in Ibero-America 2024*, https://informesursur.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/12/informe-final-ingles.pdf; SEGIB (2025[6]), *Ibero-American cooperation figures* (database), https://informesursur.org/en/ibero-american-cooperation-figures/.

Size of initiatives. The TOSSD disbursement data suggest that triangular co-operation initiatives are rather small compared to other bilateral technical co-operation initiatives; a key reason being that the financial contributions of the reporting provider are captured in official statistics and not all partners' efforts are monitored. Because the common comparable measurement in traditional development co-operation has been financial disbursements by the provider (specifically ODA), this has been seen as the default for all modalities. However, provider disbursements do not consider the efforts that many partners, particularly developing countries, are making in terms of sharing their experts' time and knowledge. A change in the way triangular initiatives are tracked is needed. These initiatives may be small in terms of the ODA budgets mobilised, but since different partners contribute different types of resources, the overall volume is higher than what can be captured in official statistics.

Project details. Data on disbursements may inadvertently hide disaggregated information about triangular co-operation projects. Most umbrella programmes, funds and facilities are reported as one line in the CRS and TOSSD – either as a commitment when the initiative is agreed or as a disbursement after the first funding for the initiative is disbursed. While this is in line with reporting practice, it only gives a very partial picture of the triangular partnerships that are being formed under the respective umbrellas. For example, the German Regional Fund for Triangular Cooperation with Partners in LAC is reported in the CRS as one data entry, though the number of initiatives since 2011 has grown to 142 projects with the participation of 39 countries and organisations (see Box 2.4 for an example where all partners contribute resources). The Fund has published its own repository of projects that for each initiative shows all partners engaged, the roles performed by each partner, monetised contributions, sectors, general descriptions, duration and status (GIZ, 2023[16]). The EU's ADELANTE, another umbrella programme, reported in the CRS as one data entry, actually comprises six dedicated funds and 55 triangular projects that are being implemented in two phases over 2015-2027 (European Commission, 2025[17]). The SEGIB public platform does not offer access to the disaggregated data collected on each project (SEGIB, 2025[6]).

Box 2.4. Example: Promoting electric mobility in Honduras towards regional integration

Costa Rica, Germany, Honduras and the Central American Integration System (SICA) worked in a triangular initiative to contribute to the promotion and early development of a national market for electric vehicles, charging infrastructure and related services. The project also aimed to promote regional integration by leveraging experiences from initiatives in Costa Rica and Honduras to create a replicable model for other Central American countries within the SICA framework. All partners decided to budget for or assign in-kind resources to implement the project. All in-kind contributions from partners were monetised in the records of the project. The breakdown was as follows:

- Honduras – EUR 540 000
- Costa Rica – EUR 322 923
- Germany – EUR 300 000
- SICA – EUR 120 000.

The collaborative funding from Costa Rica, Honduras, Germany and SICA as a regional organisation is an example of a balanced and joint investment that maximised the ownership, shared responsibility and impact of the project. Results included legal and regulatory frameworks to support electric mobility; procedures for acquiring electric vehicles to electrify public and private transportation fleets, strengthened regional collaboration to harmonise public policies on electric mobility across SICA countries; and programmes and strategies to promote, train, develop and implement electric mobility in Honduras. By pooling resources, partners ensured that the expertise and experiences from multiple countries would be used efficiently, which led to a more sustainable implementation of electric mobility initiatives in the region.

Source: GIZ (2023[16]), *Interactive Project Listing* (database), https://fondo-cooperacion-triangular.net/en/filter-list-2/. Project details also are drawn from the OECD Academy e-learning module on triangular co-operation accessible through links on the OECD triangular co-operation website at OECD (n.d.[18]), "Triangular Co-operation", https://www.oecd.org/en/topics/sub-issues/development-co-operation-in-practice/triangular-co-operation.html.

Data coverage. The qualitative data and evidence from international processes and discussions show that several governments, international organisations and non-state actors are absent from the datasets. For example, in the SEGIB reporting, Spain is the largest partner of triangular co-operation in the region with participation in 53 projects in 2022-2023 (SEGIB, 2024, p. 34[7]), and yet Spain only appears with two projects in 2022 in the TOSSD reporting. Similarly, Asia, the region in focus for this edition of the report, is significantly under-reported in TOSSD. For example, Japan appears as one of the top four triangular partners in the Ibero-American region, after Spain, Germany and the EU (SEGIB, 2024, p. 112[7]).

This disconnect stems from the fact that the different measurements have different focuses (disbursements versus projects) and different levels of reporting (programme versus project and activities). A common challenge to all frameworks is the difficulty of capturing non-governmental actors or subnational actors. There is a need to continue refining the methodologies to do so.

2.4. Looking ahead

The growing importance of triangular co-operation in global development over recent decades is increasingly reflected in data frameworks and reporting. Databases have improved in coverage, diversity of sources and methodological clarity. Nevertheless, a closer look at the available evidence shows persistent challenges regarding the regularity, accuracy and completeness of the data and in the relevance of aspects monitored. TOSSD is the most comprehensive global dataset for triangular co-operation disbursements, but reporting is still limited and irregular and provides only a partial picture.

Many reporting entities are making strides in raising awareness within their institutions about triangular co-operation and towards agreement on a common understanding or definition of triangular co-operation. This is leading to improved internal procedures for better generation of data and, consequently, better data submissions. Challenges remain, however, at international, regional and national levels.

For instance, the Ibero-American region has demonstrated the value of regional co-operation in data collection, and its methodological coherence, historical coverage and consistency in data collection have made it a reference beyond the region. However, the limited public access to disaggregated data at the project level poses constraints for analysis and comparability with other datasets.

At the national level, the implementation in Germany of a dedicated marker for triangular co-operation is evidence of the transformative potential of simple data collection innovations (Box 2.5). The marker has significantly improved the accuracy and volume of German reporting on disbursement. The Brazilian COBRADI report is an example of national efforts of Southern providers to document in-kind contributions in reporting on triangular co-operation (Box 2.2). It is crucial that all resources dedicated to a project and contributing to achieving results are accounted for. Ensuring comparability of valuing in-kind contributions remains a challenge. The pilot of the new UN framework may generate insights on this issue.

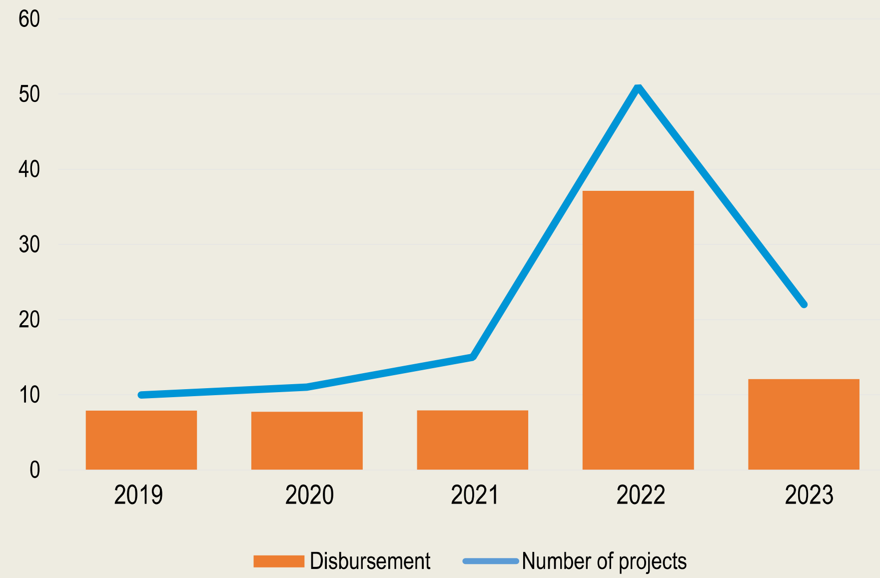
Box 2.5. Germany: A triangular co-operation marker for improving data collection at the national level

In 2022, the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) introduced a marker for triangular co-operation in its internal reporting system to facilitate identification of trilateral initiatives in official statistics and improve Germany's reporting in the CRS and later TOSSD. The goal was to capture all development co-operation projects – whether a small initiative or a global project with a triangular co-operation component – that in practice are implemented through triangular partnerships.

Germany was the first country to report its engagement in triangular co-operation to the CRS, starting in 2016. Before the new marker was introduced, the data already indicated that Germany was one of the leading actors of the modality, but the actual figures pertaining to its triangular co-operation were under-reported. Following the implementation of the marker, Germany's reported disbursements through triangular co-operation were nearly five times higher, having increased from 15 reported initiatives accounting for less than USD 8 million in 2021 to 51 reported initiatives accounting for more than USD 37 million in 2022 (Figure 2.7).

Figure 2.7. Germany's triangular co-operation reported engagement (CRS), 2019-2023

Disbursement, USD million, in constant 2023 prices



Note: In 2019 (applicable to 2018 data), a change was made to the definition of the CRS bi-multi code for triangular co-operation in the CRS. As a result, while data before 2018 are available for Germany, they are not comparable and have therefore been excluded from this figure.

Source: OECD/IsDB (2023[3]), *Global Perspectives on Triangular Co-operation*, https://doi.org/10.1787/29e2cbc0-en; GPI on Effective Triangular Co-operation (2023[19]), *Implementing BAPA+40 Through Triangular Co-operation: Case Story – Germany*, https://triangular-cooperation.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/10/GPI-Spotlight-Germany-V1.pdf; OECD (2025[20]), *CRS: Creditor Reporting System (flows)*, http://data-explorer.oecd.org/s/52.

Further analysis and dialogue on how each partner collects data on triangular co-operation could help identify steps to adjust procedures for national data collection and regional and international reporting. A significant blind spot is including information on all partners involved and not just on the reporter and beneficiaries or beneficiary.

A shared aspiration is interoperability between different global and regional databases on triangular co-operation. The FfD4 discussions included calls to promote open, interoperable data platforms and standards to improve data sharing and accessibility and address the challenges for developing countries. Data platforms and standards such as TOSSD, the CRS, SEGIB, the IATI and others thus have a unique opportunity to enhance interoperability, which would decrease the reporting burden and ensure transparency and accountability efforts in the future.

AI tools also hold promise for identifying unreported or unlabelled triangular co-operation projects (Chapter 1). AI could be used to search project documents from partners across the globe and help identify projects that are not yet included in databases or are in databases such as TOSSD and the CRS but not labelled as triangular. AI can also be used to cross-check data and identify reporting issues, which can potentially improve consistency and accuracy. Available TOSSD data include some reported activities that are clearly not triangular in nature, but without cross-checking the data either manually or with the help of technological tools, inaccuracies are bound to continue to occur.

Finally, while more information is needed on the inputs and general description of implemented triangular co-operation initiatives, statistical data will not show the full picture. Information is also needed on how partnerships are formed, what governance structures exist for horizontal decision making, how resources were integrated, what knowledge and practices have been at the core of the knowledge sharing and peer learning, and what results – direct and indirect – emerged from the triangular co-operation. Triangular co-operation actors acknowledged the importance of such information at the 8th International Meeting on Triangular Co-operation in Lisbon, agreeing that a shared challenge is identifying potential partners that have the practices they would like to learn from (PIFCSS, 2024[21]). Platforms with some information exist, but documentation of project experiences and evaluation of triangular co-operation remain insufficient.

Without improvement and adjustment of data collection at the national level, challenges around quality and completeness of data will persist and crucial aspects worth monitoring to capture the nature of the modality at the global level will continue to be missed.

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Notes

[1] The OECD online project repository includes information on triangular co-operation projects that countries, international organisations, representatives of the private sector, civil society, philanthropy and subnational actors share with the OECD. The database is being progressively expanded and was last updated in January 2023. The database can be searched by the actors involved (e.g. countries, international organisations and other non-governmental actors) as well as by sector, budget range, start date and whether costs are or are not shared. Updates after January 2023 were not possible, and the database is now available on the OECD web archive: https://web-archive.oecd.org/2019-10-07/420179-triangular-co-operation-repository.htm.

[2] Unless otherwise indicated, this report categorises regions as follows: Africa (Africa and South of Sahara in TOSSD); Asia-Pacific (Asia, Far East Asia, Oceania, and South and Central Asia in TOSSD); Europe; LAC (America, Caribbean and Central America and South America in TOSSD), and MENA (Middle East and North of Sahara in TOSSD).

[3] In 2022 and 2023, 19% of reported activities did not specify the beneficiary country or region.

[4] Regular reporting on pivotal partners will start in the 2025 data collection round on 2024 activities.

3 Triangular co-operation in Asia-Pacific: Regional dynamics, approaches and emerging opportunities

This chapter explores the dynamics and evolving landscape of triangular co-operation from the springboard of Bandung into a century of emerging Asia with rapid economic growth. It looks at the diverse ecosystem of partners in the Asia-Pacific region, the distinct mechanisms in use, and the shape of regional, interregional and business collaboration. It argues for co-designed and locally led approaches and concludes with insights and lessons for future triangular partnerships.

“Unity in diversity” is almost a national motto for many countries in Asia-Pacific, including India where Jawaharlal Nehru popularised this old wisdom, as well as Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines and Singapore – all to illustrate the importance of respecting cultural diversity. There is also an old Indonesian proverb that says: “Wherever we go, we always need to value the colour of the sky”.[1] In the context of triangular co-operation with Asia-Pacific, this insight is a reminder of the importance of respecting local contexts, needs and ways of working and embedding partnerships in cultural values and tradition. The great diversity of the Asia-Pacific region is reflected in the equally diverse approaches to triangular partnerships shaped by a strong emphasis on mutual learning, trust-building and adaptability – qualities that echo the spirit of this proverb as well as the strong tradition of South-South co-operation. With a dynamism that channels the rapid transformation that the development ecosystem is undergoing, Asian partners continue to engage through context-sensitive dialogue and flexible modalities, enabling solutions that are locally rooted yet globally connected.

The Asian Development Bank (ADB), media and academia often refer to this being the “Asian Century” (Asian Development Bank, 2011[1]) and forecast that the region would likely generate more than 50% of the world’s gross domestic product (GDP) by 2050. Much of Asia-Pacific has been a powerhouse of economic development and a major engine of global growth, fuelled by industrialisation, technological advancement and deeper integration into global markets in recent decades, and the region currently accounts for nearly a third of global GDP and more than half of the world’s population (OECD, 2023[2]; OECD, 2025[3]).

The Asian region is home to actors that, at different moments of history, have recognised themselves as emerging development partners and pioneers of triangular co-operation. Chapter 1, which discusses the future of triangular co-operation, proposes that regions are likely to play an enhanced role during these turbulent geopolitical times. Today, when development co-operation stands at a crossroad, the regional approach of the triangular co-operation in Asia has great resonance.

