SOUTH - SOUTH AND TRIANGULAR COOPERATION: EMERGING OPPORTUNITIES FOR THINK TANKS CONSULTATION[1]

Embracing a multi-stakeholder approach is one of the key characteristics of South-South and Triangular Cooperation (SSC/TrC). A pro-active engagement of think tanks in SSC/TrC contributes to the achievement of international development goals in line with the local context. However, the scarcity of independent platforms and joint research agendas jeopardizes the potential of such engagement. Understanding how think tanks' abilities and structures are attainment of their main objectives and how these internal capabilities differ between Southern and Northern think tanks is the first step to enhance think tank engagement in SSC/TrC. The roles think tanks can play in SSC/TrC ultimately determine the development of assertive and fruitful collaboration, including to: i) the definition of research topics in line with the post-2015 development agenda, ii) the implementation of a common research agenda; and iii) the support UNDP can provide to SSC/TrC research and engagement.

This paper was prepared for UNDP consultation to think tanks at the 2014 Global South-South Development Expo (Washington DC, 20-21 November, 2014) and was based on desk review, e-survey and interviews conducted over two weeks with 21 think tanks actively engaged in SSC/TrC worldwide.

Key takeaways for a common SSTC/TrC research agenda:

- A SSC/TrC research agenda could focus on priority substantive development areas and: i) the commonalities in the various SSC/TrC approaches; ii) how different SSC/TrC modalities have been made flexible and adaptive (particularly compared to North-South cooperation); and iii) to what extent SSC/TrC initiatives deliver internationally agreed development goals.
- The research agenda could also foster comparative analysis on how SSC/TrC initiatives concretely complement each other and North-South cooperation.
- The research agenda could further enable common vision and goals; establish priority actions; measure performance; and monitor any negative externalities.
- Think tanks could start implementing this research agenda by: i) developing a conceptual framework; ii) mapping existing work; iii) creating a network of interested organizations to identify specific research topics; iv) investing adequate time and resources; and v) ensuring transparency and independence in the process.
- UNDP could co-host the Technical Secretariat of such network and maximize opportunities to link SSTC/TrC research with the post-2015 agenda, building on its global project and policy expertise.
- This would require in-house capacity to leverage think tanks' internal capabilities, including by: i) brokering knowledge and learning; ii) convening dialogue; iii) administering research; and iv) pairing think tanks with funders.

I. Introduction

Embracing a multi-stakeholder approach is one of the key characteristics of South-South and triangular cooperation (SSC/TrC). A dynamic and pro-active engagement of think tanks, academia, the private sector, civil society organizations (CSOs) and other relevant stakeholders contributes to the achievement of international development goals in line with local priorities and needs. Think tanks have their own particular roles in SSC/TrC: they contribute to policy formulation and to the implementation of development cooperation through in-depth analysis, policy advice, advocacy, communication of key messages to the wider public, and capacity development to policy makers and practitioners.

Think tanks engaged in SSC/TrC are broadly defined in this paper as every research organization and network that contributes to policy formulation and implementation of cooperation initiatives among developing countries through established research programs and services like advisory, advocacy, communication and capacity development.[2] This definition includes both profit and non-profit entities at the national, regional and international levels funded by governments, universities, academic associations, businesses, or by its own revenue from consulting work related to their programs.

Despite being an established modality of development cooperation for more than three decades now, only recently has SSC/TrC become a thriving field of study in think tanks both in the North and in the South. This is partly due to the interest with which some members of the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development's (OECD) Development Assistance Committee (DAC) have been funding SSC/TrC research programs and networks[3], particularly in the past five years; as well as to the seeking of more systematic approaches from Southern countries to the promotion of their SSC/TrC policy agenda. Going forward, **structured collaborative platforms and joint research agendas could enhance the independence and impact of such analysis, and eventually their capacity to address the development needs and priorities of Southern partners.**

Understanding how think tanks' abilities and structures are conducive to undertaking their main functions as well as into what extent these internal capabilities differ among Southern and Northern think tanks is the first step to identify ways to enhance think tank engagement in SSC/TrC. The different roles think tanks can play in SSC/TrC ultimately determine the development of assertive and fruitful collaboration, including to the definition of priority topics for joint research and how SSC/TrC can best contribute to the implementation of the post-2015 agenda.

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[2] This definition was formulated based on the combination of the functional and relational aspects of think tanks proposed by MENDIZABAL et al (2012) Think Tanks and International Development Policy: Lessons from the United Kingdom, Germany, Brazil and India. It aims to reflect the wealth of institutional arrangements in the North and in the South and how different organizations are contributing to the SSC/TrC debate. Annex 1 contains a list of the think tanks interviewed in this study.

