

Triangular Cooperation Voluntary Guidelines

Country Study: South Africa
Briefing

Selected Project: SAIS 2

“Southern Africa Innovation Support Programme – Phase 2”

February 2022

Acronyms and Abbreviations

AAAA - Addis Ababa Action Agenda
ARF - African Renaissance Fund
AUDA-NEPAD – the African Union Development Agency
BIH - Botswana Innovation Hub
BRICS - Brazil, Russia, India, China, South Africa
CfP – Call for Proposals
COSTECH - Tanzania Commission for Science and Technology
DIRCO - Department of International Relations and Cooperation (South Africa)
EU - European Union
FP - Focal Points (of SAIS program)
GDP - Gross Domestic Product
GoF – Government of Finland
GoN – Government of Namibia
GoSA – Government of South Africa
HDI - Human Development Index
IBSA - India, Brazil, South Africa Forum
IMF - International Monetary Fund
IORA - Indian Ocean Rim Association
MFA - Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Finland)
NAM - Non-Aligned Movement
NCRST - National Commission for Research, Science and Technology (Namibia)
NEPAD - New Partnership for Africa's Development
NTBC - National Technology Business Centre (Zambia)
OAU - Organization of African Union
OECD - Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development
PMO - Project Management Office (of SAIS Program)
RISDP - Regional Indicative Strategic Development Plan (of SADC and NEPAD)
SADC - Southern African Development Community
SAIS - Southern Africa Innovation Support Program
SDG - Sustainable Development Goals
SSC – South-South Cooperation
TFA - Technology Facilitation Agreement
TIA - Technology Innovation Agency (South Africa)
TICAD - Tokyo International Conference on African Development
TrC – Triangular Cooperation
UN - United Nations
UNPD - United Nations Procurement Division
VDR - Voluntary National Review
WB - World Bank
WEF - World Economic Forum
WTO - World Trade Organization

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The views outlined in the publication do not necessarily reflect the policy position of Global Affairs Canada, the GPEDC AA on Triangular Cooperation, or GPI Core Group Members.

1. Executive Summary

To promote Triangular Cooperation (TrC) at the political level and make it more effective at the operational level, the 2nd High-Level Meeting of the Global Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation (GPEDC) established the Global Partnership Initiative on Effective Triangular Co-operation (GPI)¹.

Following its mandate, in March 2019, the GPI issued a set of nine Voluntary Guidelines "to ground the modality in effectiveness and to provide support in implementing impactful projects"². The Voluntary Guidelines (presented at *Box 1*) were advanced throughout a comprehensive consultation process with GPI members and generated a framework to foster the co-creation of development solutions.

Box 1. Voluntary Guidelines for Effective Triangular Cooperation

- 1. Country ownership and demand-driven cooperation:** Triangular cooperation should be undertaken with the ownership of partner countries and aligned with their national priorities, as well as those of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development;
- 2. Shared commitment:** Partners agree to participate and share responsibility with regard to identification, design, implementation, contribution, monitoring, and evaluation;
- 3. Focus on results-oriented approaches and solutions:** All partners commit to achieving agreed-upon results, as well as to demonstrating and systematising results;
- 4. Inclusive partnerships and multi-stakeholder dialogues:** Responding to the needs and objectives of all parties, partners aim to involve multiple actors with a view to foster knowledge-sharing; and to find sustainable development solutions;
- 5. Transparency and mutual accountability:** All partners are accountable for commitments made and agreed. They agree to share information on their triangular cooperation activities in accordance to the standard to enable monitoring, evaluation and accountability;
- 6. Innovation and co-creation:** Through new and existing partnerships, intelligent risk-taking, evidence-based policy and programming, technology, and flexible approaches to locally-driven innovative solutions, with a view to improving development results;
- 7. Joint-learning and knowledge-sharing for sustainable development:** Through horizontal exchanges and co-creation of development solutions, all partners mutually benefit from sharing their knowledge, capabilities and strengths;
- 8. Advance gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls:** Triangular cooperation should contribute to gender equality in its multiple dimensions as a way to accelerate sustainable development progress;
- 9. Leaving no one behind:** Triangular cooperation furthers inclusive multi-stakeholder partnerships, including those that provide support to the most vulnerable.

Source: GPI on Effective Triangular Co-operation. 2019. Voluntary Guidelines for Effective Triangular Cooperation. Available at: <https://triangular-cooperation.org/voluntary-guidelines/>

¹ GPEDC. 2016. Nairobi Outcome Document. Available at: <https://www.effectivecooperation.org/system/files/2020-05/Nairobi-Outcome-Documents-English.pdf>. (accessed 17/09/2021).

² GPI on Effective Triangular Co-operation. 2019. Triangular Co-operation in the Era of the 2030 Agenda: Sharing evidence and stories from the field. Available at: <https://triangular-cooperation.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/12/Final-GPI-report-BAPA40.pdf>. (accessed 01/09/2021).

The Voluntary Guidelines underpin GPEDC's Action Area on TrC Work Programme for the 2020-2022 biennium. The Action Area's work plan intends to "increase instances of implementation of the Voluntary Guidelines"³ as a way "to build greater awareness of, and mainstream engagement for effective triangular cooperation within the GPEDC network"⁴.

Global Affairs Canada commissioned this country study to assess the implementation of the Voluntary Guidelines in existing triangular cooperation practices. The study attempts to understand the state of the implementation of the Voluntary Guidelines and identify best practices and lessons from one TrC programme selected with South Africa's Department of Science and Innovation. Two overarching questions framed the enquire: (a) *To what extent do partners engaged in triangular cooperation adopt the Voluntary Guidelines, at both the operational and policy levels?* and (b) *What practices enable, in fact, the adoption of the Voluntary Guidelines?*

The study counted on the support of the GoSA which has volunteered to pilot the voluntary guidelines. The selected programme was the [Southern Africa Innovation Support Programme 2 \(SAIS 2\)](#), which started in 2017 and will be completed in 2022.

While the first phase of SAIS (2011-2015) focused on regional policymaking towards innovation support, SAIS 2 emphasises "concrete innovation activities delivered on a programmatic basis"⁵. Even though it did not participate in the first phase, South Africa was invited to join SAIS 2 as a knowledge partner. Such a position granted the GoSA a dual role of a beneficiary and pivotal partner. SAIS 2 overall objective is "enhanced regional innovation cooperation and national innovation systems contributing to inclusive business and employment", but it also include promoting connectivity between innovation ecosystems, strengthening start-ups and early-stage enterprises, and promoting inclusive entrepreneurship (emphasising young entrepreneurs and innovation favouring the most disadvantaged populations).

SAIS 2's results framework is organised around three areas, namely: (i) *Institutional development for regional innovation cooperation*, dedicated to improving the capacity of Innovation Support Organisations in terms of expertise and delivery to support private sector innovation and enterprise development; (ii) *Innovation in enterprises*, dedicated to improving the capacity of enterprises to innovate and enter new markets; and (iii) *Inclusive Innovation*, dedicated to improving enabling environment for inclusive innovation activities in the region.

The programme was established with the support of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Government of Finland (MFA/GoF) in partnership with the governments of Botswana, Namibia, South Africa, Tanzania and Zambia, and the Southern African Development Community and its Science, Technology and Innovation Office (SADC/STI Office).

SAIS' governance arrangements secured the active participation of partner countries at both the decision making and operational levels through a doubled representation. The Supervisory Board (SvB) is SAIS 2's highest steering and decision-making body. It consists of representatives from each partner country, the MFA/GoF and the SADC STI Office⁶ and plays several roles: policy direction, annual planning and approval of changes or adaptations to the programme⁷.

³ GPEDC-AATrC. 2020. Canada's Presentation - GPEDC Workshop. Available at: <https://www.effectivecooperation.org/system/files/2020-03/2.2%20Effective%20TrC.pdf>. (Accessed 23/09/2021)

⁴ GPEDC-AATrC. 2020. Work Plan 2020-2022. Available at: https://www.effectivecooperation.org/system/files/2020-09/Refocused%20Work%20Plan%20-%20GPEDC%20TrC%20Action%20Area%20-%20July%202020_%202020%20.DOCX (Accessed 23/09/2021)

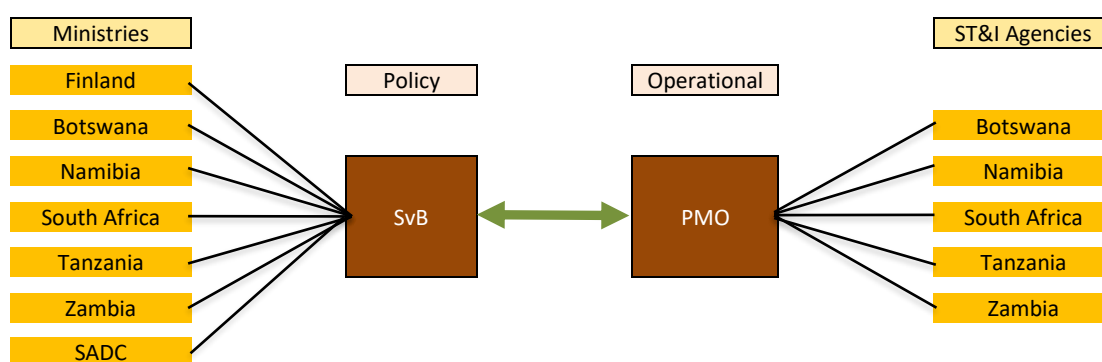
⁵ SAIS 2 - Summarised Programme Document and Results Framework, p. 5

⁶ Memorandum of Understanding between the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Finland and Technology Innovation Agency on SAIS2 p.3

⁷ SAIS Phase 2: Final Draft Programme Document p.8

The Program Management Office (PMO) is a non-legal entity set up with expertise from Finland and the region, contracted by the MFA and hosted by the National Commission on Research, Science and Technology (NCRST) in Windhoek, Namibia. The PMO supports the Supervisory Board and is mandated with the overall programme management⁸. On the other side, it is supported by five Focal Points (STI national organisations designated by partner countries)⁹. Focal Points are national innovation institutions with strong capacities for promotion, business support, identification of innovation opportunities as well as monitoring and evaluation. The Focal Points help PMO in setting up a network providing access to relevant role-players across the Southern African region. Each year the Focal Points have also prepared National Action Plans (NAPs) specifying activities that are thematically linked to SAIS and its scope. SAIS co-funds the implementation of these.