As noted in Chapter 2, in global datasets that capture triangular co-operation, such as TOSSD and the CRS, the Asia-Pacific region is in third place in terms of funding disbursed, though its triangular partnerships are likely being under-reported based on qualitative data that suggest a greater actual presence and activity.

Triangular co-operation reflects the region’s diverse development trajectories, the evolving roles of all partners, and regional integration efforts. Triangular co-operation is not only a way of sharing knowledge and resources but also a platform for learning, regional trust-building and technical diplomacy. This chapter draws on multiple interviews, informal exchanges and events with partners in the Asia-Pacific region.[2] It outlines some characteristics of triangular co-operation in the Asia-Pacific region – who is engaged in its ecosystems of development actors, and how and why partners interact – by identifying emerging patterns and remaining challenges with an eye to opportunities for scaling up impact.

3.1. Triangular co-operation in the Asia-Pacific region: from Bandung into the Asian Century

Asia’s engagement in triangular co-operation dates back at least to the 1955 Bandung Conference hosted by Indonesia, where leaders of newly independent Asian and African countries agreed to support one another through exchanges of experts, training and technical assistance (Box 3.1). This consensus evolved into formal South-South and triangular co-operation frameworks backed by many international agreements such as the 1978 Buenos Aires Plan of Action (BAPA) for Promoting and Implementing Technical Cooperation among Developing Countries, which explicitly emphasises mutual technology exchange and knowledge sharing. In 2019, BAPA+40 included additional commitments to advance triangular co-operation.

Box 3.1. Indonesia's approach to triangular co-operation

Indonesia has been a key partner in triangular co-operation in the Asia-Pacific region and Africa since hosting the Bandung Conference in 1955. It included triangular co-operation as part of its G20 Presidency in 2022 and actively engages with numerous development partners, bringing its technical expertise to triangular co-operation initiatives, particularly in least developed countries. Indonesia mainly uses five modalities – projects, joint programmes, capacity-building initiatives, dispatch of technical co-operation agents and humanitarian assistance – in priority sectors such as agriculture, fisheries, renewable energy, health, climate change, peace and security, and inclusive economic development. With these, it fosters solidarity, promotes innovation and mobilises additional resources, all by responding flexibly and enhancing ownership and learning through inclusive, demand-driven partnerships.

The governance of Indonesia's South-South and triangular co-operation is shared in the National Coordination Team for South-South and Triangular Co-operation (NCT), which consists of four key institutions: the Ministry of National Development Planning (Bappenas), the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of State Secretariat and the Ministry of Finance alongside the Indonesian Agency for International Development (AID). Together, these four ministries provide strategic guidance and policy direction for the country's development co-operation agenda while relevant sectoral line ministries implement their activities. The establishment of Indonesian AID in 2019 marked a pivotal evolution of Indonesia's co-operation architecture. The agency is tasked with managing and disbursing Indonesia's South-South and triangular co-operation through the Indonesia AID Fund and working with partner countries through grants, technical assistance and humanitarian aid, particularly to target Asia, Africa and the Pacific regions.

Indonesia's partnerships bridge language differences and geographic distance, address a variety of thematic specialties, and showcase sophisticated, multilayered triangular co-operation. An example is the collaboration with Germany for renewable energy mini-grids. Through this project, three different but interconnected partnerships were formed with actors on three continents that address specialised needs in the field of renewables: microhydro with Madagascar, grid integration with Nepal and geothermal with Kenya. This triangular, multilayered initiative is groundbreaking across multiple dimensions: It is, for example, the first project to facilitate access to the Indonesia AID Fund, leveraging triangular co-operation into stronger bilateral relations with Madagascar and with Kenya through the signing of memoranda of understanding (MoUs), a reverse of the usual pattern of bilateral relations catalysing triangular engagements. This project also is a good example of how the NCT exercises its role as the supervisory board of South-South and triangular co-operation in Indonesia.

Indonesia has been a strong partner of the Islamic Development Bank in the area of South-South and triangular co-operation mainly through the IsDB's Reverse Linkage mechanism with the involvement of its private sector and state-owned companies (as demonstrated by a project with Kyrgyzstan that is described in Box 3.5 as well as Box 4.5 in Chapter 4).

Overall, Indonesia's multistakeholder policy positions strongly foster horizontal partnerships beyond government institutions, drawing on the diverse expertise of its civil society, local community groups, academia and private sector.

Source: Interviews with representatives from Indonesia, the IsDB and Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ); OECD (2025[4]), *Development Co-operation Profiles: Indonesia*, https://www.oecd.org/en/publications/development-co-operation-profiles_04b376d7-en/indonesia_2de3e355-en.html.

By the early 2000s, many rising Asian economies also became providers of development co-operation, often taking up a dual role of providing and benefitting from development co-operation, and contributing to reshaping the development co-operation landscape (Chapter 1). New multilateral vehicles such as the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (2016) and the BRICS[3] New Development Bank (2014) emerged alongside expanded bilateral South-South co-operation. The 2030 Agenda reaffirmed South-South and triangular co-operation as a complement to traditional North-South co-operation and key to achieving the SDGs.

3.1.1. Actors and evolving roles in Asia-Pacific

The Asia-Pacific region is home to a complex ecosystem of development actors, paths, policies and partnerships. While the region is very diverse in its experiences, cultures, traditions and innovations, the development landscape features public and private stakeholders from both North and South that are united by shared goals and often by co-funded projects alongside a broad spectrum of subregional organisations and national systems with different development narratives, priorities and configurations of triangular co-operation. Most of these actors share the perspective that triangular co-operation needs to be driven by and for Asian partners, designed along Asian priorities, and used with a flexible and nimble approach that aligns with development and economic interests, taps into (digital) innovations, shares successful homegrown initiatives, integrates local knowledge, and respects cultural nuances (interview partner). The diverse approaches reflect the need for context-specific, demand-driven collaboration that blends technical assistance, policy dialogue and institutional learning.

Today, the Asian region hosts actors that could be identified with different traditions of co-operation and that perform all three roles in triangular initiatives (benefitting, pivotal and facilitating; see Chapter 1 and Figure 1.1). Japan, as a pioneer in triangular co-operation, is drawing on its extensive track record over the past decades to champion the modality in the region and beyond (Box 3.2).

Box 3.2. Japan renews and strengthens its approach to triangular co-operation

Japan's involvement in trilateral development co-operation started as early as the 1950s. Since its first collaborations, Japan's approach to triangular co-operation has evolved to adapt to the global context and changing development co-operation ecosystem. In recent years, Japan has approached triangular co-operation "as regional and global platforms for co-creation and mutual learning" (Yasunaga, Yamamoto and Murotani, 2024[5]).

Japan's most recent Development Cooperation Charter (2023) places a partnership approach at the centre of its development co-operation, pledging to work with other countries "through equal partnerships" to achieve development goals and listing "co-creation of social values through dialogue and collaboration with developing countries" as one of the country's basic policies (Japan Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2023[6]).

The Japan International Cooperation Agency's (JICA) partnership programs serve as platforms for triangular co-operation – as training programmes with regional reach, as projects, as the exchange of experts or as a mix of all of these modalities. To date, JICA has accepted approximately 85 000 participants for Third Country Training Programs and dispatched 2 000 Third Country Experts. Currently, 13 countries have signed Partnership Programs with JICA – 5 are in Latin America, 4 in Asia and 4 in MENA. Triangular co-operation has been fuelled by partners' interest in sharing and replicating successful bilateral experiences in similar contexts and in implementing regional initiatives for capacity strengthening. Some draw on regional centres of excellence to share their knowledge. JICA is currently designing a platform to collect information on all its partnerships with centres of excellence and their partners. Japan is also integrating triangular partnerships in its bilateral co-operation programmes and projects.

In renewing some partnerships, Japan has introduced novel approaches to triangular co-operation that prioritise flexibility of processes and innovation, using the potential of regional platforms and inviting new actors to engage with triangular principles. In this environment, dialogue and activities around a more circular co-operation are evolving. For example, following their strong collaboration in the Partnership Program and the dispatch of Japanese volunteers to partner countries, Thai volunteers have come to work with local governments in Japan.

Examples of triangular co-operation with Japan can be found in every region and in all configurations. Following are more examples:

- a collaboration with the Cambodian Mine Action Centre to co-operate with Angola, Colombia, Iraq, Lao PDR and, more recently, Ukraine to share technology and know-how, which has led to the co-creation of mine action equipment and methodologies with various partners and with support from JICA (Yasunaga, Yamamoto and Murotani, 2024[5])
- a multiregional initiative with Malaysia to share methods for coexistence between ecosystem conservation and local communities in a national park with Botswana, Cambodia, the Philippines, Sri Lanka, Thailand and Viet Nam.
- a partnership with Türkiye to deliver training for African health professionals, with Türkiye drawing on its healthcare system improvements to serve as a regional knowledge provider with JICA's support
- the Asia-Africa Knowledge Co-creation Program that emerged from the Tokyo International Conference for African Development process as a space for knowledge sharing and joint generation of solutions and approaches to support African development efforts (for example on rural community development and health) (Japan International Cooperation Agency, 2018[7])
- support to development co-operation agencies in countries such as Malaysia and Kazakhstan and across Latin America, supporting their triangular partnerships, which has allowed these agencies to draw on their national strengths and experiences to promote knowledge sharing and human resource development with other developing countries, thereby greatly expanding the reach of triangular co-operation.

JICA's approach to triangular co-operation builds on the local expertise and contextual knowledge of partner countries while providing Japanese financial, technical and quality assurance support. These programmes prioritise co-creation, horizontal learning, co-implementation, mutual benefit and sustainability, and the strengthening of institutional relationships across regions.

Source: Information shared in interviews with JICA; Yasunaga, Yamamoto and Murotani (2024[5]), "Japan's approach to South-South and Triangular Cooperation: A platform for co-creation and mutual learning", https://ris.org.in/newsletter/dcr/2024/paper3.pdf; Japan International Cooperation Agency (2018[7]), *JICA's Support for South-South and Triangular Cooperation*, https://www.jica.go.jp/Resource/activities/schemes/ssc/ku57pq00001wlrnp-att/pamphlet_en_01.pdf; Japan Ministry of Foreign Affairs (2023[6]), "Development Cooperation Charter and Japan's development cooperation", www.mofa.go.jp/mofaj/gaiko/oda/files/100783448.pdf.

Analysing development co-operation from the perspective of triangular co-operation shows that many developing countries, regardless of their income level, have knowledge to share and are making efforts to do so. In Asia-Pacific, Bangladesh, Cambodia, Lao PDR, Myanmar, Nepal and Timor-Leste, Pacific Island states and other least developed and low-income Asian countries have welcomed triangular partnerships (Box 3.3). They have taken on various roles in these, sometimes as main beneficiaries of the knowledge exchange and sometimes as sources of knowledge and tested practices for specific challenges of regional relevance, for example in disaster risk reduction among SIDS (OECD, 2024[8]).

Box 3.3. Triangular co-operation among the Pacific Islands and in the Pacific

To facilitate exchanges among the different countries in the Pacific for the purpose of scaling local development solutions, the Pacific Islands Development Forum (PIDF) and UNOSSC signed a memorandum of understanding in 2017 to implement triangular partnerships. In one such partnership, Fiji deploys retired teachers to benefit the Marshall Islands, Nauru, Tuvalu and Vanuatu, which helps alleviate human resource gaps in education and improve service quality in these countries. Another example is the Tuvalu Coastal Adaptation Project, in which the PIDF brokered the procurement of boulders and topsoil from Nauru for coastal reclamation, linking local supply capacity with climate resilience needs in Tuvalu. These projects emphasise peer learning, regional solidarity and locally led solutions (UNOSSC; Pacific Islands Development Forum, 2019[9]).

In the Pacific, Timor-Leste is partnering with Indonesia, Korea and the UNDP in Indonesia to increase access to renewable energy and increase operational sustainability in very remote areas. Indonesia is sharing its expertise based on a bilateral project in solar water pumping systems. The programme distributed solar lights to over 5 300 households, is building 11 solar water pumps, and developed frequently asked questions manuals and training modules for local operators in Timor-Leste (ACCESS, n.d.[10]). The project has also contributed to fostering closer collaboration between Timor-Leste and Indonesia and paved the way for potential future collaboration with the Community of Portuguese Language Countries (CPLP).

Source: Information shared during an interview, UNOSSC; Pacific Islands Development Forum (2019[9]), *South-South and Triangular Cooperation in Action: Pacific Islands Development Forum*, https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/4022467/files/1384439-EN.pdf; ACCESS (n.d.[10]), *Accelerating Green Energy Access to Reduce Inequality Project*, https://accesstoenergy.org/en/our-location/timor-leste.

Diverse middle-income countries across Asia in all subregions also are increasing engagement in South-South and triangular co-operation. Among those are the People's Republic of China (hereafter China); Central Asian countries such as Kazakhstan (Box 3.5); India; Indonesia; Malaysia; the Philippines; Singapore (Box 3.6); Samoa (Box 3.11); Thailand; Türkiye in support of other Turkic countries, Africa, Asia and Europe (Box 3.4); and Viet Nam. They have taken different paths and have different focus and experience. Some have established stand-alone co-operation agencies or co-operation units within their ministries of external affairs or trade, and some are expanding their global and regional reach while others foster triangular initiatives throughout their national networks of co-operating institutions.

Box 3.4. Türkiye's role in bridging South-South and North-South co-operation

Türkiye ranked among the top ten bilateral providers of development co-operation in 2024 and was the second largest provider of humanitarian aid in 2023, according to OECD data (OECD, 2024[11]). Türkiye is an OECD founding member but not a member of the DAC; it thus plays a role of a bridge between South-South and North-South co-operation.

The Turkish Cooperation and Coordination Agency (TİKA) was established in 1992 to support Turkic countries after the fall of the Soviet Union (including Organization of Turkic States members Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan). Türkiye has since increased its geographical reach, and TİKA now operates in over 170 countries and has 56 programme co-ordination offices in 52 countries across the Balkans, Central Asia, Latin America, Africa and Southeast Asia (OECD, 2024[11]).

Türkiye frequently relies on partnerships with UN agencies such as the UNDP and the Rome-based institutions to implement triangular co-operation. For example, together with UNDP and the Istanbul International Center for Private Sector in Development, TİKA shared knowledge from its private sector, business associations and experts to establish a vocational training centre in Bosnia (TİKA, 2019[12]). Bosnian, private sector and UNDP contributions leveraged TİKA seed funding of about USD 104 000 to reach an overall budget of roughly USD 550 000 (GPI on Effective Triangular Co-operation, 2019[13]). The Partnership Programme between Türkiye and the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) facilitates an exchange of experts in the fields of agriculture, food security, conservation, drought management and biodiversity; through this programme, Türkiye and the FAO have supported co-operation with Eritrea, Mauritania and Sudan on large-scale land restoration methods with local communities (Food and Agriculture Organization, 2025[14]).