[3] According to e-survey conducted with 21 think tanks engaged in SSC/TrC worldwide, 46% of Southern think tanks and 86% of Northern think tanks have their SSC/TrC programs entirely or partially funded by Northern governments/traditional donors directly. More details are provided in the subsequent sections.

This paper was prepared upon the request of the United Nations Development Programme to inform think tank consultation at the 2014 Global South-South Development Expo (Washington DC, 20-21 November, 2014). The paper was based on desk review of selected documents and studies, previous research conducted by the author, an e-survey with 21 think tanks with ongoing SSC/TrC initiatives and representative of Africa, Arab States, Asia, Europe, Latin America and North America, and semi-structured interviews conducted with three think tanks over the course of two weeks[4].

The e-survey was structured in three parts: think tanks' internal capabilities (a model based in five main categories: strategy, staffing, funding, networking, and influence; was developed to allow a quantitative assessment of Northern and Southern think tanks' abilities and structures); substantive development areas (allowing for a qualitative assessment of SSC/TrC challenges, opportunities and main areas of incidence); and open questions (optional). The open questions also served as a basis for the semi-structured interviews. Given the relatively small size of the sample and the fact that the questions were answered based on Northern and Southern think tanks self-assertion, all conclusions must be drawn with caution.

The following sections introduce the main findings of the research. The sections are structured in questions and answers to inspire discussion during the think tank consultation and beyond.

II. Engaging in SSC/TrC: what can we learn from think tanks?

The results of the e-survey with regards to the internal capabilities of Northern and Southern think tanks' engaged in SSC/TrC were mapped in Chart 1 against the following five main categories and their respective sub-categories:

- Strategy: how think tanks are organized, how they engage in SSC/TrC and the duration of their SSC/TrC programs;
- Staffing: seniority, quality and quantity of think tank staff working on SSC/TrC;
- Funding: total funding for SSC/TrC programs and how closely they meet think tank SSC/TrC program needs, diversification of funding sources, and how effective the think tank has been in attracting funds from different sources;
- Networking: how think tanks recognize, create, or act upon opportunities for SSC/TrC program/project development and how effectively they engage in strategic partnerships with other organizations;
- Influence: type of SSC/TrC activities carried out by the think tank, its capacity to engage multiple stakeholders and to influence policy debate.

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[4] The author and UNDP team mapped 52 think tanks engaged in SSC/TrC worldwide. From this group, 21 participated in the e-survey between 23 October and 04 November 2014. The complete list of the think tanks that participated in the e-survey is in Annex 1.

Chart 1: Northern vs. Southern think tanks' internal capabilities map
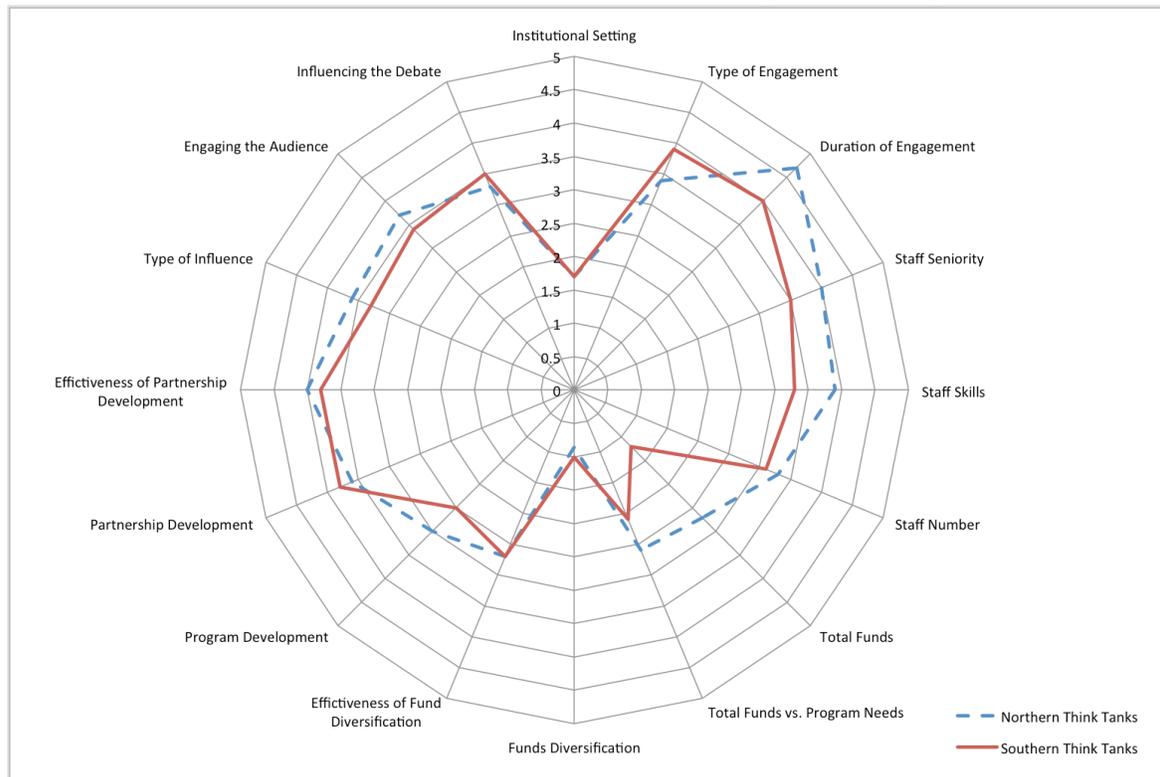
Source: author's own elaboration based on desk review, interviews and e-survey