Figure 1. SAIS 2 Governance Structure – doubled representation



Source: author's elaboration.

Key Message 1: Strengthening Governance Arrangements – Doubled Representation

Active participation in policy and operational levels augments the beneficiaries' ownership over the programme in its different stages, increasing the partnership legitimacy. The **doubled representation** adopted by SAIS 2 also strengthens monitoring practices, enhancing transparency and mutual accountability. Furthermore, arrangements enable co-creation at multiple levels: policy, programming and operational support.

- #1. Country ownership and demand-driven cooperation.
- #3. Focus on results-oriented approaches and solutions.
- #5. Transparency and mutual accountability.
- #6. Innovation and co-creation.

SAIS 2 is a singular experience of **dynamic triangulation**. While the MFA/GoF and the PMO play the facilitator role within the consortium, the five partner countries are the beneficiaries. The partner countries governments are also sponsoring along with the MFA, and various innovation role-player organisations and entrepreneurs in the larger SADC region can benefit from this. The SAIS 2 innovation fund grant consortiums can also include organisations outside of SADC countries. This makes the beneficiary list to cover also Finnish (and other country) innovation

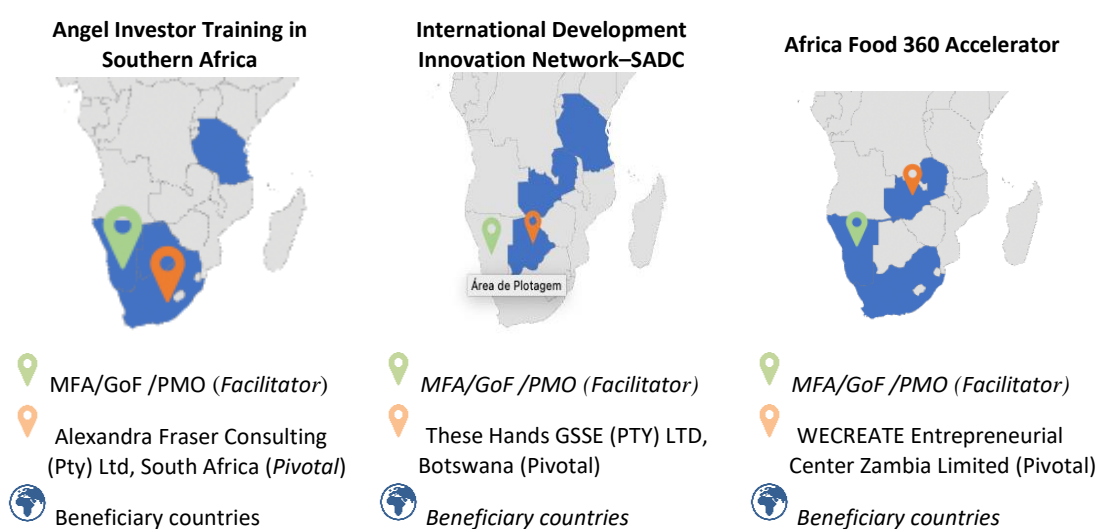
⁸ *Idem*.

⁹ SAIS' focal points are Botswana – The Botswana Innovation Hub (BIH), Namibia – The National Commission for Research, Science and Technology (NCRST); South Africa – The Technology Innovation Agency (TIA), Tanzania – The Tanzania Commission for Science and Technology, (COSTECH) and Zambia – The National Technology Business Centre (NTBC).

role-player organisations. The programme implementation mechanism is structured from a bilateral agreement between Finland and Namibia's Ministry for Higher Education, Technology and Innovation (MHETI); and from this, a series of Memorandum of Understanding were established between the MHETI and partner countries' innovation agencies.

This makes the pivotal role dynamic: depending on the activity, partner countries also act as pivotal partners, sharing knowledge and expertise and engaging in capacity development and networking. Through its innovation fund's calls for proposals, SAIS 2 enables multiple triangulations mobilising public and private development partners across the SADC. Indeed, such financial schemes foster partnerships in which countries may even play the roles of beneficiary and pivotal at the same time (Figure 2 below provides three examples of dynamic triangulation).

Figure 2. Dynamic Triangulations throughout SAIS2 Innovation Fund Calls for Proposals



Source: author's elaboration.

SAIS 2 also generates opportunities for additional triangulations via (i) Focal Points' National Action Plans, (ii) Communities of Practice; and (iii) Co-creation Platforms. The GoSA provides at least one example of such triangulation, advancing initiatives with Tanzania and Botswana under the SAIS 2 umbrella. Likewise, after the end of SAIS 2, South Africa plays a pivotal role in supporting a community of practice (Connected Hubs/Southern Africa Innovation Community) gathering Southern African innovation support organisations with linkages to international innovation ecosystems. The Connected Hubs aim at developing capacities of both tech hubs and their client (early-stage entrepreneurs), through the following: a peer learning programme for the hubs, trainings organized to the entrepreneurs under annual cross-border pitching competition (BoostUp) and networking program with the role-players in Finnish innovation ecosystem.

Key Message 2: Implementation instruments - Inclusive Partnerships Boosters and Co-creation Platforms

Special Purpose Funds may support synergies among societal actors through different forms of triangulation. Communities of practices and matchmaking fora are co-creating platforms that support capacity development, knowledge sharing and peer learning activities, leveraging multiple actors' contributions for co-creating development solutions and sharing their benefits.

- #2. Shared commitment.
- #4. Inclusive partnerships and multi-stakeholder dialogues.
- #6. Innovation and co-creation.
- #7. Joint-learning and knowledge-sharing for sustainable development

SAIS 2 was designed around actions that aim also to impact the 'Base of the Pyramid' (BOP), enhancing the capacities of innovation support organisations to assist enterprises and other role-players to deliver innovation to socially or economically excluded communities and disadvantaged groups. Indeed, one of the SAIS 2 result areas is precisely Inclusive Innovation – improved capacity of innovation support organisations and entrepreneurs to develop new and/or enhanced products, processes and services with and for socially and economically excluded communities. The Human Rights-based Approach adopted by SAIS 2 involves a particular concern about the negative impacts of development interventions. Hence, SAIS 2 must ensure that its interventions do not deepen inequality and discrimination.

Key Message 3: Practices - gender mainstreaming and targeting vulnerable groups through overarching strategies

To tackle gender inequalities, TrC programmes should go beyond specific and sectoral actions and adopt a gender-inclusive strategy in all its management systems and processes as well as in its result areas. Furthermore, the LNOB approach suggest (i) targeting vulnerable groups and excluded communities; (ii) assessing risks and negative impacts of development interventions upon vulnerable groups; and (iii) collecting disaggregated data by gender and age for targeting those left behind.

- #4. Inclusive partnerships and multi-stakeholder dialogues;
- #8. Advance gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls
- #9. Leaving no one behind

SAIS 2 implementation is underpinned by the premise that the economic strengthening of partner countries depends on and will be enhanced by the programme's capacity to promote gender-inclusive practices and target disadvantaged groups and excluded communities. Through all the result areas, the programme adopted a gender mainstreaming approach that crosses its management systems and processes (see *Table 1*, as follows). Nevertheless, the data sources required to assess SAIS 2 progress against its results framework require disaggregated data by gender and age, a condition for targeting those left behind.

Table 1. SAIS 2 Gender mainstreaming approach

Innovation Fund	Capacity Building	Knowledge and Networking
Increase funding applications and the success rate of innovation support organisations that aim to support female entrepreneurs;	To generate and stimulate sensitivity to issues related to human rights and gender inequality;	To raise awareness of positive role models for aspiring women entrepreneurs;
To minimise the effect of bias on funding outcomes and ensure that innovation support organisations led or represented by women have equal opportunities to succeed in the SAIS 2 Call for Proposals.	To strengthen knowledge and skills necessary for SAIS 2 engagement with human rights and gender equality issues both internally (with the SAIS 2 PMO and Focal Points) and externally supporting the innovation fund project grantees	To ensure the provision of a fluid mix of framed experience, values, contextual information and expert insight into gender-inclusive practices as part of documents and thematic seminars.

Source: author’s elaboration.

2. Methodological Note

This country study on the Voluntary Guidelines for Effective Triangular Cooperation was designed to answer two questions:

- To what extent do partners engaged in triangular cooperation adopt the Voluntary Guidelines, at both the operational and policy levels?
- What practices enable, in fact, the adoption of the Voluntary Guidelines?