Through other South-South co-operation partnerships, Türkiye and Colombia, working with the International Labour Organization, initiated an e-learning course on decent work in refugee and mixed migration contexts (ILO, 2021[15]). Türkiye's Reverse Linkage projects with the IsDB cover topics ranging from sustainable cotton production and an alliance to fight avoidable blindness with Azerbaijan and partners in Africa and Asia. Türkiye also engages in triangular partnerships with Japan and Korea on topics such as disaster risk management and health (OECD, 2023[16]).

Source: OECD (2024[11]), *Development Co-operation Profiles: Türkiye*, https://www.oecd.org/en/publications/development-co-operation-profiles_04b376d7-en/turkiye_09a14591-en.html; TİKA (2019[12]), "TİKA established a vocational training centre in Bosnia Herzegovina", https://tika.gov.tr/en/detail-tika_established_a_vocational_training_centre_in_bosnia_herzegovina/; Food and Agriculture Organization (2025[14]), *FAO and Türkiye Partnership*, https://www.fao.org/in-action/fao-turkey-partnership/about/en/; OECD (2023[16]), *Triangular co-operation repository of projects* (database), https://www.oecd.org/dac/dac-global-relations/triangular-co-operation-repository.htm.

Korea is another example of a country with evolving roles in development co-operation and a strong partner of triangular co-operation in the region and beyond. Australia and New Zealand are growing their engagement in multi-actor and triangular partnerships, deepening the linkages between the Pacific, Southeast Asia and major Asian economies. Partners of the Asia-Pacific in triangular co-operation beyond the region include Canada, Denmark, the EU, France, Germany, Norway, Switzerland and the United Kingdom as well as multilateral organisations such as the UNOSSC, the UNDP and the Rome-based UN institutions. The ADB, IsDB and World Bank have endorsed joint programmes that blend North-South and South-South elements. Furthermore, partnerships between Baltic and Central European countries with Central Asia and the Caucasus are offering interesting insights based on shared transition experiences (Box 3.5).

Box 3.5. Stepping up triangular co-operation in Central Asia

Central Asia is host to a wide variety of partnerships and actors with emerging linkages and practices to share. These include regional, South-South and triangular co-operation as the unique experiences of countries in the region are valuable for its neighbours and partners. For instance, Kazakhstan established the Agency of International Development (KazAID) in 2021 as the legal entity responsible for the country's development co-operation policy and promoting development and sustainable growth in Central Asian countries. Kazakhstan is also home to the Astana Civil Service Hub, and it works with Germany, the IsDB, Japan, Korea, the UNDP and other partners in triangular partnerships on digitalisation, e-governance, water resource management, disaster preparedness and risk reduction, and agriculture, sharing its experience and leveraging local expertise and cultural understanding in Central Asia.

Central Asia has partnered with the Baltic States, particularly Latvia and Lithuania, on border management, customs training and rule of law reforms through triangular co-operation frameworks supported by the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) and the EU. Baltic countries send national experts to engage in OSCE and EU projects in specific areas such as justice reform and act as peer knowledge providers sharing training curricula, operational practices and institutional know-how. Baltic countries' first-hand experience of transition from the Soviet political and legal system, as well as their post-Soviet reforms in terms of good governance and the rule of law, represent a wealth of knowledge from which Central Asia could benefit (Jēkabsone, 2013[17]).

Source: Co-authors' project information; Jēkabsone (2013[17]), "The Baltic States and Central Asia", https://eucentralasia.eu/author/anetejekabsone/; OECD (2024[18]), *8th International Meeting on Triangular Co-operation: Linking Global Processes to Create Local Impact, 7-8 October 2024, Lisbon – Summary of Discussions*, https://triangular-cooperation.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/01/Summary_8th-International-Meeting-on-Triangular-Co-operation_Lisbon-2024.pdf.

3.2. How partners engage in Asian-Pacific triangular co-operation: mechanisms, modalities and instruments

The Asia-Pacific region's triangular co-operation history runs from Bandung's spirit of solidarity through the UN's BAPA conferences to today's array of Southern-led funds and forums of the Asian Century that anchor triangular co-operation projects – for instance the Indonesia AID Fund, the UN Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) Multi-Donor Trust Fund, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) Dialogue Partner Funds, and the Sino-German Centre for Sustainable Development, among others. Triangular co-operation in Asia is becoming increasingly structured through dedicated triangular co-operation programmes, facilities, high-level agreements, MoUs, and structured collaboration with multilateral and regional organisations as well as through public-private partnerships. Following is a non-exhaustive review of approaches; the examples may or may not overlap depending on the actors engaged, the trajectory of the relationship and the topic.

Co-producing and sharing knowledge are at the heart of all triangular co-operation regardless of the mechanism that is deployed. Evidence shows that impressive results can be achieved by sharing and adapting relevant knowledge to local contexts and by matching demands and offers of co-operation. An example is the 30-year-long co-operation between Indonesia and Japan in maternal healthcare. A handbook developed in Japan in the 1950s was shared with Indonesia in 1993 and adapted to different Indonesian local contexts. Then this joint learning experience was shared with 17 other countries across the globe from Southeast Asia to Africa. Each new training and context offered insights into how to adapt and advance the handbook for both Indonesia and Japan. An evaluation found that where the handbook was in use, the rate of compliance with health checks during pregnancy was almost double that in places where it was not used and that full immunisation rates of children were higher and overall access to services across the continuum of health care for mother and child was improved (Japan International Cooperation Agency, 2024[19]). Similarly, Singapore has based its overall development co-operation model on sharing the experiences of its government, research institutions and private sector partners (Box 3.6).

Box 3.6. Singapore's approach to sharing its knowledge through triangular partnerships

The Singapore Cooperation Enterprise (SCE), established by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Ministry of Trade and Industry of Singapore, is the country's technical co-operation agency. The SCE acts as facilitator and mobiliser of technical resources across Singapore's development ecosystem, bringing together public institutions, private enterprises and domain experts to offer demand-driven solutions to development challenges.

The SCE has managed to successfully adapt Singapore's developmental solutions across countries in Africa, the Middle East, Asia and beyond in the thematic areas of connectivity, transport and logistics; digitalisation and innovation; economic and industrial development; education and skills development; governance and public sector reform; healthcare and tourism; sustainability and resource management; and urban planning and infrastructure. Being cognisant that each country is different in its needs and developmental journey, the SCE integrates efforts from the private sector and works with international financial institutions in triangular co-operation, in addition to aggregating public sector expertise from Singapore. For example, alongside the IsDB, the SCE is considering project partnerships with Turkmenistan to strengthen port operations and logistics efficiency and with Djibouti to support smart urban development planning and capacity

The SCE has also collaborated actively with partners beyond Asia to share Singapore's development experience. For example, digitalising the national identify card system in and implementing its Metro Express Light Rail Transit System as well as supporting Kenya in the inception and implementation of the Kenya electronic single window system to streamline and digitise the country's trade processes.

Source: Interview with representatives of the SCE; project information of the co-authors.

Third-country training programmes are another key approach, with an Asian partner, often a middle-income country, taking the pivotal role (with support from a facilitator) by hosting groups of participants from benefitting partners. Japan, a triangular co-operation pioneer, uses this approach in JICA's Partnership and Third Country Training Programs. These institutionalise long-term collaboration between Japan and pivotal partners such as Brazil, Chile, Egypt, Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines and Thailand to co-design and co-implement training, technical assistance and knowledge-sharing projects for third-country beneficiaries (Box 3.2). The Republic of Korea also offers ample opportunities for triangular partnerships through the facilitation of the Korea International Cooperation Agency (KOICA), its implementing agency for development co-operation (see Box 3.7).

Box 3.7. Korea's path from benefitting from development co-operation to providing support to the Asian region and beyond

Korea's evolution from being a beneficiary of development co-operation to a provider informs its approach to triangular co-operation. Acting as a bridge between North-South and South-South modalities, Korea combines strong technical capabilities with context-sensitive knowledge sharing through KOICA's 47 country offices (14 in Asia, 16 in Africa, 8 in Latin America, 6 in Eurasia and 3 in the Middle East) that work as crucial nodes connecting actors around the globe. Through KOICA, it prioritises capacity building over grants for infrastructure development, focusing on sharing technologies, governance reforms, digitalisation and institutional strengthening, thereby creating foundations for long-term partnerships.

Korea's triangular co-operation is implemented in various mechanisms, modalities and instruments: through joint training programmes; comprehensive technical projects; triangular components or activities embedded in bilateral projects; the scaling-up of successful bilateral projects; or through the distinctive Korean approach of creating joint funds or facilities to support triangular co-operation proposals. The Korea-UNOSSC partnership exemplifies this approach for specialised collaborations such as two phases of the triangular co-operation project on Electron Beam Applications for Value Addition to Food and Industrial Products and Degradation of Environmental Pollutants in the Asia-Pacific region under the Korea-UNOSSC Facility on Science, Technology and Innovation (UNOSSC, 2024[20]). In Lao PDR, KOICA worked with Hanoi University in Viet Nam to establish a Cattle Artificial Insemination and Extension Center. In this case, Vietnamese experts trained by Korean specialists transferred knowledge to Lao staff, with Korean experts ensuring quality, demonstrating how triangular elements within a bilateral project can grow into broader technical initiatives.

KOICA has also shared its experiences of creating a development co-operation system and contributing to strengthening newly created agencies across the Asian region, for example by seconding KOICA experts to KazAID and launching a new programme for emerging providers. Strategic frameworks via MoUs initiate collaboration with partner countries, and joint action plans (e.g. with Kazakhstan and Thailand) are co-developed under these MoUs to define long-term, structured development pathways. Korea leverages regional hubs and works in countries where it has no physical presence via regional partnerships.

Beyond the region, Korea has, for example, partnered with Morocco and Cameroon, Côte d'Ivoire, Senegal and Tunisia for the training of government officials and instructors on how to develop vocational training in their automotive industry.

Source: Interviews with KOICA representatives; UNOSSC (2024[20]), "Republic of Korea and UNOSSC Support Electron Beam", https://unsouthsouth.org/2024/02/29/republic-of-korea-and-unossc-support-electron-beam-technology-sharing/#:~:text=The%20United%20Nations%20Office%20for,and%20Degradation%20of%20Environmental%20Pollutants.

Triangular expert dispatch is another common modality, whereby experts from one country join projects in the beneficiary country, supported by funding from a third partner. Advisory services and policy consultations are often delivered in this way.

Multi-year project partnerships, including to co-finance pilot projects, blend bilateral ODA schemes or co-operation with multilateral organisations with contributions from the project partners, such as dedicated triangular co-operation funds**,** allowing partners to jointly design, implement and evaluate initiatives. For example, through its multi-year Fund for Triangular Cooperation with Asia, Germany has partnered with China and India to incubate small-scale triangular pilots that can be scaled up, enhancing partnerships, knowledge exchange and progress on the SDGs through a win-win-win triangular model.

The Fund publishes regular calls for proposals that are open to Chinese public and non-governmental partners and, as of 2025, has worked with Indian partners in four African countries.

Asian partners also strongly support triangular co-operation in partnership with multilateral organisations, for example through trust funds or facilities that provide regular funding for triangular initiatives as these organisations often have already developed trust and other neutral partnerships in the region. Examples are the FAO-China South-South Cooperation Programme, which is supported by a Chinese Trust Fund since 2009, or the International Fund for Agricultural Development -China South-South and Triangular Cooperation Facility, which was established in 2018. China entered high-level agreements with several DAC members while also engaging strongly through multilateral organisations, such as the UNDP, the Rome-based UN institutions and others (UNDP, 2020[21]).

Triangular co-operation is often structured **as a component of bilateral political partnerships between development co-operation providers and Asian partners.** Some of these are based on high-level agreements and MoUs between two Asian partners or an Asian country and a partner from outside the region (either North or South) and implemented by line ministries, technical institutions, civil society organisations (CSOs), philanthropy or the private sector. India is a prominent example: It has signed agreements with partners such as France, Germany, Japan and the United Kingdom, and each of these agreements has its own pace, characteristics and financial mechanisms (Chaturvedi and Piefer-Söyler, 2021[22]). For instance, India and the UK have established a Trilateral Development Cooperation Fund to help globalise Indian innovations and support start-ups through developmental capital investment, grants and technical assistance, mainly in the Indo-Pacific region.

Project implementation through CSOs, foundations and research institutes is another common modality employed by India and many other partners in Asia-Pacific to draw on their vast experience and innovations, including at the local level. Often, these non-governmental groups and institutions have developed an innovative solution to a development challenge, whether it revolves around agriculture, energy efficiency or women’s economic empowerment (Box 3.8).

Box 3.8. Working with CSOs to scale up Indian innovations

Various Indian ministries carry out India’s triangular co-operation, with the Ministry of External Affairs and its Development Partnership Administration playing a fundamental role and as the parent institution of specialised entities and programmes such as the Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation Programme. India also draws on the strength of its vibrant civil society to share innovations with third countries. For example, Switzerland worked with the Indian CSO Development Alternatives on creating brick-production technologies and systems, low-emission building materials, and industrial waste utilisation in India. These building products reached over 1 million homes in India. Based on this success, the project was shared with Bangladesh, where the rapidly growing city of Dhaka faced increasing demand for construction bricks. An Indo-Swiss multistakeholder consortium worked in a triangular partnership to green the Bangladeshi brick industry through energy-efficient technologies (Bandyopadhyay, 2016[23]).

Through the support of the Asia Foundation for former US triangular projects, Indian innovations in the agriculture sector were mapped with the demands of potential partner countries in the Indo-Pacific (Global AgriSystem Private Limited, 2022[24]). Fiji also wanted to learn from India’s experiences with telemedicine. In the past, the UK provided support for exploratory projects that aim to foster research collaboration, promote mutual learning and exchange experiences across key development sectors such as agriculture, health, nutrition and natural resource management through several Indian CSOs in Africa (Table 3.1) (Chaturvedi and Piefer-Söyler, 2021[22]).

Table 3.1. Examples of knowledge-based partnerships of Asia and Africa with United Kingdom-supported CSOs

Indian CSO name	Sector	Partner country
Digital Green	Agriculture, health and nutrition	Ethiopia, Ghana, Niger and United Republic of Tanzania
Development Alternatives	Natural resource management and clean technology solutions	Malawi
Gram Vaani	Social media platform for social development	Kenya, South Africa and Tanzania
Society for the Promotion of Area Resource Centers (SPARC)	Housing, sanitation, resettlement and rehabilitation	Ghana, Guinea-Bissau, Kenya, Malawi, South Africa, Tanzania, Uganda and Zimbabwe
Pratham	Child literacy, education and computer-aided learning	Ghana, Guinea-Bissau, Kenya, Mali, Senegal, Tanzania and Uganda
Pradan	Livelihood and rural development	Ethiopia, Ghana, Mozambique and Tanzania
Public Affairs Foundation	Knowledge-based services	Africa, Southeast Asia and Central Asia

Source: Chaturvedi and Piefer-Söyler (2021[22]), "Triangular co-operation with India: Working with civil society organisations", https://doi.org/10.1787/285b1a9a-en; GPI on Effective Triangular Co-operation (2019[13]), *Triangular Co-operation in the Era of the 2030 Agenda: Sharing Evidence and Stories from the Field*, https://triangular-cooperation.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/12/Final-GPI-report-BAPA40.pdf.