What roles are think tanks playing in SSC/TrC in different environments?

Southern and Northern think tanks engaged in SSC/TrC have similar institutional settings, comprising mostly independent organizations established as non-profit, policy research institutes affiliated with a university, and governmentally created or state sponsored think tanks (Chart 1). According to the e-survey, 85% of Northern think tanks are affiliated with a university or constituted as independent non-profit organizations. Among Southern think tanks, 54% are constituted as independent non-profit organizations and 43% as governmentally created or state sponsored think tanks. **Both Northern and Southern think tanks conduct research and analysis on a whole range of policy issues related to SSC/TrC with some Southern think tanks also focusing on advocacy and contractual work**. As seen in Chart 1, **the main difference between Northern and Southern think tanks' strategy relies on the length of their SSC/TrC programs**, with 57% of Northern think tanks having longer-term strategies (more than five years) and 54% of Southern think tanks having shorter and more medium term strategies (one to four years), according to the e-survey. Some possible causes to this difference could be the greater stability that certain institutional settings confer to Northern think tanks, particularly with regards to the access to experts and predictable funding.

With regards to staffing, Chart 1 shows that the main difference between Northern and Southern think tanks is the appropriateness of staff skills *vis a vis* the work they conduct: according to the e-survey, 86% of Northern think tanks find that their staff skills

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are appropriate to achieve their mission, against 61% of Southern think tanks. **This result suggests how Northern and Southern think tanks differ on staff seniority.** According to the e-survey, 71% of Northern think tanks are primarily constituted by experienced researchers, expert cadres of policy-makers, politicians and other senior level professionals; while 84% of Southern think tanks are primarily constituted of permanent fellows/researchers, visiting researchers, analysts and other mid-level professionals. **Nevertheless, Southern and Northern think tanks slightly disagreed with the appropriateness of the number of staff needed to achieve their missions.** According to the e-survey, 46% of Southern think tanks disagreed with the statement, versus 28.5% of Northern think tanks. Among the participating Southern think tanks, 0.7% was 'neutral' with the statement, versus 18% of Northern think tanks.

Total funding for SSC/TrC programs was the main difference between Southern and Northern think tanks, as seen in Chart 1: according to the e-survey, 92% of Southern think tanks' SSC/TrC program funding is below USD100k; while 43% of Northern think tanks' budget for SSC/TrC programs range between USD100k and 700k – with 28.5% surpassing USD1,000k. **This gap is also reflected on how think tanks perceive the adequacy of funding to their SSC/TrC program needs** (Chart 1): 77% of Southern think tanks participating in the e-survey disagree or strongly disagree that total funding closely matches the needs of their SSC/TrC programs, against 57% of Northern think tanks.

The e-survey further points to Southern and Northern think tanks agreement on the relative ineffectiveness of their efforts to diversify financial support. According to the e-survey, 85% of Southern think tanks and all participating Northern think tanks were neutral or disagreed with the effectiveness of their funding diversification strategies. **The main funding source of Northern and Southern think tanks participating in the e-survey were governments from Northern countries/traditional donors (22%),** followed by international foundations (18%), multilateral organizations (16%), governments from Southern countries (16%), foreign academic and research institutions (10%), national foundations (6%), individuals (6%), local corporations (4%) and multinational corporations (2%).