The choice for framing country studies around single programmes or projects presents clear limits. Case studies' contextual boundaries may make it impossible to generalise conclusions for the whole set of Triangular Cooperation (TrC) practices adopted by a given country. Nevertheless, a single project/programme study illuminates what principles or rules guide TrC practices in the field and the meaning they acquire for practitioners. In any case, to avoid the risk of over-generalisation, the research team conducted validation meetings with key stakeholders and the findings and conclusions presented here are submitted to their scrutiny. The case study may provide information and valuable insights on TrC initiatives, contributing to nurture the GPEDC knowledge base. Furthermore, this study aims to identify lessons and provide recommendations for helping partners to streamline the Voluntary Guidelines implementation.

The **South Africa's SAIS 2 case study** was built around interviews and desk reviews. The interviews were based on the assessment matrix (*see Annex 1*) and follow-up questions were tailored considering a qualitative perspective on the interviewee's position within the programme (such as beneficiary, facilitator, pivotal or dual), aiming to supplement the data collected with specific and inductive questions. The desk review comprised both document analysis and literature review. The documents under consideration consisted of Memorandum of Understanding (MoUs), Terms of Reference (ToRs), Minutes of the Meetings (MoMs), monitoring reports, progress reports, reviews, and evaluations or assessments. The literature review supported the general analysis and provided insights on existing TrC ecosystems in the countries targeted.

In this study we adopt the concept of TrC as defined by the Global Partnership Initiative, understanding the modality as a collaboration that requires at least three interchangeable roles being represented, with each partner potentially playing more than one role (*see Box 1*). Regarding the SAIS 2 Programme, we acknowledged that the initiative supported the institutional capacity for regional cooperation by improving and enabling the environment for inclusive innovation activities among different Ministries and Focal Points institutions responsible for Science, Technology and Innovation (STI) in Botswana, Namibia, South Africa, Tanzania and Zambia, with the scrutiny of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) of Finland and the collaboration of the Southern African Development Community (SADC).

Nevertheless, with the objective to assess the engagement with the Voluntary Guidelines throughout TrC initiatives, this study chooses to **focus only on the South African Ecosystem for International Development Cooperation**, due to (i) the country voluntary willingness to participate in this Pilot Study; and (ii) its dual role as both beneficiary and pivotal partner on the SAIS 2 Programme. For this reason, it is worth noting that while most of the informants reported that this programme was quite successfully executed in all the above-mentioned countries, this briefing relies mainly on the triangular relations that the Government of South Africa (GoSA) established within the programme and its partners.

Box 2. How is the Triangular Cooperation operated?

According to the [Global Partnership Initiative](#)'s website, Triangular Cooperation is a North-South-South development cooperation modality with growing influence. While it was traditionally a government-to-government cooperation model, the contemporary approach recognizes the importance and emergence of private sector, CSOs, philanthropic institutions, academia, and sub-national actors as potential partners.

The TrC mobilizes multiple stakeholders (from the Global North and South), with a qualified involvement in three different roles as described below:

- **Pivotal partner** often has proven experience and shares its resources, knowledge and expertise through triangular co-operation. It can sometimes provide a bridge between South-South and North-South.
- **Facilitating partner** helps to connect countries and organizations to form a triangular partnership and gives financial and/or technical support to the collaboration.
- **Beneficiary partner** seeks support to tackle specific development challenge in line with their national development priorities and needs. It is responsible for ensuring that results are sustainable.

There can be one or more stakeholders in any of these roles, and stakeholders may change roles throughout the implementation of the initiative.

This is a flexible model whereby all partners work together in a horizontally way, being recognized for the value of their distinct expertise and resources. On this modality, stakeholders are better able to share knowledge, often encouraging innovation and co-creation through mutual learning.

Source: GPI Website, <https://triangular-operation.org/about/>

3. The South African Ecosystem for International Development Cooperation

South Africa built up its relations to the world by positioning itself as part of the Global South and assuming an important role in the cooperation ecosystem of the continent with the Southern African Development Community (SADC), the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) and the African Renaissance and International Cooperation Fund (ARF), by promoting integration and development of Africa and engaging in technical cooperation in areas such as public financial management, conflict resolution and peacebuilding¹⁰. South Africa's first VNR shows that the country's commitment with South-South and African-centred cooperation remains, in drawing efforts to harmonize the United Nations' 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Africa Union Agenda 2063, in the country's National Development Plan¹¹.

The South African government has a Department of International Relations and Cooperation (DIRCO) which is responsible for the management of the country's foreign policy affairs. DIRCO works intending to facilitate South Africa's socio-economic development and articulation of cooperation in different sectors¹². DIRCO has the intention of advancing the African Agenda, Regional Integration and South-South Cooperation, reflecting the values and ideals of Pan-Africanism and Ubuntu philosophy. South Africa's main instruments to achieve these goals are bilateral and multilateral relations, as means to reduce inequality and promote socio-economic development and human rights. The bilateral relations are a way to develop direct articulation with another country, aligning goals and understanding in different areas. South Africa recognizes that bilateral relations can help bridge multilateral cooperative relations between partners with the same goals.

Nevertheless, when it comes to the International Development Cooperation (IDC), South Africa traditionally plays a **dual role**, as a beneficiary and provider of such initiatives. As a beneficiary, the country has received approximately USD 971,5 million on net official development assistance in 2019¹³. As a provider, OECD estimates that South Africa's disbursement reached USD 106 million in 2019 – decreasing from USD 111 million in 2018¹⁴.

Regarding the multilateral relations, DIRCO's position¹⁵ is one of recognising the importance of the maintenance of a multilateral system as a way to reduce the imbalance of powers in the international arena and to facilitate the addressing of common agendas, like the 2030 SDGs and the African Union's 2063 Agenda. South Africa values the UN position in promoting a better world through its bodies, agencies bodies, agencies, agencies, funds, programmes and related organisations in association with the UN and conventions and agreements that provide for inclusive and equal participation by all states. South Africa's regional engagement is also well-expressed in their contributions to multilateral organisations, which totalled USD 71.3 million in 2019 and were channelled through the African Union (37%), the United Nations (24%) and regional development banks (32%),¹⁶. The country is also heavily engaged with groupings of the South that promote South-South cooperation such as BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa); IBSA (India, Brazil and South Africa); IORA (Indian Ocean Rim Association); the

¹⁰ See <https://us5.campaign-archive.com/?u=fa9cf38799136b5660f367ba6&id=1fd20f5d8e>

¹¹ See [23402RSA Voluntary National Review Report The Final 24 July 2019.pdf](https://www.dirco.gov.za/23402RSA-Voluntary-National-Review-Report-The-Final-24-July-2019.pdf)

¹² See <https://www.gov.za/about-sa/international-relations>

¹³ See <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/DT.ODA.ODAT.CD?locations=ZA>

¹⁴ See OECD (2021), "Other official providers not reporting to the OECD", in *Development Co-operation Profiles*, OECD Publishing, Paris, <https://doi.org/10.1787/18b00a44-en>.

¹⁵ See [Department of International Relations and Cooperation - Revised Strategic Plan 2015 – 2020](#)

¹⁶ See OECD (2021), "Other official providers not reporting to the OECD", in *Development Co-operation Profiles*, OECD Publishing, Paris, <https://doi.org/10.1787/18b00a44-en>.

Group of 77 (G77) and China; and the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM)¹⁷. Currently, South Africa also chairs the Total Official Support for Sustainable Development (TOSSD) Task Force¹⁸.

Another indicator of South African commitment with the promotion with South-South cooperation in the African continent is the African Renaissance and International Cooperation Fund Act, promulgated in 2001. The fund is South Africa's effort to promote socio-economic development, during the financial year of 2019/20 the ARF processed R63.4 million in disbursements towards democracy, humanitarian assistance and resources, to fund projects and programmes within this framework¹⁹. The African Renaissance Fund is multilateral oriented and represents a mechanism that allows the funds to be directed to joint projects and many recipients since the previous project was for bilateral projects only. The fund is coordinated by the Director-General of DIRCO and an Advisory Committee, formed by the Minister of International Relations and Cooperation and two members nominated by the Minister of Finance²⁰.

Table 2. South Africa's Triangular Cooperation Projects from the OECD Repository

Project	Partners	Sector	Budget	Project period
Anti-corruption project in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC)	Germany, Regional Office United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), South Africa, Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC)	Government and Civil society	Between USD 500 000 and 1000 000	2008-2011
Building Capacity of Investigators of Police Oversight Bodies	Germany, South Africa, Kenya, Tanzania, Nigeria, Uganda, Ghana	Government and Civil Society	Between USD 100 000 and 500 000	2013-2014
Tanzania - South Africa fire management coordination project	Germany, South Africa, Tanzania	Government and Civil society	Between USD 500 000 and 1 000 000	2011-2013
African soil micro-organism as a resource for agriculture and biotechnology	United States, South Africa, Kenya	Agriculture and Food Security	Between USD 100 000 and 500 000	2015-2018
Development of propagation of pathogen-free potato seed for yield improvement in Malawi	United States, South Africa, Malawi	Agriculture and Food Security	< USD 100 000	2009-2013
Assessing the human health risks and coping mechanisms for environmental pollution	United States, South Africa, Mozambique	Environmental Protection	Between USD 100 000 and 500 000	2012-2014
Solar energy map and database of Southern Africa	United States, South Africa, Namibia, Botswana	Energy	Between USD 100 000 and 500 000	2015-2016
Climate risk and capacity building in the Southern African region	United States, South Africa, Zimbabwe, Mozambique, Namibia	Environmental Protection	Between USD 100 000 and 500 000	2012-2016

Source: author's elaboration, with data from OECD – Triangular Cooperation Repository of Projects.