Triangular modalities also extend to **knowledge networks and platforms**. Asia hosts numerous regional workshops, networks (e.g. the International Solar Alliance), South-South fairs, and online portals where best practices and lessons are exchanged. Multilateral agencies – UNOSSC, UN ESCAP, and others – run call-down trust funds to support small grants for triangular co-operation projects. Digital tools are increasingly used: e-learning courses, virtual conferences and remote technical support became more widespread during the COVID-19 era, mitigating travel challenges.

Centres of excellence or strategic hubs often provide structured platforms for exchange and knowledge sharing, a key instrument in JICA's co-operation (Box 3.6). In the Indonesian ecosystem, Badan Layanan Umum, or BLU, is a special classification for public sector institutions that grants them financial and managerial flexibility to serve as centres of excellence in education, health, training, agriculture and research. The Malaysia External Trade Development Corporation has been crucial in identifying, with the IsDB, over 60 public and private sector resource centres that are potential triangular co-operation knowledge providers (Malaysia Ministry of Investment, Trade and Industry, 2020[25]).

To meet growing investment needs, governments are increasingly turning to **public-private partnerships and blended finance mechanisms** to mobilise private capital and draw on the innovations, technology and skills that the private sector can offer in triangular partnerships (Chapter 4). Involving the private sector in triangular co-operation is firmly established in the partnerships of China, Malaysia, Singapore and some other Asian countries. Others, such as Indonesia, provide the framework through their multistakeholder policy; the IsDB's Reverse Linkage policy includes it as a core feature; and other countries involve private partners on an ad hoc basis.

3.3. Unpacking the journeys of triangular co-operation in the Asia-Pacific region

Triangular co-operation in Asia is evolving into a dynamic and multifaceted approach to development partnerships. In addition to their immediate development goals, the journeys of triangular collaborations among multiple actors in Asia-Pacific – governments, regional organisations, the private sector and civil society, among others – have characteristics, patterns and motives in common (OECD, 2018[26]). They reflect the region's diversity, development priorities and innovations and demonstrate the potential of cross-regional collaboration. The journeys also illustrate how triangular co-operation can be a flexible tool for scaling up impact, sharing expertise and fostering technical diplomacy (OECD/IsDB, 2023[27]). Four distinctive features in particular stand out in Asia's triangular partnership experiences:

- regional integration efforts that strengthen institutional and policy co-operation
- interregional bridges connecting Asia with other regions
- locally led approaches drawing on the local knowledge and innovations of local community groups, CSOs and others non-government organisations
- business-driven partnerships that align development goals with commercial interests.

3.3.1. Asian triangular co-operation that fosters regional integration

Historically, triangular initiatives contributed to fostering regional integration and building interregional bridges. Asian partnerships also benefit from the strength of regional platforms to gather, mobilise and enhance solidarity and co-operation efforts. Currently, many projects in Asia either:

- include regional organisations such as ASEAN, ESCAP, the Mekong River Commission (Box 3.9), the Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC) or the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat
- originate in interactions of regional and other groupings that have Asian members including for instance the G20, the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation, the IsDB, MIKTA (Mexico, Indonesia, Korea, Türkiye, Australia and others) or, starting in 2024, emerging development partners such as Azerbaijan, Colombia, Kazakhstan, Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Thailand and Türkiye (ESCAP, 2024[28])
- draw on regional and multilateral development banks to support triangular infrastructure projects or provide seed funding to scale innovations.

An example is Korea, which has initiated partnerships that include bilateral, trilateral and regional exchanges such as the dynamic and mutually beneficial Mekong-Republic of Korea Cooperation partnership launched in 2011. Similarly, the ASEAN-Korea Cooperation Fund was launched in 1990 to further strengthen relations between the regional organisation, its members and Korea.

The Pacific Islands Forum Economic Ministers Meeting in August 2024 agreed on a "Pacific program of enhanced peer-to-peer cooperation" to support the implementation of the Forum's *2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific Continent* and "coordinate existing peer-to-peer cooperation including through triangular co-operation with regional organisations in the Pacific and development partners (Pacific Island Forum Secretariat, 2024[29]).

Box 3.9. Lao PDR: Leveraging triangular co-operation as a regional growth engine

Lao PDR has embraced triangular co-operation as a powerful development modality, building on regional mechanisms such as ASEAN+ partnerships with China, India, Japan, Korea and others. Reflecting the historic Bandung spirit of regional collaboration, the country leverages these platforms to boost cross-border trade, investment and infrastructure connections, exemplified by the transformative Lao-China Railway that positions Lao PDR as a gateway between China and other Southeast Asian markets. As the Mekong River is a power engine for Asia, its regional organisation is an important triangular partner, as shown by the 2021-2025 Triangular Cooperation Project on Sustainable Development in the Lower Mekong Basin, based on the water-energy-food nexus. The partnership between Cambodia, Korea, Lao PDR, Thailand, Viet Nam and UNOSSC aims to strengthen access to water, food and energy for vulnerable communities living in the Lower Mekong Basin through improved development approaches and management in these sectors. It takes integrative and multisectoral approaches to pilot cross-border collaboration, build institutional capacity, and enhance resilience through data-driven planning and knowledge exchange (Mekong Institute, 2023[30]). Moreover, the Mekong Institute is another result of a triangular partnership between Thailand, New Zealand and the countries of the Mekong River Basin.

Faced with managing economic growth in the face of global challenges such as climate impacts and the COVID-19 pandemic, Lao PDR has shifted beyond traditional development co-operation models towards South-South and triangular co-operation enriched by involvement of the private sector, CSOs and philanthropy. Its growing number of public-private partnerships and infrastructure services are enhancing resilience while helping deliver the SDGs and climate action agendas. This evolving approach reflects the Lao PDR's ambition to both contribute to and benefit from co-operative frameworks that unite regional actors, stakeholders and the private sector in sustainable, scalable triangular projects.

Source: Presentation of a representative of the Institute for Industry and Commerce of the Lao PDR Ministry of Industry and Commerce cited in Mekong Institute (2023[30]), *Sustainable Development in the Lower Mekong Basin: Building Forward Better toward COVID-19 Recovery with Water-Energy-Food Nexus Approach through South-South and Triangular Cooperation*, https://mekonginstitute.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/12/LMB-WEF-Nexus-Knowledge-Product_MI.pdf.

3.3.2. Triangular co-operation as an interregional bridge

With its deep tradition in interregional triangular co-operation dating from the Bandung Conference 70 years ago, Asia is a source of inspiration for other regions as many of its triangular partnerships connect three continents with multi-directional knowledge flows. These interregional triangular co-operation initiatives facilitate mutual learning across continents, promote context-sensitive development solutions and strengthen the global reach of regional expertise. This is especially the case with Africa and Latin America and with the collaboration of European and North American partners.

Interregional triangular co-operation between Asia and other regions is seeking to combine complementary expertise, regional perspectives and shared development challenges. While data on triangular co-operation with Asian partners are limited (Chapter 2), there are many examples of interregional triangular partnerships – involving African partners (OECD, 2022[31]), for instance, and partners in Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC) – through which Asia's development experiences are shared with other regions, fostering Asia's global role as important partner. Common themes in Asia-Africa triangular initiatives include agricultural development, vocational training, public health, energy and digital governance. Box 3.10 outlines triangular co-operation on energy between Asia-Pacific and Africa.

Box 3.10. Scalable interregional triangular partnerships in the energy sector complement bilateral co-operation

China is sharing its experiences with renewable energies and energy efficiencies with partners in the Asia-Pacific region and Africa. Complementing its bilateral South-South co-operation with Zambia, for instance, China worked with the UNDP and Denmark in the triangular Renewable Energy Technology Transfer project with public and private stakeholders. A centre of excellence in solar energy in Zambia, which is one of the key project outputs, has been training local technicians on the installation and maintenance of solar technologies. Some of the first graduates of the centre have supported a bilateral co-operation between the UNDP and the Zambian government aimed at electrifying rural health centres through solar energy technologies. The project also supported the review and reform of energy sector regulations to increase private sector involvement in rural electrification.

Denmark and the UNDP shared with China their best practice on project management and their experiences of engaging in cross-cultural collaboration with African countries. The triangular project management unit from China's Ministry of Science and Technology institutionalised the lessons learned from the project in Zambia and a similar initiative in Ghana. It has established a Technology Transfer South-South Cooperation Centre through which China, in partnership with the UNDP and Sri Lanka, adapted the project model in a 2019-2022 triangular partnership with Ethiopia.

Source: Kamwengo (2020[32]), "Beneficiary country ownership and the politics of partnership in trilateral development cooperation: a case study of Zambia", http://etheses.dur.ac.uk/13696/; UNDP (2014[33]), *China-Zambia South-South Cooperation on Renewable Energy Technology Transfer*, https://www.undp.org/china/projects/china-zambia-south-south-cooperation-renewable-energy-technology-transfer; UNDP (2019[34]), *MOFCOM-UNDP: Trilateral Cooperation on Renewable Energy in Ethiopia*, https://www.undp.org/china/projects/mofcom-undp-trilateral-cooperation-renewable-energy-ethiopia.

The triangular partnerships that Asian countries have initiated with LAC have focused on science and technology, climate resilience and institutional strengthening, including with a focus on Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation. Korea has partnered with Mexico and countries in Central America in sustainable forestry and climate resilience and with Costa Rica and other countries in Central America on horticulture for food security. Japan and Argentina have collaborated to share quality control and productivity methodologies in Latin America and Africa; JICA and Brazil have worked on projects on community policing with countries in Central America and the Caribbean and, in co-ordination with the UNOSSC, on South-South and triangular co-operation capacity development. Thailand and Chile have collaborated with countries in Central America to improve agricultural productivity through technical exchanges. China has supported education and infrastructure planning across LAC via partnerships that blend concessional finance and technical training. ESCAP and the regional platform, the Mesoamerica Integration and Development Project (Proyecto Mesoamérica), are partnering with Colombia to address inequalities and build inclusive, climate-resilient and nature-based economies in both the Asia-Pacific and LAC regions by promoting knowledge exchange between policy makers; investors; and micro, small and medium enterprises (ESCAP, 2024[35]).

Working through regional hubs and centres of excellence has proven successful in linking different regions and partners. Multilateral and regional spaces such as the Ibero-American Program for the Strengthening of South-South Cooperation (PIFCSS), the IsDB and UN agencies increasingly play a key role in brokering and sustaining these multicontinental development learning environments and, in some cases, coalitions. For example, the South-South and Triangular Cooperation Facility, a partnership between China and IFAD, supports the sharing of China's agricultural innovations and rural development expertise with developing countries through scalable, country-led projects. Similarly, the China-FAO South-South Cooperation Trust Fund finances the deployment of Chinese experts, technologies and resources to enhance food security and agricultural capacity in partner countries, particularly in Africa and Asia.

3.3.3. Locally led triangular co-operation

As these partnerships demonstrate, triangular co-operation is a way to share many successful Asian homegrown initiatives and learn from solutions developed in other regions. Emphasising local approaches, involving local communities, fostering local cultures and constructively building on cultural differences are essential to the success of triangular partnerships (Box 3.11). This localised approach helps projects to be relevant and sustainable and to have a meaningful impact on the communities they serve (Anderson and Swanepoel, 2022[36]). Co-training is also valuable for shaping people-to-people links.

Box 3.11. Examples of locally led triangular partnerships

The triangular partnership between Australia, Kiribati and Samoa aimed at diversifying seaweed industries in Pacific Island countries demonstrates the value of community-based approaches that build on local and traditional context-based knowledge systems to achieve direct outcomes for the target groups (OECD/IsDB, 2023[27]).

Another example is the triangular partnership between Afghanistan, Germany and Indonesia (2013-2018), which could not have achieved its project results had it not drawn on local knowledge and experiences in a culturally sensitive way. Through the facilitation of the Indonesian and German governments, women's community groups in Indonesia engaged with local women's groups in Afghanistan around producing and selling handicrafts in local markets. By sharing its experiences as a fellow Muslim country with its Afghan partners, Indonesia also demonstrated the whole-of-society benefits it gained from improving women's economic empowerment.

Bangladesh and Nepal partnered with Norway to strengthen capacities of local stakeholder groups on health education and health communication through participatory approaches using community radio stations. A community learning programme was built on the premise of co-learning, with community participation constituting an integral part of the communication design and production process, thereby empowering the community and their means of communication.

Another triangular partnership was a collaboration among the Philippines, Viet Nam, the United Kingdom and the UN Children's Fund on capacity strengthening of multidisciplinary teams to manage child abuse prevention in Viet Nam. This effort was based on and adapted from the Philippines model of a functional child protection unit and from shared experiences in the protection of children from online abuse (OECD, 2023[16]).

Source: OECD/Islamic Development Bank (2023[27]), *Global Perspectives on Triangular Co-operation*, https://doi.org/10.1787/29e2cbc0-en; OECD (2023[16]), *Triangular co-operation repository of projects* (database), https://www.oecd.org/dac/dac-global-relations/triangular-co-operation-repository.htm.

3.3.4. Business-driven triangular co-operation

Partnerships with the private sector have become a prominent component of triangular co-operation in Asia. Chapter 4 discusses different models and approaches used in partnerships with the private sector that enable the development of sustainable value chains that enhance the business environment, promote innovations and advance other shared goals.

To meet growing investment needs, PPPs and blended finance mechanisms are gaining traction. In this regard, triangular co-operation offers ways to partner with the private sector; multilateral development banks (MDBs) such as the ADB, Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank and the IsDB; and export-import (EXIM) banks and government institutions. MDBs are increasingly serving as co-creators, co-financers and conveners in triangular co-operation projects. Partnerships between MDBs and private actors (e.g. blended finance) also may increase, particularly in large-scale connectivity and digitalisation projects, aligning well with the priorities and comparative advantages of Asian partners. Infrastructure features prominently in some Asian and other partners' global development strategies, among them China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), the EU's Global Gateway, Korea's Digital ODA agenda, and India's Global Development Compact.