How are think tanks cooperating with each other and how are they engaging with respective governments and other development actors in the context of SSC/TrC?
Both Northern and Southern think tanks have underutilized networking with other think tanks, governments and other development actors as a tool to recognize, create, or act upon opportunities for program development in SSC/TrC, despite recognizing the importance of partnerships to deliver their strategic objectives (Chart 1). According to the e-survey, diversification of networking opportunities remain relatively low with 38% of Southern think tanks and 28.5% of Northern think tanks making use of at least three of the following instruments: provide spaces of debate and facilitate public understanding of policy issues; identify, articulate and evaluate policy proposals and programs; transform ideas and emerging problems into policy issues; facilitate the construction of "issue networks through coalitions of interest groups/people that advocate for a specific problem and for changing a government policy that pertains to that problem.

Yet, the e-survey and interviews were able to map some dialogue platforms, academic networks, joint research, learning communities and other examples of networking initiatives taking place at the national, regional and intra-regional levels. In India, the Participatory Research in Asia launched the multi stakeholder platform 'Forum for Indian Development Cooperation.' The forum is engaged with the Ministry of External Affairs of India to help the government articulate a clear policy and guideline on development cooperation. In Bangladesh, the Center for Policy Dialogue has been hosting the 'Southern Voice on Post-LDCs', through which Southern think tanks organize joint events, exchange research agendas and define their strategy to pursue common SSC/TrC-related causes.

The Universidad Autónoma de Puebla (Mexico) and the Universidad Nacional de La Plata (Argentina) have established regional cooperation mechanisms with other academic institutions and research programs though the CLACSO Working Group on South-South Cooperation and Development Policies in Latin America. This network has also allowed for the development and strengthening of informal academic research initiatives with partners in Brazil, Ecuador, Colombia, and Spain.

The German Development Institute and the Shanghai Institutes for International Studies have been organizing joint workshop, conference and publishing joint articles and other publications together to further strengthen intra-regional understanding and policy development. Further intra-regional joint research is also developed under DIE's 'Managing Global Governance Network' in partnership with Instituto Mora (Mexico), China International Development Research Network, and the South African Institute for International Affairs.

Participating Southern and Northern think tanks, however, agree that they easily engage in strategic partnerships with governments and other development actors to deliver SSC/TrC initiatives. Their strategic objectives could also be achieved through partnerships with other organizations, although **there is still space for improving think tank networking opportunities and mechanisms** as seen in Chart 1.

How is think tanks engagement in SSC/TrC contributing to countries' development agenda?

As Chart 1 demonstrates, **Southern and Northern think tanks have similar ways through which they exercise their influence, being evidence-based research and analysis (i.e. monitoring, policy briefs, case studies, testimony), issue articulation (such are addresses to the public and NGOs, intermediaries including media, elites, governments, with the aim of raising public awareness), and policy formulation (i.e. studies, evaluation, consultation, networking)**. The e-survey and the interviews demonstrate that some Southern think tanks also provide, although in less intensity, services with lower space to influence policy such as technical assistance (project management, knowledge management, communications, monitoring and evaluation) and implementation (media relations, training, capacity development).

Even though Southern and Northern think tanks were found to regularly engage relevant

policy makers, institutions, and other stakeholders in dialogues related to its mission on a regular basis, **Southern think tanks were more effective in steering, changing, or impacting the course of the public debate/policy on SSC/TrC than Northern think tanks** (Chart 1). According to the e-survey, 61.5% Southern think tanks agreed with the statement against 43% of Northern think tanks. Some possible causes could be Southern think tanks relative greater legitimacy – both in terms of how their work may be perceived by the governments of developing countries and awareness of the priority issues on the ground.

The e-survey and the interviews mapped a number of **examples demonstrating how Northern and Southern think tanks' engagement in SSC/TrC is concretely contributing to countries' development agenda.**

1. Increasing transparency and accountability: The Brazilian Institute of Applied Economic Research (IPEA)'s main impact thus far has been to reveal to the general public what kinds of development activities are being carried out, where, and for what purpose. IPEA also conducts analyses of the national institutional setting of SSC and comparative studies across countries, which may help guide governmental policies and international negotiations. The Shanghai Institute for International Studies (SIIS) also provides regular report s concerning SSC/TrC to the central government, including a series evaluation reports on the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation.