¹⁷ See [Department of International Relations and Cooperation - Strategic Plan 2020 - 2025](#)

¹⁸ See OECD (2021), "Other official providers not reporting to the OECD", in *Development Co-operation Profiles*, OECD Publishing, Paris, <https://doi.org/10.1787/18b00a44-en>.

¹⁹ See Annual Report for 2019/20 Financial Year - African Renaissance and International Cooperation Fund (ARF).

²⁰ See <http://www.dirco.gov.za/foreign/Multilateral/profiles/arfund.htm>

Box 3. SADC and South Africa

South Africa became a member of SADC in 1994. The community was formed to address the region's main challenges to achieve development. SADC's formalised structure changed in 2002, it became a centralised institution having a Summit of Heads of State, a Council of Ministers and the Standing Committee of Senior Officials. South Africa addresses this opportunity of harmonization of agendas, bringing issues to the region's development plan such as regional integration, gender equality, development of human resources, the establishment of a free trade area, combat of drug trafficking, combating HIV/AIDS. SADC represents South Africa's commitment to deepening its relationship with neighbouring countries to promote democracy, peace and development.

Source: <http://www.dirco.gov.za/foreign/Multilateral/africa/sadc.htm>

South Africa also has a deep commitment to inter-African countries. As evidenced in its participation in the SADC, which acts as a space for the alignment of the development in the region with the ultimate goal of regional integration and interdependence. South Africa's view on North-South cooperation includes South Africa's engagements with key global economic players and spaces such as the WTO (World Trade Organization), the WB (World Bank), IMF (International Monetary Fund), OECD (Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development) and the WEF (World Economic Forum). South Africa promotes its relationship with the Global North as well as recognizing their value as enablers of development, and view these relations as means to bridge the cooperation between these actors and South Africa's Global South partners. Two examples are the Joint Africa-European Union (EU) Strategy, which promotes relations between Africa and the EU; and the Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD)²¹.

One of South Africa's main groupings is the African Union Development Agency (AUDA-NEPAD), a mandate of the African Union, originated from a strategic framework document adopted in 2001 by the Organization of African Unity initiated by Algeria, Egypt, Nigeria, Senegal and South Africa. Its main goal is to address African countries' development issues, promote sustainable growth and development, stimulate cooperation and integration with the global economy. AUDA-NEPAD also has more direct goals: ending poverty and accelerating women empowerment²². AUDA-NEPAD's link with SADC is the Regional Indicative Strategic Development Plan (RISDP), adopted in 2001 by the Ministers of Foreign Affairs and Finance that harmonises AUDA-NEPAD's SADC's efforts in the regional economic communities. This effort was translated into task teams, each being coordinated by the five previously mentioned AUDA-NEPAD countries, and South Africa is responsible for the Peace, Security, Democracy and Political Governance Initiative²³. Furthermore, since 2011 AUDA-NEPAD has supported the "Africa Action Plan on Development Effectiveness" based on the Continent's development priorities as expressed by the African Union Agenda 2063. The plan relates to the continent's: (i) Progress on implementing the Busan commitments; (ii) Tax and domestic resource mobilisation; (iii) Middle-income countries and effective development cooperation; (iv) Knowledge sharing,

²¹ See

http://www.dirco.gov.za/department/strategic_plan_2020_2025/strategic_plan_revised_2020_2025.pdf

²² See www.dirco.gov.za/au.nepad/nepadbrief.htm

²³ See http://www.dirco.gov.za/au.nepad/nepad_overview.htm

South-South and Triangular Cooperation; (v) The private sector and effective development cooperation²⁴.

Box 4. Trilateral or Triangular Cooperation?

In South Africa, the cooperation activities involving three partners are usually defined as **“Trilateral Cooperation”** instead of the “Triangular Cooperation” definition provided by the OECD. In some cases, when it represents agreements between more than two countries, it is also called “a plurilateral agreement”. Nevertheless, the South African option for using the ‘trilateral’ wording can be understood as a way to encode those initiatives in a broader set of South–South Cooperation (SSC) partnerships.

Although the trilateral definition is pretty much close to the [Global Partnership Initiative’s](#) rationale – that defines TrC as “a modality of its own that requires at least three roles being represented, with each potentially having more than one actor” – in this study, we opted to maintain the "Triangular Cooperation" wording.

By doing so, we aimed to emphasize the dynamic character of the Triangular Cooperation initiatives, stressing how different partners might play different and interchangeable roles depending on the component and the needs of a particular TrC project.

Sources: GPI website and DIRCO’s Annual Performance Plan for 2021 – 2022²⁵.

²⁴ See <https://www.nepad.org/publication/africa-action-plan-development-effectiveness>

²⁵ See

http://www.dirco.gov.za/department/annual_performance_plan2021_2022/annual_performance_plan_revised2_2021_2022.pdf

4. Selected Programme: Southern Africa Innovation Support Program – Phase 2

The [Southern Africa Innovation Support Programme \(SAIS\)](#) started in 2011 to promote policy and develop the innovation ecosystem in the SADC region. The program's first phase was initiated in 2015 and acted in stimulating policy, capacity building, networks and projects. For its first phase, SAIS worked on producing an analysis of the regional innovation ecosystem, identifying the needs to fast development, and setting key elements and priorities for the countries involved. In that sense, the SAIS 1 focused on policy development and on the design of innovation strategies to provide technical assistance.

The second phase of the SAIS program was started in mid-2017 and until 2021 it enlarged and deepened the first phase achievements. Moving from the policy level, SAIS 2 promoted the interaction and the innovation landscape itself, with the aim to foster innovation through different actors, such as individuals, intermediary institutions and incubators. In its second phase, SAIS 2 counted with two new partners: Tanzania and South Africa. The programme focused on three main result areas:

- I. **Institutional Development for Regional Innovation Cooperation:** advancing institutional capacity and supporting expertise in the innovation sector
- II. **Innovation in Enterprises:** support capacity development of early-stage enterprises and start-ups and entering the new markets
- III. **Inclusive Innovation:** promote the development of innovation for socially and economically excluded communities

The program Focal Points (FPs) are the institutions responsible for innovation in Botswana, Namibia, South Africa, Tanzania and Zambia, with the scrutiny of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) of Finland.

SAIS 2 main goal is "Enhanced regional innovation cooperation and national innovation systems contributing to inclusive business and development"²⁶. South Africa's FP is the Technology Innovation Agency (TIA).

SAIS 2 Programme Management Office is based in Windhoek, Namibia, and hosted by the country's National Commission for Research, Science and Technology (NCRST). The PMO is composed of a Lead Expert, a Programme Director, Regional Programme Officer, Communication Officer and a Finance and Administration Officer. The program also has a Supervisory Board (SVB), the highest decision-making body of SAIS 2, that oversees the program's budget, work plans, financial reports, and implementation. The SVB also approves the Evaluation Committee members, strategic changes and mediate conflicts²⁷.

²⁶ See <https://www.saisprogramme.org/storage/app/media/documents/sais-summarised-program-document-ed-june-2018-rev-2-1.pdf>

²⁷ See <https://www.saisprogramme.org/about-sais#focal-points>

Box 5. SAIS Guidelines

The SAIS 2 program has designed several products with the guidelines of the project for different aspects. Some of them are worth mentioning, as the:

- **Impact Toolkit (2020)** – which provides the guidelines for the gathering of data and analysis of impacts and outputs. The Toolkit emphasizes the importance of the gender lens, the harmonization with the SDGs, and how to secure the sustainability of the actions of the program. The SAIS Toolkit was introduced to all SAIS beneficiaries and funded projects, to provide support on three levels: curating the impact of SAIS-funded projects, managing decisions along the way, and visualising the projects' outcomes in order to support sustainability and impact. With the Toolkit, each project beneficiary was guided and encouraged to develop their own impact case study.
- **Application of a Human Rights-Based Approach and Gender Mainstreaming Strategy for SAIS 2 (2018)** – which is a document containing numerous strategies that seek the implementation of a Human Rights-Based Approach and Gender-Sensitive approach. Emphasizing the role of SAIS in the promotion of these agendas in the region.

Regarding the 3rd action area of the program that is related to Inclusive Innovation, these guidelines stand out:

- **Breaking Barriers Female Technology Entrepreneurship in Southern Africa (2020)** – this document is a collection of feedback from women tech entrepreneurs in the SAIS countries addressing the challenges of being a woman in this field.
- **8 Ways to Strengthen Your Inclusive Innovation Training Programme (2020)** – this is a document that summarizes the learnings from training others in Inclusive Innovation. The document was produced as an effort to share with policymakers and civil society strategies on how to form a program that booster inclusiveness.

According to the Semi-Annual Report 2020, SAIS 2 Output 1.1: “Improved staff and organisational capacity in the innovation support organisations”²⁸ is 100% achieved. Another output worth mentioning is Output 2.3 on “Improved international expertise on innovation management amongst innovation intermediaries, entrepreneurs and potential entrepreneurs”, which has stimulated efforts to enlarge networking collaboration activities with Southern Africa local and regionally – as the SAIS 2 Connected Hubs network, that promoted the regional start-up competition BOOST UP 2020²⁹. SAIS 2 can be viewed as an instrument to develop the innovation sector in Southern Africa, based on the goal of Regional Integration and South-South cooperation. By aligning the partners' innovation and development agendas, besides focusing on building the sector capacity and infrastructure, SAIS 2 aims to create a Southern African Innovation Ecosystem centred on the principle of cooperation.