3.4. Insights from triangular co-operation in the Asia-Pacific region

The experiences and examples shared in this chapter illustrate the diversity of triangular partnerships in Asia-Pacific, which have evolved from small and scattered projects to structured initiatives that foster regional and interregional dialogue and co-operation. As Zeynep Orhun Girard (2024[37]), chief of Capacity Development and Partnerships at ESCAP, observed recently, "Development co-operation is no longer what it used to be, even a decade ago". Mindsets are changing among both traditional and emerging development partners. New mechanisms and forums are being created that carry forward the spirit of Bandung and reinterpret it to match today's context and changes. Triangular co-operation with and in the Asia-Pacific systems offers lessons that can inform and inspire the triangular co-operation community in the region and beyond. Some key insights are as follows:

Design demand-driven and locally owned triangular partnerships. While triangular partnerships are ideally co-designed by all and led by the benefitting partner(s), there are inherent power imbalances in triangular co-operation whether in Asia-Pacific or other regions. Economic and (geo)political relations naturally influence partnerships and risk overshadowing the development focus. Projects in which benefitting partners took the lead, all partners were equally involved from the beginning, that extended beyond the initial pilot phase and that had strong local champions and co-financing commitments tend to have more lasting and sustainable results.

Invest in long-term partnerships and institutionalise triangular co-operation. Experiences in Asia-Pacific show that investing in long-term partnerships with a view to institutionalising triangular co-operation creates trusting partnerships, and this can have positive spillover effects in other policy areas. This ability to deliver technical diplomacy is one of the most important assets of triangular co-operation overall (OECD/IsDB, 2023[27]). Moving from pilot projects or one-time trainings to more structured follow-up initiatives and programmes will be crucial to achieving sustainable development and partnership results, investing in an environment for partners to grow rather than one-off initiatives.

Include triangular co-operation in national development plans and strategies. Raising awareness and allocating budgets for trilateral initiatives could put the modality on a stronger footing from the demand side. Many countries have already strengthened their national strategies and institutions, including by creating agencies for South-South and triangular co-operation (OECD/IsDB, 2023[27]) and by sharing lessons on that institutional development journey. Triangular co-operation requires specific skills and capacities such as co-ordination, creative thinking, cultural sensitivity and inter-cultural understanding that are important for countries to nurture and develop.

Increase flexible financing, seed funding and dedicated budget lines for triangular co-operation. In Asia-Pacific, there are few dedicated triangular co-operation funds. Projects often rely on reallocations of portions of existing ODA budgets. Long-term financing, however, remains a challenge, and some partners noted that many of the triangular co-operation projects in the region are short-term pilots without strategies to sustainably anchor the results or continue the collaboration. There are promising new multilateral instruments that could be explored; for instance, the ADB houses a regional triangular facility specifically for Asia-Pacific projects. Pivotal partners are increasingly providing funding through newly established mechanisms, one example being the Indonesia AID Fund described in Box 3.1, while benefitting partners are hosting the activities of the triangular co-operation projects by providing additional resources. In practice, many benefitting partners shoulder much of the cost (venue, staff time, infrastructure). In addition, individuals who are generally regarded as beneficiaries often commit time and expertise to improve the systems in their sectors: For example, farmers may test new practices or products for the benefit of the whole sector and for the providing institution(s), which can then share and sell this new expertise in other contexts.

Use lessons from crisis mode to simplify and ease administrative burdens. Planning and implementing triangular co-operation projects require co-ordination of three (or more) partners. This can create additional steps and complexity as the addition of each new partner involves extra layers of negotiation. Interview respondents mentioned that agreeing on a joint workplan often takes considerable time and that administrative procedures (for staffing, budgets and reporting) can be tedious (Box 3.12). The COVID-19 Evaluation Coalition found that operating in crisis circumstances fostered flexibility and openness to new approaches and that the use of digital tools, many of them still being put to use, helped preserve continuity. During the pandemic, many actors showed flexibility, quickly allowing programme adjustments, relaxed procurement process requirements and reduced reporting requests. A get-it-done attitude prevailed that allowed funding, implementing and local partners to work together in the crisis to overcome barriers and find solutions (OECD, 2025, pp. 12-13[38]).

Box 3.12. Easing the administrative burden in triangular co-operation

A recurring challenge in triangular co-operation is bringing together three (or more) administrations. This can be especially challenging in interregional initiatives where organisational cultures and institutional arrangements often clash. UNDP research in China found that Chinese partners regarded the differences in procedures and financial management and traditional partners' lack of flexibility as hindrances to project efficiency. For their part, traditional development actors regard the differences between China and their own (DAC) concepts and approaches as a stumbling block. For example, Chinese institutions tend to focus more on "hardware" provision, whereas DAC members tend to focus on behavioural change in partner countries (UNDP, 2020, p. 23[21]). More time and other resources are often needed to find compromises while implementing projects, reporting and accountability mechanisms.

Similar problems were cited in discussions about power imbalances among triangular partners during the PIFCSS-run Co-labs and the 8th International Meeting on Triangular Co-operation in Lisbon (OECD, 2024[18]). Heterogeneity of budgetary and accountability procedures was mentioned as adding to the administrative burden along with project authorisations and monitoring and reporting requirements that led to an overload of work particularly for partners in the South. These perceived problems were associated especially with providers that usually manage triangular co-operation as a bilateral project. In addition to the cost in terms of horizontality, the administrative burden has time, financial and opportunity costs.

How to ease administrative burdens without sacrificing accountability and rigour is a key concern that cuts across different modalities of development co-operation. Some solutions relevant to triangular co-operation to effectively simply procedures and make them more flexible include:

- decentralising decision making
- simplifying reporting (e.g. through verbal reporting)
- distributing responsibilities by taking as an advantage the diversity of procedures
- agree whether, when and how to harmonise procedures and formats.

Beyond triangular co-operation, some development partners have adopted simplification as an institutional goal and conducted comprehensive assessments of underused organisational procedures, systems and tools; introduced AI tools for report simplification; and even launched failure laboratories to openly address what is not working in their practice. What these examples have in common are flexibility, an organisational culture favourable to learning and change, and a decision to make the system work for people and projects rather than making the people and projects work for the system.

Source: Authors' own compilation based on workshops and interviews; OECD (2024[18]), *8th International Meeting on Triangular Co-operation: Linking Global Processes to Create Local Impact, 7-8 October 2024, Lisbon – Summary of Discussions*, https://triangular-cooperation.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/01/Summary_8th-International-Meeting-on-Triangular-Co-operation_Lisbon-2024.pdf.

Measuring impact and capturing and communicating results. Data on triangular co-operation projects in the region and globally are fragmented, with significant gaps and blind spots, as elaborated in Chapter 2. There is ample room for improvement in the reporting and monitoring of project results. One reason is that many triangular initiatives fall within the scope of larger bilateral programmes, which allows for modalities to strengthen one another but means data are not always captured properly. International reporting, visibility and accountability can benefit from assessment and discussion among peers and across regions on how to identify and track triangular partnerships; in this way, practices and experiences also can be more widely shared and available. Developing joint evaluation frameworks from the beginning of a new triangular partnership – specifying indicators for all parties' contributions and benefits – will also help monitor its progress and results. Funding for external evaluations may not always be available. But more streamlined ways of assessing results could be introduced into enhanced and co-created monitoring frameworks that combine South-South and triangular co-operation principles and the DAC evaluation criteria. Documenting and widely disseminating lessons learned and impact stories, for instance through annual reports or case study compilations, can shorten the process of finding partners and solutions.

Flexibility, adaptability and continuous innovation are vital to successful triangular partnerships. Incorporating iterative feedback from all partners to allow for changes and adaptations over the course of a project, in advance of the next phase or in preparing a new project, is crucial if the collaboration is to deliver joint results. In the rapidly changing global development co-operation landscape, static models of co-operation are no longer sufficient. Projects with mechanisms that allow for innovation – whether through digital platforms, green technologies or new financing instruments – have a better chance of keeping pace with external changes and take advantage of the dynamism of the Asia-Pacific region.

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Notes

[1] An Indonesian interview partner shared this proverb.

[2] This chapter was informed by interviews with representatives from Asian and international institutions (see Annex B for a list of interview partners) as well as two sessions dedicated to triangular co-operation with Asian partners during the 8th International Meeting on Triangular Cooperation in Lisbon (7-8 October 2024); the conference on "Global South & Triangular Cooperation: Emerging Facets" organised by Research and Information System for Developing Countries (RIS India) (3-4 June 2025), a virtual event to launch the call for proposals with Chinese partners of the German Fund for Triangular Cooperation with Asia (10 December 2024); the 1st Asian Conference on Triangular Cooperation (ACTrC): A Collaborative Endeavor for Global Progress (2-3 November 2023); and a side event, "Triangular Cooperation: A Modality for The Asian Century", at the 2022 Global South-South Development Expo (GSSD Expo) in Bangkok (13 September 2022).

[3] As of September 2025, the BRICS members are Brazil, Russia, India, China, South Africa, Saudi Arabia, Egypt, United Arab Emirates, Ethiopia, Indonesia and Iran.

4 A snapshot of triangular partnerships with the private sector

This chapter explores some of the pathways, models, motivations, challenges and success factors in triangular co-operation partnerships involving the private sector. It offers examples of innovative triangular partnerships and reviews the various approaches being taken to leverage the expertise, knowledge and financial weight of the private sector, governments, multilateral development banks, business associations and other partners to co-design initiatives that simultaneously drive development progress and advance shared business goals in a win-win-win dynamic.

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the outcomes of the Fourth International Conference on Financing for Development (FfD4) leave no doubt: Achieving the SDGs demands the collective responsibility of the broader community – governments, international and regional organisations, the private sector, civil society, philanthropy, local actors, and many others. Business as usual is no longer an option. The Business Steering Committee,[1] in a communique issued at the FfD4, called on the private sector to expand investment vehicles and platforms that deliver impact, partner with governments and development partners, align sustainability standards across borders, reassess financial regulations to incentivise long-term investment, and expand access to finance for underserved markets and enterprises (UN, 2025[1]). Moving from declarations to actions – that is, forging new partnerships where everyone contributes, learns and benefits – is the challenging next step.

Triangular co-operation, by creating platforms that integrate development expertise and practical innovation from different sources in horizontal partnerships, can drive such impact and action. The private sector has emerged in recent years as an increasingly important partner in triangular co-operation including as a co-designer of solutions that align commercial objectives with development goals. To further unlock the opportunities offered by partnerships with the private sector, traditional co-operation frameworks must be reimagined to create flexible spaces where private firms can join not only as funders, technology providers or contractors but also as co-creators and peers in the pursuit of customised development solutions.

Triangular partnerships with the private sector are still few in number. Much remains to be done in terms of collecting data (Chapter 2), learning from these partnership journeys and sharing evidence on their results. However, evidence to date suggests there are two main challenges to working with the private sector in triangular co-operation. First, how to connect private and government partners, regardless of whether they are located in developed or developing countries, to address a development challenge. And second, how to bridge the apparent paradigm divide between the development co-operation world and the private sector.

Horizontal and multistakeholder efforts offer some guidance. One significant example is the Kampala Principles and toolkit, which emerged from a collaborative effort to guide collective work on making private sector partnerships for development co-operation more effective (GPEDC, 2019[2]). These also outline who and what are included in the overarching term "private sector", ranging from smallholder farmers and informal workers to large multinational companies and financial institutions.

Together with partners from the public sector, private sector actors can support or assume different roles in triangular co-operation. They can benefit from the partnership, for instance through new contacts or knowledge, and play a pivotal role in the partnership by providing expertise and resources and facilitating the progress of the collaboration, for example by contributing efficient procedures or logistical knowledge. While documentation of cases and results remains limited and many partners continue to find such engagement challenging, the private sector is appreciated for the strengths it brings to the table: competitive, feasible and sustainable solutions and a capacity for implementation as well as investment, innovations and social responsibility.

Interviews[2] and desk studies of project documents suggest that knowledge sharing in triangular partnerships can take place in at least three ways:

- through business-to-business peer exchange and learning, or B2B
- through the sharing of private sector expertise with government partners, or B2G
- through the improved conditions for business that public and/or government partners provide, or G2B.

This chapter provides a snapshot of the highly dynamic landscape of triangular co-operation involving private sector and development stakeholders, with a focus on the different motivations, success factors, challenges and emerging models of private sector engagement. It offers perspectives that can be relevant for countries aiming to attract greater private sector involvement in triangular co-operation; for private enterprises and business associations interested in participating in triangular co-operation; and for international organisations promoting business and economic development. Drawing on the experiences of the Islamic Development Bank (IsDB) Reverse Linkage mechanism, especially in Asia, the focus region of this report, as well as on project experiences of other partners, the chapter also offers concrete ideas for strengthening the enabling environment for private actors and supporting scalable, high-impact partnerships.

4.1. Approaches to including the private sector in triangular partnerships

The private sector can become an active partner in triangular co-operation through a variety of different approaches. One is to work through structured programmes, facilities or funds for triangular co-operation to facilitate partnerships with non-government actors including the private sector. Doing so can lead to adapting the working dynamics of such mechanisms and enable new forms of partnerships other than the more traditional way of implementing triangular co-operation through knowledge sharing and grants. Once the mechanism is open in explicit and clear terms, potential partners can reach out to the broader network of partnerships of an institution or country to explore platforms and portfolios that exist in the ecosystem of the benefitting, pivotal and facilitating partners. These networks allow actors that are ready to partner to connect and learn about each other's motivations, limitations and working methods. Some partners in triangular co-operation have created a conducive environment for engagement with the private sector including the European Commission, Germany, the IsDB, Japan, Singapore and Spain, among others (Table 4.1).

Table 4.1. Examples of triangular co-operation mechanisms that welcome private sector engagement

Partner	Triangular co-operation facility/programme	Participation from private sector	Structures, networks and potential nodes to connect with private sector
European Commission	ADELANTE 1 and 2	Encouraged in ADELANTE 2, drawing on lessons from the first phase	EU Global Gateway
Germany	Regional Fund for Triangular Cooperation with Partners in Latin America and the Caribbean; Fund for Triangular Cooperation with Asia	Encouraged through calls for proposals and openness to private sector partners being part of project proposals and implementation	DeveloPPP; KfW banking group with German Investment and Development Corporation (DEG); Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ)
IsDB	Reverse Linkage	Reverse Linkage policy to explicitly include private sector partners	Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC), International Islamic Trade Finance Corporation (ITFC)
Japan	Third Country Partnership Program	Encouraged through Japan's private sector policy, Japan International Cooperation Agency's (JICA) Private Sector Investment Finance (PSIF), and its focus on working with Japanese firms to implement development co-operation projects	Japan Bank for International Cooperation, JICA, Nippon Export and Investment Insurance
Singapore	Third Country Training Programme and Singapore Cooperation Enterprise's Partnership Programme	Private sector engagement encouraged and supported by the Singapore government	Singapore Cooperation Enterprise and Enterprise Singapore
Spain	Triangular Cooperation Program for Latin America and the Caribbean	Explicitly encourages multistakeholder partnerships, including through its decentralised triangular co-operation of different Spanish regions	Compañia Española de Financiación del Desarrollo S.A. S.M.E. (COFIDES); regional governments

Source: Authors' own compilation.