2. Building policy consensus: The Society for International Development (SID) facilitated the first Pan-African Conference on Inequalities in the Context of Structural Transformation in Ghana in 2014. Senior leaders from the continent and across sectors (politics, business, academia, civil society) met to reflect on the economic growth trajectory of the continent and the issues that were emerging as a result. The focus on the post-2015 framework of development goals was also part of the debate and a regional process is now in place to follow up on this agenda.

3. Lobbying for strategies, policies and legal frameworks: The Center for Policy Dialogue is trying to incorporate the concerns and opportunities of SSC/TrC in the ongoing process of preparation of the Seventh Five Year Plan of Bangladesh. Instituto Mora (Mexico) participated in the legislative process and debate, which launched the Law of Development Cooperation in Mexico and provided evidences gathered from the country case studies presented at the Busan High Level Meeting, in 2011.

4. Brokering knowledge: In Kenya, SID's research on inequality has led the organization to work closely with the Commission on Revenue Allocation, whose core mandate is to recommend the basis for equitable sharing of domestic revenues between the National and the County Governments and among the County Governments. A number of bills that have been prepared and taken to parliament were influenced by the outcomes of studies that SID conducted. In the UK, a research program based at the University of Manchester examines how lessons from Brazil's development experience can be learned and adapted for African countries. The program is investigating the nature and sources of Brazil's inclusive growth performance in order to assess the Brazilian model from the perspective

of emerging economies in sub-Saharan Africa.

III. Defining a common research agenda on SSC/TrC: delivering the post-2015 development goals

South-South partners are extending delivery modalities beyond traditional technical cooperation to include publicly and/or privately funded collaborative instruments such as knowledge and scientific networks, technology transfers, loans and grants. These more robust delivery modalities focus not only on skills and capacity development, but also on institutional strengthening, systems design, technology transfer and pre-investment initiatives. SSC/TrC has also been taking the form of bilateral and trilateral engagements among countries in different regions, beyond bilateral cooperation with regional and sub-regional neighbors. While some South-South partners continue to focus on productive sectors and infrastructure development, there has been a general movement towards more capacity development and technology transfer initiatives in sectors directly related to the MDGs, including health, agriculture, and education. The increased scale, scope and complexity of SSC/TrC have also prompted South-South partners to boost their institutional capacity for engaging with peers abroad.[5]

Research[6] shows that despite the expansion of SSC/TrC in recent years, there is still **little evidence-based analysis on SSC/TrC contribution to the implementation of international development commitments like the MDGs and the post-2015 development agenda; to policy formulation in substantive development areas** like poverty eradication, education, energy, health, agriculture, peace and security; **and to global regimes like climate change, trade and human rights.**

The e-survey also corroborated the **lack of SSC/TrC actionable principles, definitions and standards**. The absence of a proper regime that puts the SSC/TrC principles enshrined in the Nairobi Outcome Document into practice allows South-South partners to innovate in rules, approaches and procedures. Nevertheless, the lack of a lowest common denominator render statistical comparisons, a proper examination of the relative significance and impact of SSC/TrC, and building of norms very difficult in the international realm. There is little evidence on how the Busan principles on aid effectiveness could eventually fill in (part of) this gap or how the successes and failures of this experience could inform South-South partners in designing their own standards.

Furthermore, **weak needs assessment, matching and transfer of development solutions, and internal management capacity** remain an issue. Few SSC/TrC activities focus on opportunities for scaling up, often leading to one-off activities or the need for repeated events. There is also room for further analysis on how the success factors (or enablers) of development experiences implemented in a particular setting inform the

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[5] Based on desk review, interviews and e-survey conducted with 21 think tanks between 23 October and 04 November 2014. VAZQUEZ, Karin (2014) 'What Future for South-South Cooperation?'

[6] Based on desk review, interviews and e-survey conducted with 21 think tanks between 23 October and 04 November 2014. VAZQUEZ, Karin (2014)

design and implementation of SSC/TrC initiatives, and into what extent these initiatives consider the reality, context, needs and priorities of partners.

Finally, **monitoring and evaluation tools to measure and account for results and mechanisms to avoid potential negative socio-economic-environmental spillover effects of SSC/TrC initiatives are yet to be developed**. For instance, some SSC/TrC initiatives are being questioned about their potential impacts on local communities, including land conflicts and the exploitation of natural resources. Civil society is yet to be included in institutional arrangements, frequent and systematic dialogue spaces and/or monitoring mechanisms side by side with governments are needed to ensure SSC/TrC initiatives respect human rights and environmental standards.