²⁸ SAIS - Semi Annual Report 2020

²⁹ SAIS - Semi Annual Report 2020

5. Key Findings

SAIS 2 is a singular experience of **dynamic triangulation**. While the MFA/GoF and the PMO play the facilitator role within the consortium, the five partner countries are the beneficiaries. The consortium is structured from a bilateral agreement between Finland and Namibia's NCRST (as the PMO host) and a series of Memoranda of Understanding between the NCRST and partner countries' innovation agencies.

The pivotal role is dynamic: depending on the activity, partner countries also act as pivotal partners, sharing knowledge and expertise and engaging in capacity development and networking. **At the SAIS 2, South African public and private organizations have played a dual role, as beneficiary and pivotal.** SAIS 2 enables multiple triangulations mobilising public and private development partners across the SADC through its innovation fund's calls for proposals. Indeed, such financial schemes foster partnerships in which countries may even play the roles of beneficiary and pivotal at the same time.

When assessing to what extent the Voluntary Guidelines were being adopted by South Africa and its development partners at the SAIS 2 Programme, this study could gather the following comprehensive findings.

A. Country ownership and demand-driven cooperation

Triangular cooperation should be undertaken with the ownership of partner countries and aligned with their national priorities, as well as those of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

In assessing beneficiaries' ownership of the TrC project, we referred to (i) the GoSA engagement and leadership in all project phases; (ii) the level of engagement of local beneficiaries.

Such understanding suggested the following assessment questions:

- If and how beneficiary countries were involved in the conceptualization of the project?
- How were beneficiary countries engaged with the different stages of the project implementation?
- Was the project consistent with the government strategies?
- Was the implementation process flexible and adaptable to local needs?
- Did the project facilitate the exchange with other sectors or areas beyond its original scope?

In sum, SAIS is a platform where beneficiaries also play pivotal roles. Along with MFA/GoF and SADC, line ministries from partner countries made up the Supervisory Board mandated with strategic planning. At the same time, national innovation agencies work with the Programme Management Office to implement programme activities at the regional, national and local levels. Unfolding partners participation across policy and operational levels (doubled representation) enhances the beneficiary's ownership over the programme in different stages.

A1 SAIS is a consortium of national innovation agencies in the southern African region. It is a GoF-funded programme involving Zambia, Namibia, Botswana, Tanzania and South Africa. The programme is steered by a Supervisory Board (SvB) where partner countries, including the GoF and SADC, are represented. Under the SvB, the Programme Management Office (PMO) runs SAIS activities. The PMO is housed by the National Commission on Research, Science and Technology (NCRST) in Namibia. Following the SvB guidance, the PMO plans SAIS activities aligned with the demands of the focal points. According to informants, the priorities are established according to the needs of the innovation landscapes in partner countries.

Created as SAIS operational arm, the PMO facilitates the programme implementation at the regional level and, with the focal points, at the national and local levels.

- A2 The PMO facilitates coordination and cooperation among focal points. More than one informant described the PMO as “the glue for managing the programme (...) and for all the countries”. While the GoF and the PMO play the facilitator role within the consortium, the five partner countries are the beneficiaries. The consortium is structured from a bilateral agreement between Finland and Namibia and a series of Memorandums of Understanding between the NCRST and partner countries' innovation agencies. Nevertheless, depending on the activity, partner countries also act as pivotal partners, sharing knowledge and expertise and engaging in capacity development and networking. As one informant suggested, SAIS could be described as a multi-partner programme, where some agents, like South Africa, would play various roles.
- A3 SAIS 1 focused on policy development, assisting partner countries in setting up and strengthening innovation ecosystems. SAIS 2 builds upon the results achieved with SAIS 1, moving from the policy level to the innovation landscape itself, with two clear targets: the innovators themselves, and two, in intermediary institutions that support innovation. In such context (2017), following an invitation from the GoF, South Africa and Tanzania were involved in designing the second phase of the programme. As one informant stated, throughout the design process of phase 2, the GoSA aligned its role of beneficiary and knowledge partner with the GoF. Within SAIS, South African public and private organisations often play a double role of a beneficiary and pivotal partner.
- A4 The programme adopted the principle of co-funding by participating countries, considering each partner's different capacities. SAIS 2 was designed to incorporate the national innovation systems. In this sense, while line ministries made up the SvB, national innovation agencies were mobilised to implement the programme's activities as focal points. According to informants, all partner countries participated in SAIS from design to evaluation. Moreover, the SvB was able to adjust the implementation process both to local needs and the circumstances created by the COVID-19 pandemic. Beyond the programme's original scope, considering municipalities as part of innovation ecosystems, the SvB approved a pilot project in Namibia. After successful results, the SvB expanded the experience to include up to 11 municipalities across the five countries and a total number of about 55 beneficiaries. Many projects financed throughout the Call for Proposals (CfPs) have also reached countries beyond SAIS boundaries, enhancing its impact.

B. Shared Commitments

Partners agree to participate and share responsibility with regard to identification, design, implementation, contribution, monitoring, and evaluation.

While assessing the shared commitments among the SAIS 2 partners, we aimed to identify their roles and contributions along the project cycle and raised the following questions:

- What was the contribution and value-added by each partner to the design, implementation, and evaluation of this project?
- How do partners coordinate their activities?
- How do partners manage the resources?
- How is knowledge circulated among partners?

All partners followed the principle of co-funding according to differentiated capacities. Even though the GoF contributed with more than 90% of SAIS' funds, every partner provided financial

and in-kind contributions to the programme. Beyond financial and non-financial contributions, every beneficiary plays a pivotal role in sharing knowledge and expertise and engaging in capacity development and networking.

- B1 The **Supervisory Board (SvB)** is SAIS' highest steering and decision-making body. The SvB consists of representatives from each partner country, the MFA/GoF and the SADC STI Office³⁰. The SvB plays several roles: policy direction, annual planning and approval of changes or adaptations to the programme. In addition, the SvB approves the members of the Evaluation Committee (the committee is composed of international experts)³¹. **The Program Management Office** is hosted by the National Commission on Research, Science and Technology (NCRST) in Windhoek, Namibia. The PMO supports the SvB and is mandated with the overall programme management, which includes: (i) Coordinating all transactional operations; (ii) Managing Programme finances and reporting; (iii) Supervising selection procedure of Challenge Fund projects; (iv) Supporting organizing annual Innovation Forums, and private sector financing events, and (v) Developing a platform to promote collaboration with Finnish and International stakeholders³². The PMO is supported by five **focal points** (STI national organizations designated by partner countries)³³. The focal points bridge the PMO to partners countries, promoting SAIS decisions and projects at the national level. As described by one interviewee, the focal points help the PMO to manage SAIS' resources and its footprint in each of the partner countries. Along with the PMO, they structure the network across the southern African region. SAIS supports focal points activities throughout their National Action Plans (NAPs). Focal points also play a role in disseminating the call for proposals and screening the submissions with the PMO. The focal points articulate SAIS activities with the private sector, government, and academia at the local level.
- B2 Each of the partners has contributed financially to SAIS. The overall programme budget was EUR 9,200,000. The GoF contributed EUR 8,700,000 while partner institutions and project applicants balanced the funds. SvB members have also provided their time and covered participation costs in the meetings. Beyond in-kind contributions for SAIS implementation at the national level, focal points matched SAIS contributions for the NAPs and learning activities within "Connected Hubs" networks. As per the Challenge Fund, applicants must match the funding ranging from 20% to 40% depending on the type of the organization and project.
- B3 According to informants, partners recognize South Africa as the most developed country and, as such, endowed with the highest concentration of organizations (public and private) involved in innovation in the region. Nevertheless, this asymmetry did not lead to a power imbalance in SAIS 2 engagement or decision making – since all partner countries were equally represented at the SvB. Hence, SAIS 2 included South Africa to strengthen the national and regional innovation ecosystems. South Africa was not supposed to act only as a beneficiary but also as an active provider of knowledge, expertise, and funds supporting a more robust regional approach to innovation support. As such, while many of South Africa's organizations were involved as SAIS' funded projects, many organizations providing capacity development support were based in South Africa.

³⁰ Memorandum of Understanding between the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Finland and Technology Innovation Agency on SAIS2 p.3

³¹ SAIS Phase 2: Final Draft Programme Document p.8

³² idem

³³ SAIS' focal points are: Botswana – The Botswana Innovation Hub (BIH), Namibia – The National Commission for Research, Science and Technology (NCRST), South Africa – The Technology Innovation Agency (TIA), Tanzania – The Tanzania Commission for Science and Technology, (COSTECH) and Zambia – The National Technology Business Centre (NTBC).

B4 Within SAIS 2, knowledge flows could be structured throughout the entire network or triangulating within the consortium. The "Connected Hubs" networks are examples of the first case. The peer learning activities within the hubs mobilize focal points and partner organizations that share knowledge, skills and capacities with the other programme partners. In the second, triangular case partners design and implement joint projects with the support of the PMO. Two cases led by TIA are examples of this dynamic: (i) Joint Technology Innovation Programme (JTIP) established by TIA and BIH' (ii) Joint ICT Innovation and Entrepreneurship Programme in Digital Health and digital Food Security established by TIA and COSTECH.

B5 STI was targeted by many of the SADC's Regional Indicative Strategic Development Plans (RISDP), such as Education and Training (1997) and STI (2008). Even though these documents show concern about the need to build institutions, organizations and policies, the actual efforts to establish an effective innovation system in the region "have been hampered by modest funding, weak skills, and lack of coordination and linkages between initiatives"³⁴. SAIS2 helps fill these gaps, supporting strengthening national innovation systems' and enhancing regional innovation cooperation.