Triangular programmes that welcome private sector actors are found in all regions. For instance, ADELANTE, the EU's flagship triangular co-operation programme with Latin America and the Caribbean, initially did not offer partners from the private sector the opportunity to directly participate in calls for project proposals (Piefer-Söyler and Pelechà Aigües, 2020[3]). But this changed in its second phase when the private sector was encouraged to participate as early as the project formation period (ADELANTE, 2025[4]). The shift corresponded with the start of the EU's Global Gateway programme in 2021.

Likewise, Germany's two regional funds for triangular co-operation, one with partners in Latin America and the Caribbean and the other with partners in Asia, encourage private sector participation, and the calls for proposals of the Asia Fund in China explicitly target private sector and civil society partners. More broadly, Germany facilitates private sector engagement in partner countries through a diverse set of mechanisms and instruments and provides incentives for the German private sector to engage in development co-operation through dedicated mechanisms and instruments such as the Agency for Business and Economic Development, develoPPP, and the AfricaGrow fund and through the provision of export credit guarantees (Hermes Cover) and investment guarantees. In addition, the network of German Chambers of Commerce Abroad offers support to partner countries and German businesses to engage in building capacity and establishing business associations. The government is seen as a strategic partner and private sector actors also value the support of the GIZ network in partner countries (OECD, 2021[5]).

Spain has renewed its triangular co-operation approach and in 2024 launched the Triangular Cooperation Program for Latin America and the Caribbean, which aims to transition to a more advanced model of triangular co-operation by focusing on partnerships formation, innovation and co-creation. With the support of the Spanish Agency for International Development Cooperation (AECID) and drawing on the experience of innovation initiatives such as INTERCOONECTA, Spain has developed methodological tools for different audiences to facilitate co-creation processes. The programme's call for proposals explicitly welcomes the private sector as well as regional and international organisations, civil society, and academia to participate in the proposed triangular partnerships. Multistakeholder and multi-level initiatives are prioritised in project selection. Private sector partners were included in 4 of the 21 proposals approved in 2024 (AECID, 2025[6]).

The IsDB has explicitly opened its Reverse Linkage mechanism for triangular co-operation and adapted its working dynamics to fully include partners from the private sector, using its network as an anchor to institutionalise private sector engagement. Through this mechanism, it supports its member countries to share their knowledge, expertise, technology and resources to develop capacities and devise solutions for their national development. The IsDB has three clearly defined roles in this process, acting as a connector, a facilitator and a provider of catalytic financing (Islamic Development Bank, 2019[7]).

As a result of the IsDB's decision to engage a broader range of actors in triangular co-operation exchanges, both the providers and recipients of knowledge and resources now may come from the public sector, the private sector or civil society. Private sector partners can be engaged as providers of expertise and solutions, for instance, but also be financial partners, which encourages collaborations that are fully led by the private sector such as business-to-business (B2B) partnerships. Through its peer-to-peer stakeholder-empowered approach to triangular co-operation, the IsDB has branched out from traditional public financing: To co-finance triangular initiatives and activities, it has mobilised private sector investment beyond grants, including direct investments, impact investments and loans, among others, in addition to intellectual property and in-kind contributions such as technology, training and infrastructure (Box 4.1). The Reverse Linkage policy includes safeguards to ensure that the beneficiary's development goals remain the chief focus – for example by evaluating the eligibility of proposals following an agreed set of criteria while also creating opportunities for the facilitator and pivotal partners to benefit – thereby ultimately fostering a win-win-win dynamic (Islamic Development Bank, 2019[7]).

The IsDB's Reverse Linkage also takes advantage of existing platforms and portfolios to bring actors together and learn. In this regard, it uses the networks of the OIC and promoted the participation of affiliated entities, notably the ITFC, which focuses on trade facilitation and export development. By connecting suppliers and buyers across member countries, the ITFC enhances trade-based solutions that align with development priorities.

Box 4.1. Moving beyond grants: Embracing a wide range of private sector contributions in the IsDB's Reverse Linkage

Financial contributions by the private sector in Reverse Linkage projects can include, among others:

- grant contributions that are provided for the benefitting stakeholder (regardless of categorisation) including through corporate social responsibility resources
- direct investments that are made during project implementation as part of the project itself to ensure successful completion of all intended outputs
- direct investments committed to a partnership that are made upon completion of the intended outputs of a Reverse Linkage intervention
- impact investments, made on a reimbursement basis, that will be returned to the provider upon achievement of a specific development objective
- loans obtained by the beneficiary stakeholders from the IsDB, any IsDB entity or commercial banks.

Non-financial and technical contributions can include, among others:

- technical expertise that is provided by the private sector actor's existing human resources at a substantial discount or free of charge as part of the intervention
- in-kind contributions such as use of facilities, existing equipment, etc.
- patents, intellectual property and other types of knowledge products that are shared and/or transferred to the beneficiary as part of an intervention.

Source: Authors' compilation.

4.2. Models of private sector engagement in triangular co-operation

Private sector engagement in triangular co-operation takes many forms. Interviews conducted for this report, the co-authors' own experiences and additional research identified six possible models of how businesses contribute to and benefit from triangular co-operation. These six models demonstrate the diverse ways in which private sector actors participate in triangular co-operation, but they should not be viewed as rigid or mutually exclusive approaches, and they often overlap within a single project. In practice, private sector initiatives often cut across multiple models. A company entering a new market through a public-private partnership (PPP), for example, may simultaneously engage in technology transfer and capacity building. Similarly, ecosystem development initiatives frequently overlap with efforts to expand markets or support regulatory reform. This hybridity reflects the inherent flexibility of triangular co-operation as a modality. Table 4.2 includes possible risks in these models of prioritising profit maximisation over development goals or adopting a form inconsistent with a horizontal partnership.

Table 4.2. Overview of five models for private sector engagement in triangular co-operation

Model	Roles in triangular co-operation for the private sector	Way of engaging	Opportunities/ developmental contribution	Risks
Knowledge transfer and capacity building	Pivotal or facilitating partner as mentor and advisor; benefits from experiences of other private sector partners	Capacity strengthening	Institutional strengthening, local skills growth	Private sector not a partner and co-designer but a hired knowledge provider
Supporting innovations, technology transfer and localisation	Pivotal in providing adapted technology; benefits in adapting innovations from other private partners	Providing equipment, training and local implementation	Technology diffusion, innovation absorption	Cultural differences in adapting innovations insufficiently respected
Market access and expansion	Pivotal as catalyst for market development and service innovation; benefits from new market access	Structured entry via trilateral platforms	Investment in underserved sectors	Profit goals or aims dominate the project; unfair access and impact of local players
Public-private partnership (PPP)	Pivotal as service co-provider; benefits from the experience and de-risking support provided by public and private partners	Contractual partnerships and joint governance	Public service delivery	Private sector as public service provider in lieu of governments
Industry ecosystem and regulatory frameworks	Pivotal as ecosystem builder; benefits from the expertise of other private partners	Regulatory, compliance and certification design	Market creation, quality assurance, export support	Profit goals or aims dominate the project and bias of regulatory framework
Local private sector development	Benefits from the knowledge and experiences of the pivotal partner; pivotal partners share tested solutions such as agri-business incubators, co-operative models and sustainable financing tools	Capacity strengthening, sharing and scaling up innovations	Business development, SME strengthening, support of smallholder groups and co-operatives, strengthening women's economic empowerment	Promoting experiences of the pivotal partner without adaptation to the local realities in the benefitting context

Note: SME = small and medium-sized enterprise.
Source: Authors' own compilation.

To meaningfully scale up private sector involvement, it is essential to move past the limitations of grant-dependent financing and explore innovative financing mechanisms that better align with the private sector's operating models and risk-return expectations. These may include, among others:

- sovereign-backed financing models that use public guarantees to lower risk for private investors
- blended finance structures that combine concessional and commercial capital to catalyse private investment
- results-based financing approaches that tie payment to achieved outcomes, thereby rewarding efficiency and performance.

By mitigating financial exposure and reducing transaction costs, such instruments help incentivise the private sector to contribute not just funding but also innovation, technology and operational expertise. The IsDB experience in de-risking private sector involvement through sovereign guarantees offers a compelling example of such innovative financing in action.

4.2.1. Knowledge transfer and capacity-building model

In this model, private sector actors such as innovation incubators or business associations act as knowledge intermediaries, contributing specialised expertise to strengthen institutional capacity in partner countries. Rather than pursuing immediate commercial returns, companies participate as technical advisors, trainers, facilitators and/or institutional mentors (Box 4.2). Activities can include public sector capacity development, regulatory advisory services and curriculum design. This model can also enable local institutions to internalise global best practices while allowing private sector firms to expand their policy influence and build reputational capital.

Such triangular partnerships offer a number of benefits for companies that motivate them to join. The flexibility, openness to learn and exchange, and horizontality in triangular partnerships often provide them access to learning networks that include other firms, academic institutions and policy think-tanks. These interactions may foster further collaborative approaches to problem solving and promote the transfer of best practices across sectors and countries. For example, experienced companies may serve as informal mentors to new entrants, helping them navigate the complexities of development finance, public sector negotiation and cross-cultural engagement through mentor-mentee programmes.

Box 4.2. Supporting the internationalisation of start-ups through triangular co-operation: The EU ADELANTE programme connecting Latin American and European markets

In 2021-2022, partners from Colombia, Mexico, the European Commission and Germany jointly developed a sustainable internationalisation model tailored for Colombian impact-driven start-ups. The collaboration aimed to bridge entrepreneurial ecosystems by supporting market entry, strengthening business capabilities and fostering cross-continental partnerships.

The project was led by Corporación Ruta N in Medellín, Colombia, with key contributions from Impact Hub Monterrey in Mexico and Impact Hubs in Hamburg and Leipzig, Germany. Impact Hub Medellín played a vital role as a collaborating entity, overseeing local implementation and mentorship; the Impact Hub network, with offices in all three countries, acted as a bridge and facilitator between the different partners. Together, these partners combined their expertise to co-design and pilot a so-called soft landing model for international expansion that was tested with 14 promising start-ups selected through a competitive process.

The initiative provided in-depth training on legal, financial and operational aspects of entering European markets. Start-ups also benefited from mentorship with international experts and networking events with investors and corporate leaders. In a study visit to Germany for five of the start-ups, participants engaged with the local innovation ecosystem and validated their business models. Throughout the project, human rights and environmental sustainability were embedded as cross-cutting priorities. The initiative ultimately delivered a replicable methodology for supporting international business growth.

Source: Information from the project interview; European Commission (n.d.[8]), *Soft landing COxDE for Colombian impact-driven start-ups*, https://international-partnerships.ec.europa.eu/policies/programming/projects/soft-landing-coxde-colombian-impact-driven-start-ups_en.

4.2.2. Supporting innovations, technology transfer and localisation model

Scaling up innovations is one of the key strengths of triangular co-operation. Spotted in one place, new ideas and solutions can be shared with partners in the same region and beyond through the facilitation of a third partner (OECD, 2022[9]). Often, but not exclusively, innovations are (co-)created with the private sector. Groundbreaking digital innovations in Africa such as mobile banking (Box 4.3) are one example; the use of drones in the health sector and to collect data is another (Box 4.4).

Box 4.3. M-Pesa: A digital innovation developed from a partnership with the private sector

M-Pesa has revolutionised the provision of financial services in Africa

In 2000, the UK Department for International Development set up its first Financial Deepening Challenge Fund with a volume of GBP 15 million. It offered organisations in 15 countries (12 in sub-Saharan Africa with the rest in India, Pakistan and the United Kingdom) a chance to win grants of between GBP 50 000 and GBP 1 million. Safaricom and Vodafone in Kenya were among the winners and launched M-Pesa, the first mobile banking platform in the country, in 2005, providing mobile banking services for people who had had no access to financial services. Based on its experiences in Kenya as pivotal partner and through the facilitation of the private sector and the United Kingdom, M-Pesa expanded to Afghanistan, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Egypt, Ethiopia, Ghana, Lesotho, Mozambique, South Africa and the United Republic of Tanzania.

Source: OECD (2022, p. 32[9]), *Triangular Co-operation with Africa*, https://triangular-cooperation.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/10/OECD_Triangular-co-operation-with-Africa.pdf; Pompa (2013[10]), *Understanding Challenge Funds*, https://odi.org/documents/4516/9086.pdf; Ali and Phillips (2017[11]), "8 things we learned from running a challenge fund", https://blogs.worldbank.org/voices/8-things-we-learned-running-challenge-fund; Batchelor (2012[12]), "Changing the Financial Landscape of Africa: An Unusual Story of Evidence-informed Innovation, Intentional Policy Influence and Private Sector Engagement", http://doi.org/10.1111/J.1759-5436.2012.00367.X.

This model involves the introduction and contextual adaptation of proprietary technologies such as construction techniques, diagnostic tools, digital platforms and manufacturing systems. Private firms not only provide the tools and equipment but also embed training, maintenance and knowledge sharing to help local partners absorb the technology. Successful models often include co-development with state-owned enterprises, research institutes or vocational training centres (Box 4.5). This creates shared ownership, reduces dependency and supports the diffusion of innovation beyond the initial intervention.

Incentives in this model include access to funding that may be urgently needed to actualise a local innovative idea. In addition, its multi-actor and cross-regional structure encourages private sector partners to develop or refine their products and services in ways that are more responsive to real-world development needs and allows for them to be tested in different policy, regulatory and environmental contexts. Engagement across a variety of institutional, technical and cultural contexts exposes firms to new demands and use cases, further stimulating adaptive innovation. This iterative learning process frequently results in the creation of new market-ready solutions that have application not only for the benefitting partner(s) but also across other similar contexts. In this way, development engagement can directly contribute to product diversification and business model evolution. This model can also be implemented by providing mentoring and comprehensive support to start-ups that have innovative proposals and would benefit from additional funding, the refining of products and services with the support of the system, and mutual learning with research and vocational centres, industry actors, and experienced firms.

Box 4.4. Using drones to innovate in the health, agriculture and climate sectors

Aerodyne, a Malaysian drone company, leveraged triangular co-operation to enter Gambia's agricultural sector, a strategic expansion into a previously untapped market. Through the triangular partnership, which was facilitated by the IsDB, Aerodyne introduced AI-powered drone services including land mapping, crop monitoring and digital analytics to support rice farming. Importantly, the engagement extended beyond technical deployment: The company also co-developed regulatory frameworks with the Gambia Civil Aviation Authority, trained local drone operators and data managers, and participated in policy dialogue to support sustainable adoption. The initiative shows how triangular co-operation can enable private sector actors to combine commercial innovation with developmental objectives while also establishing long-term operational and reputational footholds in new regions. It also exemplifies how multilateral backing can lower entry barriers and enable technology transfer in frontier markets.