### Priority topics for further common research in the area of SSC/TrC

The recent trends and challenges faced by SSC/TrC highlight the need to **channel research priorities, timeframes and budgets to understanding how the different approaches to SSC/TrC contribute to substantive development areas and how SSC/TrC can best support the implementation of the post-2015 development goals.**

A common SSC/TrC research agenda could focus on areas in which countries already have expertise and tested best practices, and allow comparative analyses across countries and regions - including how different SSC/TrC expertise and tested best practices concretely complement each other as well as North-South cooperation. A common SSC/TrC research agenda could bring to the fore areas of commonality among the various approaches to SSC/TrC; how the different modalities of SSC/TrC have been made flexible and adaptive (particularly compared to North-South cooperation); and to what extent SSC/TrC initiatives deliver internationally agreed development goals.

With regards to substantive development areas, a mapping[7] of Northern and Southern think tanks' research priorities (Chart 2) indicates their main areas of convergence and divergence. Mainstreaming SSC/TrC in the post-2105 agenda and poverty eradication were the key priority development areas to both Northern and Southern think tanks (Chart 2). Areas like environment, agriculture, food security, public-private partnerships (PPPs), transparency, accountability, peace, security and energy were also priority to both Northern and Southern think tanks (Chart 2). Education and health were found to be priority research areas mostly to Southern think tanks while infrastructure and mainstreaming SSC/TrC in the new climate agreement were priority areas mostly to Northern think tanks (Chart 2).

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[7] Based on desk review, interviews and e-survey conducted with 21 think tanks between 23 October and 04 November 2014. VAZQUEZ, Karin (2014)

Chart 2: Northern/Southern think tanks' proposed substantive development areas
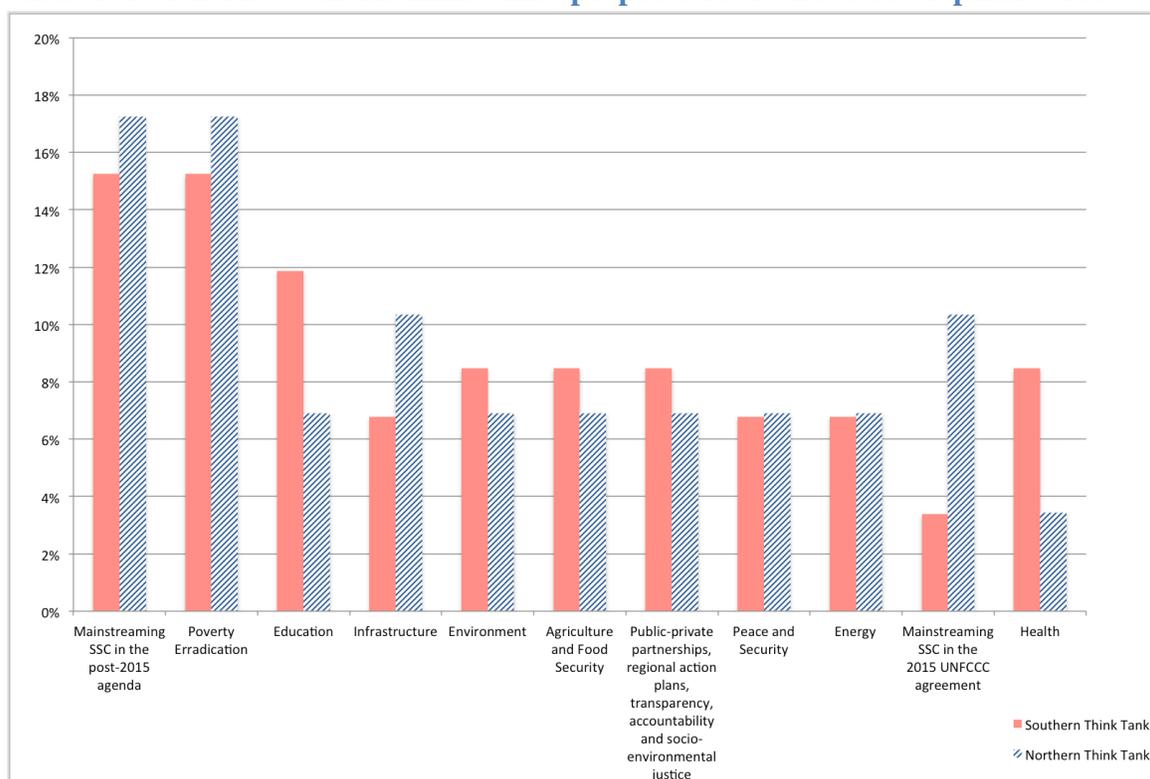
Source: author's own elaboration based on desk review, interviews and e-survey