C. Focus on results-oriented approaches and solutions

All partners commit to achieving agreed-upon results, as well as to demonstrating and systematizing results.

The research team assessed the use of results-oriented approaches at the Facility design and implementation throughout the following questions:

- How does the project record its activities and assessed their impact?
- How do partners assess and address the project risks?
- Did the Covid-19 pandemic affect the project implementation and results?
- How were the results used to drive country ownership?

The PMO has developed tools and protocols to register and monitor outputs' completion and assess risks. Its semi-annual reports present the progress achieved to date.

C1 SAIS 2 Results framework follows the principles of Results-Based Management and is organized around three outcome areas and eleven outputs³⁵. As the SAIS operative arm, the PMO monitors the execution of activities and completion of outputs. Such progress is registered in semi-annual reports. Informants acknowledge the PMO's efforts in developing management tools, without which the programme implementation would be impossible. Moreover, they consider the PMO's expertise and developed protocols as a SAIS' collateral benefit that SADC should embrace.

C2 Partners developed a matrix assessing the risks (as part of the programme document). The matrix comprises three dimensions: contextual, programmatic, and institutional. The PMO updates the risk matrix (when needed) and reports against it in its semi-annual reports.

C3 With WHO's announcement of the pandemic in February 2020, the Innovation Fund projects adjusted their activities to comply with their respective national regulations. The PMO approached projects coordinators to minimize the impact of the pandemic upon planned activities. Milestones, delivery schedules, and budgets were adjusted to complete the

³⁴ Summarised Programme Document and Results Framework, p.7

³⁵ Summarised Programme Document and Results Framework, p.10

projects within the scope initially proposed successfully. As documented in the Project Portfolio Report, The PMO reviewed the proposed changes and amendments to the grant agreements were agreed upon and established where needed³⁶.

- C4 The mid-term evaluation was commissioned by the MFA/GoF as an internal procedure. All partners were interviewed, and preliminary results were presented to the SvB for comments and inputs. Partners also expect an impact evaluation after the programme ends.

D. Inclusive partnerships and multi-stakeholder dialogues

Responding to the needs and objectives of all parties, partners aim to involve multiple actors with a view to foster knowledge-sharing; and to find sustainable development solutions.

Partnership's inclusivity was assessed considering decision making and communication procedures, through the following questions:

- Which actors are involved in the decision-making and consultation processes?
- Does the project contribute to maintaining, strengthening or expanding partners' institutional networks?

All partner countries are involved both in decision-making and implementation processes. Key stakeholders are mobilised through Call for Proposals and consulted through mid-term reviews. Within SAIS scope, Innovation support organisations organised a community of practice (Connected Hubs Network) to support early-stage entrepreneurs.

- D1 The SAIS 2 Supervisory Board (SvB) is the highest steering and decision-making body of the Programme (see B1 above). The SvB provides policy guidance, making all the major decisions on the program resources and annual plans and any changes to the Programme Document. The PMO reports back to the SvB, presenting biannual reports and yearly financial reports subjected to its consideration. And there is also a coordination structure facilitated by the PMO, with the focal point agencies from each country. On the one side, line ministries from partner countries, the MFA/GoF and SADC STI Office are represented at the SvB making substantive decisions. On the other, alongside the PMO, national innovation agencies are the focal points mandated to implement these decisions and provide feedback to the SvB.
- D2 The mid-term reviews of CFP projects provided an opportunity for the PMO and the Focal Points to further engage with stakeholders, identify bottlenecks and challenges, discuss next steps and eventual adjustments. Furthermore, the projects supported by the Innovation Fund provide regular feedback on the implementation status, difficulties and successes to the PMO.
- D3 SAIS 2 supported many networks throughout its Innovation Fund. Indeed, all the projects are submitted as consortia or partnerships, in most cases connecting two or more countries in the SADC region. Some of the applicants were partners before the SAIS support, some of them came together because of the SAIS support, but SAIS focused on existing projects rather than new proposals or concepts.
- D4 Informants often considered the creation of the Connected Hubs Network as one of the SAIS 2 main accomplishments. The Connected Hubs Network is a community of practice of

³⁶ Project Portfolio Report, SAIS 2 Innovation Fund (Annex 3), p.4

"Southern African innovation support organisations with linkages to international innovation ecosystems". The Connected Hub is a regional network that brings together organisations from SAIS2 partner countries aiming to support the development of entrepreneurs by sharing best practices. The activities developed within the Connected Hubs Network have been grouped into three dimensions: capacity development, networking and support to Early-Stage Entrepreneurs and Start-ups. The participating organisations have seen the benefits of this type of regional cooperation. Beyond formal cooperation agreements and memoranda between countries, the network arrangement enabled by SAIS2 helped these stakeholders participate in concrete actions together, showing the benefits of that type of joint work. Informants report partners' interest in continuing the Connected Hubs Network activities and the initial agreement that TIA should lead the network.

E. Transparency and mutual accountability

All partners are accountable for commitments made and agreed upon. They agree to share information on their triangular cooperation activities in accordance to the standard to enable monitoring, evaluation and accountability.

In assessing transparency and mutual accountability, we referred to (i) reporting, monitoring and evaluation practices; and (ii) the level of engagement of partners. Such understanding suggested the following assessment questions:

- How have partners engaged with monitoring and evaluation activities during the project cycle?
- Does the project have a potential for self-financing?

Monitoring protocols and tools developed by SAIS' PMO enhance transparency and help keep partners accountable. However, the Programme could adopt more inclusive evaluation practices.

- E1 SAIS 2 counts with a robust results framework and a series of monitoring tools and protocols developed by the PMO. In this context, the PMO regularly produced progress and financial reports to partner countries and stakeholders. The PMO also conducts mid-term reviews of funded projects alongside the focal points. The PMO led monitoring processes to enhance transparency and mutual accountability among SAIS partners. Nevertheless, the mid-term programme evaluation is still an initiative led by the MFA/GoF (as an internal procedure) in which partner countries are called only to provide inputs.
- E2 SAIS 2 adopted a programmatic project approach and focused on concrete innovation activities. On one side, such an approach facilitates collaborative learning and knowledge exchange across innovation ecosystems increasing scalability. On the other side, it allows beneficiaries from multiple public or private organisations to replicate initiatives and projects for themselves beyond the programme completion.
- E3 Interviewees seem to disagree about the prospects for self-financing. According to some, self-financing is possible depending on the component or project. This is the case with the Connected Hubs Network. Allegedly, TIA, from South Africa, had taken the lead on managing the Network after SAIS. Informants were much more sceptical about the possibilities of self-financing SAIS' Innovation fund. Until 2019 partners concentrated the debates around its feasibility and its organisational aspects – whether the fund should be established by a consortium or within the SADC. After 2020, with the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, the perspectives on self-financing the funding schemes adopted with SAIS are much greyer, and partners see few possibilities of keeping them without external support.

F. Innovation and co-creation

Through new and existing partnerships, intelligent risk-taking, evidence-based policy and programming, technology, and flexible approaches to locally-driven innovative solutions, with a view to improving development results.

While assessing such guidelines, the research team will try to understand whether and how the project enables co-creative arrangements towards locally-driven innovative development solutions. Such assessment includes the following questions:

- Which innovations were created along the project cycle?
- Which expertise has been brought in by partners to create innovative solutions?
- Are the project's components easily added and complemented by each partners' expertise?

SAIS 2 is a platform engineered to facilitate the collaboration between innovation players, enabling co-creation in multiple levels: policy, programming and operational support.

- F1 As seen above (A3), South Africa was incorporated in SAIS 2 as a beneficiary and a pivotal partner (knowledge partner). Indeed, the GoF expected that the inclusion of South Africa and Tanzania would lead to more robust regional networking. In March 2020, the SAIS 2 Innovation Fund had contracted 21 projects, all of which were coordinated by private or public entities from Botswana, Namibia, South Africa, Tanzania, and Zambia. Confirming the expectations, South African and Tanzanian organisations took part in almost 80% of the funded projects. South African organisations alone participated in more than 50% of projects (11). Nevertheless, SAIS 2 induced regional cooperation. In almost all cases, these organisations submitted the proposals in association with partners from other SAIS participating countries (and in some cases with institutions from countries beyond SAIS 2 borders). All selected projects include a skills development component "either directly as part of their main service offering (training programmes, e.g. accelerators) or indirectly as part of the market validation conducted by the project team for their products or services"³⁷. Box 1 Provides a list of CfP windows and selected projects.
- F2 Grants from the Innovation Fund were designed to increase collaboration, coordination and learning of activities, initiatives and resources among role-players working on innovation and early-stage entrepreneurship. Grantees include (i) innovation support organisations (incubators, accelerators, innovation hubs and labs, technology transfer offices or NGO's); or (ii) entities tasked to advise policy-makers and other actors in innovation policy, entrepreneurship and the development of entrepreneurship ecosystem. The overall purpose is to assist organisations that can positively impact multiple beneficiary organisations within a given innovation ecosystem.³⁸
- F3 Throughout its Innovation Fund, SAIS 2 strengthened innovation supporters in the region. With such an approach, SAIS 2 played a catalytic role in linking national, regional, and local efforts to support entrepreneurship and innovation and extend their deployment across borders³⁹. SAIS 2 was able to mobilise available capacities and expertise in the region and facilitate processes of sharing and co-creation among partners and stakeholders.
- F4 SAIS 2 is a platform conceived to enable collaboration on multiple levels. The programme encompasses (i) an SvB made of high-level decision-makers, (ii) a network of agencies responsible for national innovation programmes, and (iii) a series of networks or consortia

³⁷ Project Portfolio Report, SAIS 2 innovation fund - Annex 3, p.6

³⁸ SAIS 2 Programme, pp.6-7

³⁹ Summarised Programme Document and Results Framework, p.8

connecting multiple innovation support organizations. SAIS 2 facilitates, then, the collaboration at the policy, programming and operational levels. Informants highlighted how this multi-level approach enhances a sense of partaking in a shared space of experiences: "I think it is also significantly important for the partner countries to realize that the region is lagging in innovation, and therefore, we all have the same problem of developing a culture of innovation". On the one hand, this common ground legitimizes the policies enacted by the SvB and embedded in the CfP concepts; on the other hand, it underpins the annual plans prepared by the PMO and focal points. Furthermore, at the project level, this common ground is the playing field where innovation support organizations share and disseminate information, knowledge, and experiences to enhance national and regional ecosystems.