Digital innovations made in Africa are at the heart of a triangular co-operation between Côte d'Ivoire, Rwanda and Germany to design impactful drone use cases tailored to local priorities. In Rwanda, drones are used to combat malaria linked to climate change and for precision agriculture in the coffee and tea sectors through high-resolution mapping that enables targeted pest management and yield forecasting. In Côte d'Ivoire, drones and satellite data monitor forests for carbon storage and support wildlife monitoring in protected areas. By collaborating with public and private stakeholders, the project develops actionable, scalable open data solutions that promote resilience, sustainability and improved living conditions in rural Africa. The actions are paired with work on secure and innovation-friendly regulation and its implementation as well as the development of local capacities and technical expertise to ensure sustainable growth in Africa's emerging drone technology sector.

Zipline, a California-based start-up, co-created its innovative method of delivering much-needed medical supplies to remote areas in Africa via drones with a Tanzanian computer programmer and health researcher and the government of Rwanda. Zipline started delivering blood products, vaccines and other medical supplies by unmanned drones to remote areas in Rwanda that are not well-served by the country's road infrastructure in 2016. Using that experience, Zipline then opened a new distribution centre in Ghana in 2018. The success in both African countries helped Zipline obtain the authorisation to operate in the United States in 2019. During the COVID-19 pandemic, Zipline signed an agreement with Pfizer to deliver vaccines in Ghana and Nigeria and is planning to expand into the Japanese market.

Source: Interviews and research by authors; OECD (2022, p. 32[9]), *Triangular Co-operation with Africa*, https://triangular-cooperation.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/10/OECD_Triangular-co-operation-with-Africa.pdf; de León (2021[13]), "Role of medical drones in global Covid vaccine campaign is growing", https://www.cnbc.com/2021/02/04/role-of-medical-drones-in-global-covid-vaccine-campaign-is-growing.html; Dean (2021[14]) "Drones in Ghana Deliver COVID Vaccines To Rural Communities", https://www.businessinsider.fr/us/covid-vaccine-ghana-drones-covax-who-coronavirus-zipline-rural-communities-2021-3; Zipline (n.d.[15]), *Zipline* (website), https://flyzipline.com/.

Box 4.5. Empowering health systems through win-win-win partnerships

PT Bio Farma (BioFarma), Indonesia's only vaccine producer, is a state-owned enterprise established in 1890 and headquartered in Bandung. With 20 vaccines prequalified by the World Health Organization and an annual production capacity of up to 3.1 billion doses, BioFarma stands among the top five global suppliers to the World Health Organization (WHO) by volume and plays a vital role in advancing global immunisation.

Within the framework of the IsDB's Reverse Linkage mechanism, BioFarma has been engaged as a strategic partner with the Institute Pasteur de Dakar (IPD), which has initiated the MADIBA project in support of Africa's vaccine self-reliance agenda and in alignment with Senegal's Plan Sénégal Émergent, which targets 50% local pharmaceutical production by 2035, and the African Union's goal of producing 60% of vaccines locally by 2040.

The Reverse Linkage model promotes mutual development through knowledge sharing and innovation. In this context, BioFarma offers its well-established expertise in vaccine production to strengthen the IPD's capabilities. It also is contributing across several areas including technical training in cell culture and viral vaccine quality control, staff competency assessments, and guidance on setting up quality control infrastructure at the IPD. Additionally, BioFarma is assisting in the development of a GS1-based digital traceability platform, aligned with global standards such as the UN Children's Fund Traceability and Verification System, or TRVST, initiative to support efficient vaccine distribution in low- and middle-income countries.

The collaboration delivers mutual benefits. For the IPD and Africa, it enhances regional vaccine security, fosters local job creation and expands access to affordable, high-quality vaccines. For BioFarma, it opens new business opportunities, elevates its international advisory profile and reinforces Indonesia's contribution to global health, particularly as a member of the OIC.

Source: Authors' own compilation based on information shared by the project partners.

4.2.3. Market access and expansion model

In this commercially driven model, private companies engage in triangular co-operation primarily as a strategic vehicle for entering new or emerging markets (Box 4.6). Many private sector actors, especially those seeking new revenue streams to grow in frontier or underserved markets, see triangular co-operation as a practical platform for overcoming entry barriers. A defining feature of this model is that firms may not passively respond to invitations but actively pursue triangular co-operation as a tool for market development.

Companies may be motivated to join a triangular partnership because the facilitation of public and multilateral partners lends institutional legitimacy and political backing to initiatives, which in turn lowers perceived risk and increases trust among host country stakeholders. Government-to-government agreements, when used as a framework, often provide formal pathways for private sector involvement, such as through MoUs or official partnership endorsements. These mechanisms reduce reputational and regulatory uncertainty for firms entering complex environments.

By opening up previously underserved sectors or by opening sectors to new proposals or to traditionally marginalised entrepreneurs, triangular co-operation enables access to innovation, investment and specialised services. It also offers more responsible approaches to entrepreneurship – for instance to sectors and entrepreneurs originating in rural areas managed sustainably by Indigenous and local populations or to address the needs of these populations – that might not have otherwise been available. These engagements can contribute to job creation, local supplier networks and improvements in service delivery, thereby aligning private sector incentives with public development outcomes.

Box 4.6. Accessing new markets to enhance road connectivity in Senegal, Uganda and Kyrgyzstan

Probase Manufacturing Sdn Bhd (Probase), a Malaysian infrastructure company specialising in soil stabilisation and proprietary road-sealing technologies, implemented a road construction project in Senegal with support from the IsDB, EXIM Bank Malaysia and the Senegalese government. While the IsDB provided concessional financing to the Senegalese side and Malaysia's EXIM Bank funding mechanisms supported the project, Probase also contributed by directly investing its own capital. This investment included funding from the Malaysian government for feasibility studies, support from EXIM Bank Malaysia for international private sector projects and the establishment of local production facilities for construction materials.

The project shows how strategic partnerships can create lasting socio-economic impact across regions while creating commercial value. Probase's road technology upgrades unpaved roads to asphalt standard with a 20-year design lifespan and a 10-year maintenance guarantee, offering a cost-effective, sustainable solution for underserved regions. In support of the Plan Sénégal Émergent, 63 kilometres of pilot road were developed in a Reverse Linkage engagement with Probase. Beyond construction, Probase provided technology transfer, facilitated academic collaboration and offered a ten-year maintenance plan. Local production was also established, and a corporate social responsibility component provided millet mills to women's groups to enhance livelihood opportunities and promote gender inclusion along the constructed roads. Overall, Probase prioritises local employment (80-90%), capacity development and skills transfer to foster long-term self-reliance.

By sharing both investment and feasibility risks, the project successfully demonstrated how triangular co-operation can mobilise blended financing from public and private sources. Probase's localisation of production and workforce development not only improved efficiency but also strengthened local ownership, illustrating the broader potential of co-investment models in scalable infrastructure solutions for low-income markets.

Building on Senegal's success, Probase pledged USD 75 million in 2023 to expand Reverse Linkage collaboration. Further opportunities have been identified in Uganda to integrate rural road improvement with agricultural value chain development, including palm oil. Additionally, in Kyrgyzstan, Reverse Linkage efforts extend to digital innovation and support for building information modelling-based road design. Probase has also partnered with another Malaysian private sector and building information modelling expert, Reliant Design Solution Pte Ltd, and took on the role as Reverse Linkage mentor.

Source: Authors' own compilation based on inputs from the project partners.

4.2.4. Public-private partnership (PPP) model

This model represents a formalised long-term collaboration between public authorities and private enterprises to deliver essential public services such as healthcare, infrastructure, water and sanitation, or pandemic preparedness (Box 4.7). The private partner delivers and funds public services using a capital asset in this model, thus sharing the associated risks (OECD, 2025[16]). PPPs in triangular co-operation contexts often emerge through government-to-government MoUs, with the private sector brought in as a co-implementer. Projects under this model can involve shared financing, co-design of service models and risk-sharing arrangements. Its advantage lies in combining the operational efficiency and innovation of the private sector with the policy legitimacy and oversight capacity of government institutions.

Incentives for the private sector to engage in such triangular co-operation include access to financing and risk-sharing instruments such as blended financial instruments that help de-risk early-stage engagement. Many firms, especially small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), have difficulty absorbing the upfront costs of feasibility studies, pilot implementation and institutional negotiation. Through triangular co-operation, these companies can benefit from concessional financing, matching grants, technical assistance funds, and co-financing arrangements led by development banks or development co-operation agencies. These resources not only ease initial investment burdens but also enable experimentation with innovative solutions in new sectors or regions. Furthermore, the shared financial commitment across public and private actors increases the perceived viability of such projects, attracting additional stakeholders or follow-on investors.

Box 4.7. Artificial intelligence (AI) meets development: How ADDO AI empowered Indonesia's pandemic response and beyond

With the outbreak of COVID-19, the Indonesian Ministry of Health's data systems were quickly overwhelmed by a surge of information. The ministry's Center for Data and Information (Pusdatin) faced the critical challenge of transforming vast amounts of raw data into meaningful insights to support the national response. Limitations in infrastructure and analytical capability posed significant hurdles. To address these, a strategic partnership was established through the IsDB's Reverse Linkage and ADDO AI, a Singapore-based firm known for its AI and data science solutions.

Indonesia required a smart, integrated big data system capable of real-time analysis, predictive modelling and policy support. With ADDO AI's prior experience in health analytics and predictive disease surveillance and with support from Enterprise Singapore, the IsDB facilitated collaboration with both Indonesia's Ministry of Health and Ministry of National Development Planning (Bappenas). The one-year project, launched in April 2022, set out to establish an intelligent big data infrastructure, deploy AI and machine-learning tools for outbreak forecasting, and build institutional capacity for AI-driven decision making. Activities included infrastructure assessment, development of a new platform, deployment of AI applications and capacity building through a training-of-trainers model followed by six months of support. A joint steering committee including the health ministry's data centre, ADDO AI and the IsDB provided oversight.

The initiative enhanced Indonesia's ability to monitor health trends in real time, strengthened pandemic preparedness and created a replicable model for broader application. It also demonstrated the mutual benefits of public-private collaboration. ADDO AI gained a strategic market foothold in Indonesia while the public sector benefited from proven technical capacity, exemplifying the value of involving agile, innovative private sector stakeholders in sustainable development efforts.

Source: Authors' own compilation based on inputs from the project partners.

4.2.5. Industry ecosystem and regulatory frameworks model

In this model, private firms work closely with public authorities to strengthen and support industry ecosystems (Box 4.8). These collaborations go beyond individual transactions or services and focus on building the regulatory, institutional and operational foundations for a sector to grow in a sustainable and standardised way. This can entail the development of certification schemes, compliance tools, regulatory frameworks and sector-wide platforms. This model is most effective when international standards, trust and quality assurance are prerequisites. For benefitting partners, such collaborations build export capacity and raise sectoral competitiveness. For firms, they create stable markets underpinned by common standards and reliable enforcement.

Box 4.8. Building ecosystems to catalyse inclusive growth in halal trade in countries with Muslim communities

Serunai Commerce Sdn. Bhd. (Serunai) is dedicated to enhancing connectivity and transparency within the global halal market through innovative digital solutions. To meet growing domestic and international demand for halal products, the Malaysian company has developed platforms that seamlessly connect halal producers with consumers. Its aim is to advance economic and social progress by digitising and harmonising the halal ecosystem worldwide while strengthening the institutional capacities of halal certification bodies.

Serunai's ongoing contributions to Reverse Linkage projects and its digital platforms enable benefitting partners to elevate halal certification standards, streamline audits and enhance supply chain transparency. These efforts not only promote trade and investment but also foster inclusive economic growth, generate employment, raise industry standards and contribute to sustainable economic development across participating nations.

Leveraging Malaysia's leadership in the halal industry, Serunai supports halal authorities in both IsDB member countries and others (e.g. Fiji) to enhance governance, technical standards and international recognition. In collaboration with the IsDB Reverse Linkage division, Serunai deploys six proprietary digital systems including VH SMART and Verify Halal complemented by tailored training and capacity-building programmes. This comprehensive approach fosters effective adoption, operational efficiency and sustainability of digital halal frameworks.

Beyond technology, Serunai acts as a mentor to private sector actors engaged in Reverse Linkage initiatives, offering structured mentor-mentee programmes endorsed by the IsDB. This mentorship accelerates knowledge transfer and strengthens project implementation, as shown by partnerships such as Zaiyadal Aquaculture Sdn Bhd, which pledged USD 25 million to fisheries development opportunities in IsDB member countries.

Moving forward, Serunai plans to expand to a more programmatic approach through its multistakeholder INOUR programme to build a multisectoral, cross-border integrated global halal ecosystem. This initiative aims to integrate other Malaysian private sector partners like Zaiyadal Aquaculture and Aerodyne Group (Box 4.4) to promote halal-compliant innovations across diverse industries while fostering South-South and triangular co-operation.

Source: Authors' own compilation based on inputs from the project partners.

4.2.6. Local private sector development model

Triangular co-operation can support inclusive private sector development by connecting practical know-how from experienced partners with the needs of emerging enterprises in developing contexts. By focusing on grassroots actors such as smallholder farmers, women-led businesses, co-operatives and rural start-ups, this approach fosters entrepreneurship, strengthens value chains and supports integration into the formal economy. At its core, this model combines peer learning, local capacity building and catalytic support to create enabling ecosystems for inclusive business development. Through triangular co-operation, grassroots entrepreneurs gain access to knowledge, technology and markets while building institutions that can foster innovation. By linking local needs with global expertise and collaborative partnerships, this model also contributes to broader development goals such as decent work, women's economic empowerment and rural transformation (Box 4.9).

Box 4.9. Strengthening rural women producers and smallholder farmer co-operatives through triangular partnerships

A pilot triangular co-operation project between Germany, India and Malawi led to the creation of Malawi's first women's agri-business incubator model, designed to support rural women producers in developing sustainable enterprises. Drawing on India's experience and technical know-how, the first agri-business incubator in Malawi was established, which enabled 55 Malawian women farmers and trainers to access training in entrepreneurship, value chain development and co-operative management. From a single farmer to organising 15 women using the new beekeeping expertise, establishing a green banking system and running a co-operative for women and youth, the triangular partnership showed concrete results. This innovative model has the potential to spread across the country and create a significant impact on advancing economic inclusion and rural development (Kumar, 2025[17]).

In another partnership using the local private sector development model, Argentina, Brazil, Cuba, Mexico and the EU, together with universities in Argentina, Colombia and Italy, explored how to develop sericulture in the Latin America and the Caribbean region. By harnessing unique technical expertise related to all stages of the silk value chain, the project co-created targeted solutions for local producers and artisans in the region. Funds were directly channelled to local producers and manufacturers of silk along with specific technical assistance in the fields of basic production, transformation and commercialisation. This approach allows final beneficiaries a great degree of flexibility to choose from a wide range of solutions and financial assistance, which has had a direct and immediate effect on their businesses (GPI on Effective Triangular Co-operation, 2019[18]).