Table 1: Northern/Southern think tanks' proposed research topics

Development area	Proposed research topics
Mainstreaming SSC in the post 2015 Agenda	• The influence of Southern countries as well as their SSC/TrC in the design and implementation of the Post 2015 agenda.
Poverty Eradication	• Experiences of Southern countries that have achieved inclusive growth while maintaining headline rates of GDP and how other developing countries can learn from them. • Modalities to fight extreme poverty. • The impact of SSC in fighting inequality.
Education	• How Southern countries can ensure quality education
Infrastructure	• Benefits from seamless connectivity
Agriculture and Food Security	• Experiences of Southern countries that have reduced deforestation while also increasing agricultural exports and productivity, and ways other developing countries with large areas of forest can learn from them.
Energy and Environment	• How Southern countries can set up policy and institutional frameworks to implement the new Climate Agreement. • How Southern countries can transition to a low carbon economy. • How Southern countries can increase their tax/GDP ratios, while avoiding/minimizing the resource curse and ensuring a strong social contract. • Institutional mechanisms to establish regional energy grids.
PPPs, transparency, accountability and socio-environmental justice	• Institutional aspects of PPPs. • Analyzing practices on governance and accountability as the basis for mutual learning. • Data, frameworks, and evaluation of post 2015: definition of country

	indicators taking the local context, potential, and installed capabilities into consideration.
	• M&E systems.
Peace and Security	• How SSC/TrC experiences have embraced principles of ownership and inclusivity and how this differs from traditional development assistance.
Health	• How SSC/TrC experiences have been able to put in place regional institutional cooperation mechanisms to address communicable diseases.

Source: author's own elaboration based on desk review, interviews and e-survey

With regards to crosscutting themes to substantive development areas, a common SSC/TrC research agenda could enable:

- **Setting a vision:** Where do SSC/TrC partners want to be? What development results do they want to achieve? How do these development results contribute to the post-2015 development agenda? How do they influence policy discussions?
- **Setting goals:** How does the gap between desired future and present get narrowed? What resources are available and where?
- **Establishing priority actions**: How do SSC/TrC partners move from setting goals to implementing them? Into what extent are the success factors (or enablers) of development experiences implemented in a particular setting are informing the design and implementation of SSC/TrC? Into what extent these knowledge and technology transfers consider the reality, context, needs and priorities of SSC/TrC partners? How to maximize knowledge and technology transfers? Who does what? What partnerships need to be developed?
- **Measuring success and performance:** How to translate the SSC/TrC principles enshrined in the Nairobi Outcome Document into performance indicators? How other principles (e.g. Busan principles on aid effectiveness) could complement these efforts? How to conduct M&E actions?
- **Monitoring any negative socio-economic-environmental spillover effects of SSC/TrC initiatives on the ground:** How to build and/or strengthen stakeholder networks, including with the civil society?

IV. Implementing a common research agenda on SSC/TrC

First it is necessary to **develop a common minimum conceptual framework and map the work that has already been done in SSC/TrC in order to have a general knowledge of who is doing what and where, what are the challenges and opportunities.** This will form the basis for a set of conversations to work towards finding common ground and eventually a future common research agenda. This study and the e-survey conducted intend to start such an exercise.

Next it would be useful to **create a network of interested organizations, which would identify specific research issues and share information on them.** The starting point should be the mutual interests, capacities and/or demand of the Southern countries involved. One element to take into account is whether the proposed research actually addresses a specific need for information or knowledge beyond the academics involved, particularly SSC/TrC policy makers and practitioners.

Finally, there needs to be **time and resources invested in doing this as well as ensuring that the process is transparent and free of vested interests** (other than the public good). Ensuring appropriate (and often longer) time-scales are important as well as the space to clarify the mutual offers, demands and expectations of the various parties involved. The strong commitment of the South countries to the research is also fundamental.

Elements to be taken into account when implementing a common research agenda
A common SSC/TrC research agenda should be inclusive and relevant so that ideas flow upwards and to policymakers. In this regard, it should avoid lack of consultation, top-down implementation, not understanding why previous change efforts might have failed, planning/thinking short-term, and not linking goals with broader visions or objectives.

The main risk to be avoided is to analyze SSC/TrC with North-South parameters. Openness and fairness is key to keep dialogues between the South and the North, reconcile research priorities of Southern and Northern think tanks on the development areas of study, as well as to ensure that donors' agenda and working practices don't dominate proceedings within triangular approaches.