Box 6. CfP Windows and selected projects

Window 1: Developing Institutional Capacity for Regional Cooperation
The Regional Open Innovation Platform
Piloting a Biotech Incubation Programme
Developing Additive Manufacturing Ecosystems
Universities–Industry–Government (UIG) Co-Creation Platform
Testing Africa Small Business Analytics Platform in SADC
Angel Investor Training in Southern Africa

Window 2: Scaling Enterprises through Stronger Innovation Support Organisations
TechTribe Accelerator: A Scalable, Virtual, Technology-Driven Accelerator
Ntaka Hyperlocal Soil Health Advisory Services
Developing EdTech Start-ups and the EdTech Ecosystem
Start-up Regional Connectivity and Global Visibility
Scaling Anaesthesia Innovation in the SADC Region
Transfer of Low-Cost Water Filter Technology
Seedstars Investment Readiness Programme

Window 3: Inclusive Innovation
Economic Inclusion Incubator
Dololearn – Piloting Future Education in Namibia
Advanced IT Training and Online Incubator for Women
ITTHYNK Tech Academy
Living Permaculture
Precision Desert Agriculture as a Job Creator
IDIN–SADC Consortium
Africa Food360 Accelerator

G. Joint-learning and knowledge-sharing for sustainable development

Through horizontal exchanges and co-creation of development solutions, all partners mutually benefit from sharing their knowledge, capabilities and strengths.

Joint-learning and knowledge-sharing assessment refer to the project's abilities to enable peer learning, facilitate exchanges between partners and disseminate lessons beyond the original partnership. Assessment questions include:

- Does the program facilitate knowledge exchanges and joint learning processes?
- Does the program help to disseminate local experiences and good practices at the regional or global level?
- Does the program impact the ways triangular cooperation is designed or implemented?

SAIS' Innovation Fund induces the creation of regional consortia and networks, enhancing the coordination of knowledge sharing, capacity building and peer-learning.

- H1 SAIS 2 fosters connectivity of local and regional innovation ecosystems throughout (i) grants provided by its Innovation Fund, (ii) capacity building, and (iii) networking and Community of Practice (Connected hubs network). As stated in the programme document, rather than being a given, “the regional dimension is built from the base up through increased interaction and cooperation activities”. Indeed, while fostering connectivity within a regional scale, SAIS 2 allows participants to gain the critical mass to acknowledge and meet common challenges. Hence, the programme frames knowledge flows throughout cross-border pilot projects, which mobilize innovation support organizations. The Innovation Fund induces the creation of regional consortia and networks, enhancing the coordination of knowledge sharing, capacity building and peer-learning.
- H2 One of the SAIS most significant accomplishments was the establishment of various networks, from the Connected Hubs to project induced networks. According to one informant assessment, SAIS networks significantly impacted the innovation landscape as they suggest common paths beyond national ecosystems. The networks triggered a dynamic in which partner countries may revisit adapt their policies vis a vis the experience acquired with SAIS and its networks.
- H3 Informants identify several projects that had a spillover effect in other areas beyond the initially targeted ones. This is the case, for instance, of the additive manufacturing project and the health sector. Likewise, other projects were scaled up and reached regions beyond their original scope, like the Angel Investor Training, the low-cost water filter, or the virtual incubation acceleration program. Other projects leveraged partnerships with organizations or companies in other regions (like Microsoft).

H. Advance gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls

Triangular cooperation should contribute to gender equality in its multiple dimensions as a way to accelerate sustainable development progress.

Advance gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls was assessed considering beneficiary groups and expected outcomes, through the following questions:

- Does the program have girls and women as beneficiaries?
- Does the program improve girls and women's living conditions?

In addition to specific and sectoral actions, SAIS 2's gender-inclusive strategy entails adopting a gender mainstreaming approach in all its management systems and processes and its result areas.

- H4 SAIS 2 follows the priorities set for the development policies adopted in 2016 by the GoF. Among the four priorities, the rights of women and girls are highlighted⁴⁰. SAIS 2 is

⁴⁰ Finland's four development policy priorities, as established in 2016, are: (i) the rights of women and girls; (ii) reinforcing developing countries' economies to generate more jobs, livelihoods and well-being; (iii) democratic and well-functioning societies, including taxation capacity; (iv) food security, access to

underpinned by the premise that the economic strengthening of partner countries depends on and will be enhanced by the programme's capacity to promote gender-inclusive practices. In addition to specific and sectoral actions, the programme's gender-inclusive strategy entails adopting a gender mainstreaming approach in all its management systems and processes and its result areas. Box 4 summarises the objectives established to enhance gender mainstreaming in each result area.

- H5 As reported in the project portfolio, the eight projects selected under the Inclusive Innovation window are building capacity for minority groups and validating innovative products. Two projects under this window focus on ICT and entrepreneurship skills for girls and women (ITTHYK Tech Academy and Advanced IT Training and Online Incubator for Women). These projects improve graduates' employability and provide essential skills to traumatised and excluded young girls⁴¹. (p.6)
- H6 SAIS 2 launched the publication Breaking Barriers: Female Technology Entrepreneurship in Southern Africa during ASAIF 2020. The study was conducted in partnership with Hivos Southern Africa and aimed at gaining "insight into barriers encountered by female-driven businesses in the field of technology (...) and contribute to a paradigm shift where women become better represented" in this field⁴².

Box 7. Gender Mainstreaming Strategy for SAIS 2

A. INNOVATION FUNDING

Objectives: To increase funding applications and the success rate of innovation support organisations that aim to specifically support female entrepreneurs or have the intention, paired with evidence, to mainstream gender and HRBA into their operations. To minimise the effect of bias on funding outcomes and ensure that innovation support organisations led or represented by women have equal opportunities to succeed in the SAIS 2 Call for Proposals.

B. CAPACITY BUILDING

Objectives: To generate and stimulate sensitivity to issues related to HRBA and gender inequality. Besides that, it aims to strengthen knowledge and skills necessary for the enhancement of SAIS 2 programme's organisational capacity to engage with HRBA and gender equality issues both internally (with the SAIS 2 PMO and Focal Points) and for the support that the programme provides.

C. KNOWLEDGE AND NETWORKING

Objectives: To raise awareness of positive role models for aspiring women entrepreneurs and to ensure that there is a fluid mix of framed experience, values, contextual information and expert insight into gender-inclusive practices.

Source: Application of a Human Rights-Based Approach and Gender Mainstreaming Strategy for SAIS 2.

water and energy, and the sustainable use of natural resources. See: [Government Report on Development Policy: One World, Common Future - Toward sustainable development](#).

⁴¹ Project Portfolio Report, SAIS 2 innovation fund - Annex 3, p.6

⁴² Breaking Barriers: female technology entrepreneurship in South Africa, p.10

I. Leaving no one behind

Triangular cooperation furthers inclusive multistakeholder partnerships, including those that provide support to the most vulnerable.

While assessing Leaving no one behind, we aimed to identify the project impacts upon the most vulnerable and raised the following questions:

- Does the programme impact/improve the lives of the most vulnerable and underprivileged people?
- Does the programme offer actionable knowledge and practices to achieve the UN's Sustainable Development Goals?
- Do you see a way in which the programme could help to reach regional and global Sustainable Development Goals?

SAIS 2 result areas are aligned with internationally agreed goals. The programme adopts a Human Rights-Based Approach, prioritising the most marginalised and excluded groups.