Source: OECD (2024[19]), *8th International Meeting on Triangular Co-operation: Linking Global Processes to Create Local Impact, 7-8 October 2024, Lisbon – Summary of Discussions*, https://triangular-cooperation.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/01/Summary_8th-International-Meeting-on-Triangular-Co-operation_Lisbon-2024.pdf; Kumar (2025[17]), *Characteristics of India-Germany's Triangular Cooperation Approach in Africa*, https://www.ris.org.in/sites/default/files/Publication/DP-308_Sushil_Kumar.pdf; GPI on Effective Triangular Co-operation (2019[18]), *Triangular Co-operation in the Era of the 2030 Agenda: Sharing Evidence and Stories from the Field*, https://triangular-cooperation.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/12/Final-GPI-report-BAPA40.pdf.

4.2.7. Motivations for the private sector to engage in triangular co-operation

Private sector participation in triangular co-operation is shaped by different motivations and incentives on the part of all partners involved in the strategic, financial, technological, operational and reputational domains. These extend beyond simply closing a financial gap. The role that the private sector and its partners take in triangular partnerships depends on to a great extent on which actors of the diverse private group are involved and which development challenge the project tackles. These vary case by case.

The six models discussed in the previous section show that the private sector value proposition encompasses proven knowledge and solutions, business development, market creation, employment generation and the harnessing of intellectual property as well as providing proven and mature technology – all elements that are crucial to building sustainable and robust economies. Experience shows that the financial capacity, innovation, technology and agility of the private sector can boost the possibility of success in triangular partnerships. Moreover, the private sector brings an entrepreneurial approach to triangular co-operation that is often missing in time-bound development co-operation interventions and emphasises efficiency, scalability and sustainability.

At the same time, triangular co-operation can bring together private sector actors with a sustainability perspective and invite in outside actors that usually stay in business-related environments. Such engagements create opportunities for parallel peer-to-peer conversations about investing collectively in resilience, about transformation of core operations and about approaches to circular economy. Triangular co-operation offers some private sector partners, among them SMEs as well as multinational companies, compelling incentives to collaborate in, for instance, facilitating market entry and expanding to new geographies, de-risking, learning, knowledge exchange, supporting product and service innovation, and strengthening social impact. The more documentation and evidence from experiences that incorporate different private sector voices, the better the ecosystem will understand the dynamics of engagement.

When designed and implemented well, projects involving the private sector generate outcomes that are not only developmentally meaningful but also commercially viable and a strategic tool for business growth. These incentives are particularly salient in today's development landscape where complex challenges require adaptable, cross-sectoral and collaborative solutions.

4.3. Challenges to private sector engagement in triangular co-operation

While triangular co-operation offers significant opportunities for partnerships with the private sector, it also comes with challenges. These challenges often stem from inherent differences in ways of working, mismatched expectations, institutional rigidity and structural barriers across partner contexts. Some of the common challenges identified in the initiatives and experiences analysed in this report include the following:

- **Differing priorities and agendas.** Ensuring that the goals of sustainable development will prevail when engaging with actors of the private sector whose priorities are seeking business opportunities and profit was a central challenge.
- **Mutual lack of awareness.** Sometimes neither private sector nor development co-operation actors are aware of the others' opportunities, forums, dynamics and processes. This can be an obstacle to even starting a conversation, let alone knowing where to meet the right potential partners or how to find opportunities to take the first step in a collaboration.
- **Cultural, linguistic and operational barriers.** As in any development co-operation project, differences in regulatory frameworks, organisational and institutional approaches, and business norms pose communication and co-ordination challenges (Box 3.13 of Chapter 3). On top of overcoming language and inherent cultural differences, understanding the operational logics of different stakeholders is crucial for successful trilateral partnerships. The same words are often interpreted differently in different (organisational) cultures.
- **Regulatory and bureaucratic complexity.** Many private sector partners find it difficult to navigate the government procedures and regulatory frameworks of partnering countries. Delays in approvals, limited awareness of triangular co-operation mechanisms among local authorities, and overlapping institutional mandates can create uncertainty and slow implementation.
- **Mismatch of timelines.** Differences in operational culture and timelines frequently surfaced as a point of friction. While private firms are often driven by commercial timelines and efficiency goals, public institutions may require longer consultation, clearance and reporting processes. This misalignment can lead to a loss of momentum, budget overruns or project redesign mid-stream.
- **Potential power imbalances.** There is a significant risk of increasing power imbalances when partnering with private actors for development co-operation. Facilitating market access for a few or foreign actors has implications for the local market players. Mobilising platforms and partnerships with governmental actors can also create asymmetry within a sector or industry, and motivations of private entities to engage in triangular co-operation differ depending on their size, structure and business model. The Kampala Principles and toolkit (GPEDC, 2019[2]) as well as the OECD DAC Blended Finance Principles (OECD, 2018[20]) and the two Guidance documents (OECD, 2021[21]) (OECD, 2025[22]) are tools to navigate this challenge.

- **Access to financing to conduct feasibility studies and pilot projects**. Accessing early-stage funding for feasibility studies, pilot projects or preparatory work remains a major constraint, particularly for SMEs. Traditional development finance mechanisms often do not cover these costs, and private investors may be hesitant to enter high-risk or unproven markets without catalytic support. This highlights the need for targeted financial instruments that support pre-implementation stages of triangular co-operation projects such as those offered by EXIM Bank Malaysia to support Malaysian companies operating abroad (Box 4.6).

4.4. Making it work: Reflections on private sector success in triangular co-operation

As the international community prepares to implement the Seville Commitment (*Compromiso de Sevilla*) of the Fourth International Conference on Development Finance (FfD4) and accelerates efforts towards achieving the SDGs, treating private sector engagement as optional or secondary is no longer sufficient. Such engagement is a strategic imperative – a critical driver of innovation, efficiency and sustainability in development co-operation. This includes embracing the private sector as an equal development partner with shared accountability and a vested interest in the long-term success of triangular partnerships. Drawing on insights from the IsDB's Reverse Linkage and other triangular co-operation facilities and projects, the following elements[3] consistently emerge as critical to the success and scalability of private sector involvement in this modality:

- **Foster a culture of partnership.** Partnership is the heart of successful triangular co-operation. Partnerships require a shift from transactional models to transformative relations. They thrive on mutual respect, sustained dialogue and a shared vision of success. Triangular co-operation can provide a platform for experimentation, which helps build long-term strategic relationships. Many firms find that initial participation in small-scale development projects serves as a stepping stone to broader regional engagement. Through repeated interaction with governments and development partners, companies can solidify their presence in key sectors, gain policy influence and co-develop initiatives with long-term growth potential. These relationships also foster continuity, trust and co-ownership, making the private sector a stable and integrated partner in multi-year development strategies. To this end, triangular partners will have to invest in relationship building with each other, working for contract-based engagements but also for purpose-driven, principle-driven and impact-oriented arrangements. Some ways to do so include:
    - Establish platforms for regular consultation to listen and learn from each other and to build trust. Actors that approached triangular co-operation with a focus on building relationships rather than short-term gains are more successful in establishing trust.
    - Make space for an open, horizontal and transparent conversation about interests, expectations, risks and potential benefits throughout the process of finding shared goals. Beyond co-financing, also seek to co-design the interventions while leveraging proven solutions, knowledge, expertise and flexibility in continuous co-ordination with the local stakeholders. Doing so can ensure that triangular partnerships are built on increased ownership and commitment.
- **Recognise and celebrate success** – in terms of deliverables, project results and impacts of investment but also in terms of establishing trust, mutual knowledge, indirect effects and enlargement of networks.
    - This entails recognising the contributions of others (e.g. in-kind contributions and the time and effort people put into the joint endeavour) as well as the contribution of risk sharing, including by experimenting with a horizontal and collaborative approach to working together.

- **Work towards mutual understanding, acknowledge language differences and overcome bureaucratic hurdles**. Private sector stakeholders are enthusiastic partners, but both firms as well as development co-operation institutions struggle with the technical and institutional capacity needed to engage effectively. Given that each comes to the partnership with its own jargon, standards and procedures, it is important to acknowledge the differences and offer mutual support with clarifications, tools, knowledge and networks to comply with international standards and access financing mechanisms. This support empowers the participants and also strengthens the overall quality and inclusivity of triangular interventions.
- **Encourage flexibility and adaptability**. Private sector stakeholders operate in fast-moving environments characterised by constant shifts in technology, consumer demand and policies. Adaptability and flexibility are crucial to maintaining relevance and momentum, and both are also key features of triangular co-operation. Allowing room for iterative design and innovation not only improves project outcomes but also aligns better with the operating models of private partners.
- **Prioritise local engagement and contextual understanding**. Strong and sustained engagement with local actors – from government agencies to community organisations – is a consistent success factor. Projects that build in time to understand local regulatory, cultural and institutional contexts were more likely to be owned by all partners, implemented effectively and embedded into existing systems. When training, mentoring, capacity strengthening and local adaptation are built into the project design, they foster stronger local ownership, improve sustainability and support long-term institutional strengthening.
- **Expand access to early-stage financing and risk-sharing tools.** High upfront costs and limited access to feasibility funding remain key barriers, particularly for SMEs. Development banks, co-operation agencies, multilateral organisations and other development partners could expand the use of blended finance instruments to support the early stages of triangular co-operation projects. These include feasibility grants, concessional loans, first-loss guarantees and matching funds. In addition, targeted support for due diligence, regulatory analysis and early-stage technical design can help lower entry thresholds for private companies and encourage innovation in high-risk contexts.
- **Promote peer learning and onboarding among private actors.** Some SMEs and local entrepreneurial initiatives run more sustainable and context-sensitive operations. Structured peer-learning platforms can allow experienced actors that have participated in collaborations with both the public and private sectors to share insights on navigating development co-operation systems and private sector dynamics as well as cross-cultural engagement and negotiation. These exchanges help demystify triangular co-operation and change preconceived notions about the private sector, accelerate learning, and build a more diverse and capable private sector ecosystem. Establishing informal communities of practice can also promote alignment in sustainable values, approaches and expectations across projects and regions.
- **Enhance visibility and awareness.** Triangular co-operation is often neither visible nor well known to development and commercial stakeholders. Actors interested in engaging with the private sector can explore how to enhance visibility in the private sector's language and natural spaces by attending conferences, award programmes, matchmaking forums and knowledge-sharing platforms that highlight successful private sector partnerships.

By sharing their experiences of partnership formation in triangular co-operation and making these more available, actors from all sides can continue learning and building an enabling ecosystem for horizontal partnerships. Collaboration is an urgent necessity now, and this urgency should be a strong motivator to address constraints and show openness to experimentation.

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Notes

[1] The Business Steering Committee for UN FfD4 was launched on 25 June 2024 to engage with the wider universe of businesses for the Fourth International Conference on Financing for Development (FfD4) in 2025. The Committee is co-chaired by the GISD Alliance and the International Chamber of Commerce. The Committee brings together for the first time a broad range of business organisations and groups as well as UN system-related private sector initiatives. The role of the Committee is to agree on issues of importance to private stakeholders to bring to FfD4, engage with the intergovernmental process of the Conference, arrive at headline business commitments and partnerships to be launched; and organise an International Business Forum on the sidelines of FfD4.

[2] To inform this chapter, 20 interviews were conducted with private sector representatives and their triangular co-operation partners. For a complete list of interviews and activities that informed this report, see Annex B.

[3] These elements are highlighted for their specific presence in triangular co-operation initiatives and do not substitute or suggest incompatibility with principles and recommendations contained in instruments on private sector engagement in development co-operation such as the Kampala Principles.

Annex A. Mapping weak signals, strong signals and emerging trends for the future of triangular co-operation

Figure A A.1 organises the weak signals, strong signals and emerging trends that could shape the trajectory of triangular co-operation over the next five to ten years. These signals and trends were collected and mapped during two horizon-scanning exercises in October 2024 and February 2025 and then clustered into the areas of geopolitics, development co-operation modalities, economy and financing, technology, governance, and environment and social.

Figure A A.1. Emerging signals and trends that may impact triangular co-operation in the next five years

Note: The trends and signals were collected during two horizon-scanning exercises with participants from around the world conducted in Lisbon (October 2024) and virtually (February 2025). These were then clustered using the categories of the OECD's Strategic Foresight Toolkit for Resilient Public Policy plus an additional specific category on development co-operation.
Source: Authors' own compilation.

Annex B. List of interviews conducted to inform this report

No.	Interview partner	Date
1	Ministry of State Secretariat (Setneg), Indonesia	2 November 2024
2	Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA)	18 November 2024 & 23 April 2025
3	Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ), India	17 December 2024
4	Asia Foundation, India	7 January 2025 & 3 February 2025
5	Korea International Cooperation Agency (KOICA)	10 February 2025, 31 July 2025, & 2 September 2025
6	PT Bio Farma (Persero), Indonesia	11 February 2025
7	Aerodyne Group, Malaysia	11 February 2025
8	CSQ Law, Malaysia	12 February 2025
9	MobilityOne Sdn Bhd, Malaysia	12 February 2025
10	Vision One Sdn Bhd, Malaysia	13 February 2025
11	Serunai Commerce Sdn Bhd, Malaysia	13 February 2025
12	Probase Manufacturing Sdn Bhd, Malaysia	14 February 2025
13	Addo.AI, Singapore	14 February 2025
14	Singapore Cooperation Enterprise	18 February 2025
15	GIZ, Germany	21 February 2025
16	IndoAID	27 February 2025
17	Impact Hub, Hamburg	12 March 2025
18	GIZ Indonesia	21 March 2025
19	GIZ Mexico and GIZ Colombia	2 April 2025
20	China Center for International Knowledge on Development	15 April 2025
21	RIS India	14 May 2025

Source: Authors' own compilation.

Global Perspectives on Triangular Co-operation 2025

Development co-operation is at a crossroads. Multiple crises, geopolitical shifts, shrinking budgets and growing needs demand new ways of working—partnerships that are inclusive, resilient and fit for today's realities. Triangular co-operation offers such a model. It breaks with traditional donor-recipient and aid dynamics, builds trust across divides, and mobilises finance, knowledge and innovation from diverse partners. By doing so, it creates platforms to co-design solutions to global challenges. This report, the second joint publication by the OECD and the Islamic Development Bank (IsDB), explores the future of triangular co-operation through a foresight lens. It analyses global data trends, highlights triangular partnerships across the Asia-Pacific region, and examines opportunities for engaging the private sector. More than a reference for the latest evidence and thematic debates, the report aims to spark discussion and inspire change—re-thinking development co-operation, advancing systemic transformation, and promoting triangular and inclusive partnerships for a more sustainable world.

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