V. Enhancing think tanks collaboration: UNDP support to SSC/TrC research/ engagement
UNDP could support the establishment of think thanks-led research networks and the development of a common SST/TrC research agenda. It could also act as / co-host the Technical Secretariat of such network to maximize opportunities to link SSTC/TrC research with the post-2015 development goals. This would require in-house capacity to: i) broker knowledge and learning; ii) convene dialogue; iii) administer research; and iv) pair think tanks with funders.

UNDP's main added value would be to draw from its own project and policy experience worldwide to support SSC/TrC partners: i) identify relevant development solutions; i) assess the success factors (or enablers) and the lessons learned from these experiences; iii) design and implement SSC/TrC exchanges considering the enablers, the local context and the learning process; and iv) foster links with internationally agreed development goals. **The decision on what development solutions to learn from and eventually implement is ultimately of the Southern countries in the SSTC/TrC exchange.**

In this regard, and based on the mapping of Northern and Southern think tanks internal capabilities (Chart 1) as well as the proposed substantive areas (Chart 2 and Table 1), UNDP could help:

Improve overall opportunities for SSC/TrC research to steer, change, or impact the course of the public debate through:
- Support the formulation of a common research agenda: facilitate discussions on priority research topics; undertake collaborative work; convene dialogues with multiple stakeholders; monitor results and potential thematic gaps/overlaps.
- Research uptake: link up SSC/TrC common research agenda and key messages with

regional and global policy dialogues; support Southern researchers' participation in relevant global fora; pursue more policy engagements concerning SSC/TrC.

Improve overall opportunities for SSC/TrC research development and networking through:
- Capacity building: identify and publicize accumulated experience, including research methodologies, and mechanisms to scale up learning processes; promote workshops and trainings in relevant tools of analysis.
- Exchange platforms: organize workshops and roundtables on SSC/TrC; develop research platforms and networks.
- Bridging Northern and Southern think tanks: through a common research agenda on triangular cooperation.

Reduce staff capacity gap between Northern and Southern think tanks through:
- Broker knowledge: facilitating the documentation, exchange and comparison of experiences, good practices and lessons learned in different development areas.
- Support to field studies: particularly through the identification and engagement of researchers in LDCs.

Reduce funding gap between Northern and Southern think tanks and improve overall opportunities for fund diversification through:
- Support to resource mobilization to think tanks, engaging especially in LDCs, to undertake SSC/TrC focused research.

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ANNEX 1 - LIST OF THINK TANKS INTERVIEWED

Name	Organization	Country	Interview/E-survey
Arthur Muliro	Society for International Development	Italy	23/10/2014
André de Mello e Souza	Institute for Applied Economic Research	Brazil	23/10/2014
YE, Jiang	Shanghai Institutes for International Studies	China	23/10/2014
Juan Pablo Prado Lallande	Universidad Autónoma de Puebla	Mexico	24/10/2014
Camilo Molina	Observatory of the Development Cooperation in Ecuador	Ecuador	26/10/2014
Amanda Lucey	Institute for Security Studies	South Africa	27/10/2014
Adik Bandoro	Surya University	Indonesia	27/10/2014
Pascal Tchiwanou	Bornefonden	Denmark	28/10/2014
Christian Freres	ICEI	Spain	28/10/2014
Pranay Sinha	Aid Data	USA	28/10/2014
Abdulaziz Sager	Gulf Research Center	Saudi Arabia	28/10/2014
Stephan Klingebiel	German Development Institute	Germany	29/10/2014
Javier Surasky	Universidad Nacional de La Plata	Argentina	29/10/2014
Gabriela Sánchez Gutiérrez	Instituto Mora	Mexico	30/10/2014
Citlali Ayala Martinez	Instituto Mora	Mexico	30/10/2014
Kaustuv Kanti Bandyopadhyay	Participatory Research in Asia	India	31/10/2014
Mustafizur Rahman	Centre for Policy Dialogue	Bangladesh	31/10/2014
Leonardo Paz Neves	Brazilian Center for International Relations	Brazil	31/10/2014
Chris Jordan	The International Research Initiative on Brazil & Africa, hosted at the University of Manchester	UK	03/11/2014
Priscilla Miranda	CEPEI	Colombia	04/11/2014
Mao Xiaojing	Chinese Academy of International Trade and Economic Cooperation (CAITEC), Ministry of Commerce of China	China	04/11/2014
Anthea Mulakala	The Asia Foundation	USA	04/11/2014