- I1 SAIS 2 was designed around actions that aim to impact the 'Base of the Pyramid' (BOP), enhancing the capacities of innovation support organisations to assist enterprises and other role-players to deliver innovation to socially or economically excluded communities and disadvantaged groups. Indeed, one of the SAIS result areas is precisely Inclusive innovation – improved capacity of innovation support organisations and entrepreneurs to develop new and/or enhanced products, processes and services with and for socially and economically excluded communities. Furthermore, the SAIS flagship event, the Annual Southern Africa Innovation Forum (ASAIF), aims to tackle shared challenges such as poverty and unemployment through an exchange of experience to support innovation and entrepreneurship⁴³.
- I2 As reported in the project portfolio, the eight projects under the Inclusive Innovation window are building capacity for minority groups and validating innovative products. Two projects focus on girls and women (see H5). Three other projects are piloting new co-creative programmes to develop and use low-tech tools, build business plans, and provide underserved communities with access to entrepreneurship guidance (The IDIN–SADC Consortium, the Economic Inclusion Incubator, and Living Permaculture). Two projects are working in the agricultural sector. One offers services that transfer knowledge, skills, and affordable farming tools amongst informal communities operating in harsh and unfertile environments (Precision desert Agriculture). The other establishes skills and standards that improve micro-entrepreneurs access to established value chains (Africa Food360 Accelerator)⁴⁴.
- I3 SAIS implementation is also anchored with internationally agreed goals, like the SDGs. First, as a means of implementation (SDG17), particularly regarding the capacity building. Furthermore, the programme expects to contribute to various goals (4 – education, 5 – Gender, 8 – Decent work and 9 – innovation). According to informants, applicants to the Innovation Fund grants are required to refer their project's outcomes to the SDGs and, if selected, to conduct an assessment taking them into account.
- I4 The Human Rights-based Approach adopted by SAIS 2 involves a particular concern about the negative impacts of development interventions. Hence, SAIS must ensure that its interventions do not deepen inequality and discrimination. Accordingly, the programme will

⁴³ Summarised Programme Document and Results Framework

⁴⁴ Project Portfolio Report, SAIS 2 innovation fund - Annex 3, p.6

follow the “principles and standards derived from international human rights that provide objective criteria for acceptable development processes which ensure participation, inclusion and accountability and can prioritise the most marginalised and excluded groups”⁴⁵.

- 15 The data sources required to assess SAIS 2 progress against its results framework require disaggregated data by gender and age, a condition for targeting those left behind.

⁴⁵ Application of a Human Rights Based Approach and Gender Mainstreaming Strategy for SAIS 2, p.8

6. Lessons Learned

SAIS 2 is a vast and complex programme. The programme enabled multiple triangulations in which beneficiaries often play **pivotal roles**.

As SAIS 2 was launched in 2016, no partner could adopt the Voluntary Guidelines for effective TrC. Nevertheless, as the findings indicated above, the GoSA's engagement as a beneficiary/pivotal partner in triangular arrangements **in practice adopted most of nine Voluntary Guidelines**.

Moreover, regarding seven guidelines⁴⁶, the GoSA and its partners adopted a series of procedures that can illuminate the road ahead for the Voluntary Guidelines implementation by development partners.

The following lessons, learned while assessing the SAIS experience, may pave the way for mainstreaming the Voluntary Guidelines.

⁴⁶ Namely, "Country ownership and demand-driven cooperation", "Shared Commitments", "Inclusive partnerships and multi-stakeholder dialogues", "Innovation and co-creation", "Joint-learning and knowledge-sharing for sustainable development", "Advance gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls", and "Leaving no one behind".

Table 3. Key Findings and Lessons Learned

Voluntary Guideline	Key Findings	Lessons Learned
Country ownership and demand-driven cooperation	SAIS is a platform where beneficiaries also play pivotal roles. Along with MFA/GoF and SADC, line ministries from partner countries made up the Supervisory Board mandated with strategic planning. At the same time, national innovation agencies work with the Programme Management Office to implement programme activities at the regional, national and local levels. Unfolding partners participation across policy and operational levels (doubled representation) enhances the beneficiary's ownership over the programme in different stages.	#1. The partners double representation into TrC policy and operational levels enhances the beneficiary's ownership over the programme in different stages.
Shared Commitments	Even though the GoF contributed with more than 90% of SAIS' funds, following the principle of co-funding according to differentiated capacities, every partner provided financial and in-kind contributions to the programme. Beyond financial and non-financial contributions, every beneficiary played a pivotal role in sharing knowledge and expertise and engaging in capacity development and networking.	#2. Beyond financial and non-financial contributions, the ability of beneficiaries to play pivotal roles sharing knowledge and expertise and engaging in capacity development and networking increases their responsibility for the programme and its outcomes. #3. The participation of implementing institutions in decision-making processes increases their responsibility for the programme and its outcomes.
Focus on results-oriented approaches and solutions	The PMO has developed tools and protocols to register and monitor outputs' completion and assess risks. Its semi-annual reports present the progress achieved to date.	#4. The development of M&E capacities enhances the focus on results and solutions.
Inclusive partnerships and multi-stakeholder dialogues	All partner countries are involved both in decision-making and implementation processes. Key stakeholders were mobilised through call for proposals and consulted through mid-term reviews. Within SAIS scope, Innovation support entities organised a community of practice (Connected Hubs Network) to support early-stage entrepreneurs.	#5. Inclusive decision-making and implementations processes increase the legitimacy of development interventions. #6. Networks and Communities of practice mobilize and engage stakeholders with triangular arrangements.
Transparency and mutual accountability	Monitoring protocols and tools developed by SAIS' PMO enhances transparency and helps keep partners accountable. The Programme could adopt more inclusive evaluation practices.	#7. Inclusive monitoring practices enhance transparency and help keep partners accountable. #8. Inclusive evaluation practices are conditions for assuring transparency and mutual accountability.
Innovation and co-creation	SAIS 2 is a platform engineered to facilitate the collaboration between innovation players, enabling co-creation in multiple levels: policy, programming, and operational support.	#9. Inclusive arrangements enable co-creation on multiple levels: policy, programming, and operational support.
Joint-learning and knowledge-sharing for sustainable development	SAIS' Innovation Fund induces the creation of regional consortia and networks, enhancing the coordination of knowledge sharing, capacity building and peer-learning.	#10. Community of practices and networking enhance the coordination of knowledge sharing, capacity building and peer-learning.
Advance gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls	In addition to specific and sectoral actions, SAIS 2's gender-inclusive strategy entails adopting a gender mainstreaming approach in all its management systems and processes and its result areas.	#11. The adoption of a gender mainstreaming approach in all its management systems and processes as well as in result areas tackles gender inequalities and contributes to the empowerment of women and girls.
Leaving no one behind	SAIS 2 result areas are aligned with internationally agreed goals. The programme adopts a Human Rights-Based Approach, prioritising the most marginalised and excluded groups.	#12. The alignment with internationally agreed goals and the adoption of Human Rights-Based approaches helps prioritise the most marginalised and excluded groups.

Annex I. Assessment Matrix

Voluntary Guidelines	Questions
Country ownership and demand-driven cooperation	1 How did the program/project idea come about? How was the program/project conceived?
	2 When/In which phase of the program/project did you/your institution get involved?
	3 What role did your institution/organisation play in this program/project? [Beneficiary/Pivotal/Facilitator - If you choose more than one, please justify.]
	4 Was the program/project consistent with the government strategies? [Yes/No - Give examples.]
	5 Was the implementation process adaptable and flexible to local needs? [Yes/No - Give examples.]
	6 Did the project facilitate exchanges with other sectors/areas beyond its original scope? Which areas?
Shared Commitments	7 How did your institution contribute to the program/project?
	8 Were there any budgetary gaps? [Yes/No - Give examples.]
	9 How were the resources managed? Were there any coordination mechanisms (i.e., Steering Committee/Supervisory board etc.)?
	10 What was the value added by each partner to the design, implementation and evaluation of this program/project?
	11 Did your institution seek to get advice and/or transfer of knowledge from other partners? Did the other partners seek the same from your institution? [Yes/No - Give an example]
Transparency and mutual accountability	12 Did your institution mobilise resources to monitor and evaluate the program/project's activities? [Yes/No - How much was mobilised?]
	13 Does the program/project have a potential for self-financing?
	14 Do you think this program/project could be scaled up? [Yes/No - If yes, is the cost of scaling up low? Here, consider financial contribution but also transactional costs.]
Focus on results-oriented approaches and solutions	15 Did the program/project record its impact? How?
	16 Is impact easily attributed to the program/project?
	17 Were the impacts assessed / will they be assessed in the near future?
	18 How did the partners assess the program/project risks?
	19 Did the Covid-19 pandemic affect the program/project implementation and results? How?

Inclusive partnerships and multi-stakeholder dialogues	20	How did the partners develop and communicate the project's decisions?
	21	How many actors are involved in the decision-making processes?
	22	How many decision points are required for implementing the project?
	23	How many agents take part in implementing the project and need to be consulted?
	24	Does the project contribute to maintain, strengthen and/or expand your institutional network? [Yes/No - Give examples.]
	25	How were the networks, platforms or individual exchanges institutionalised during the program/project (or after activities ended)?
Innovation and co-creation	26	Which program/project solutions do you consider most innovative? How were they developed?
	27	Which expertise has been brought in by which partner, to finding the program/project's solutions?
	28	Are the projects' components easily added and complemented by each partners' expertise? [Yes/No - Give examples.]
	29	Does the project provide relative advantage or cost reduction compared to other existing practices? [Yes/No - Give examples.]
Joint-learning and knowledge-sharing for sustainable development	30	Looking back, what was the most valuable experience for each partner in learning from the others?
	31	Does the program/project impact how triangular cooperation is formulated or implemented in your sector/country/region? [Yes/No - Give examples.]
	32	Does the program/project facilitate cooperation exchanges in other areas (e.g., foreign policy, trade, environment)?
	33	Does the program/project help to disseminate local experiences and good practices at the global level? [Yes/No - Give examples.]
Advance gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls	34	Does the program/project have girls and women as beneficiaries?
	35	Does the program/project improve girls and women's living conditions?
	36	Do you see a way in which the program/project could contribute to gender equality? How?
Leaving no one behind	37	Does the project impact/improve the lives of underprivileged people who are most vulnerable?
	38	Is it possible to observe complementarity between the original idea of the program/project and the LNOB approach?
	39	Does the program/project offer actionable knowledge and practices to achieve the UN's Sustainable Development Goals?
	40	Do you see a way in which the program/project could help to reach regional and global Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)?