

Concept Paper

Advancing South-South Knowledge-Sharing in Asia **Independent Evaluation at ADB and Korean Development Institute, Seoul, South Korea, 04 July, 2018**

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A. INTRODUCTION

1. Independent Evaluation at ADB has been intensifying its efforts in knowledge and learning engagements as part of its accountability and learning mandate, with the objective of making evaluation influential for improved development effectiveness.
2. In line with this objective, IED in partnership with the Korea Development Institute (KDI) will host a learning event entitled “***Advancing South-South Knowledge-Sharing in Asia***”, at the Global KDI Knowledge Exchange and Development Center(GKEDC) on July 04, 2018 in Seoul, South Korea. The event’s primary focus will be on enhancing and broadening knowledge sharing on sources of development in Asia and the Pacific. It will showcase recent practical and innovative solutions, as well as promising experiences and lessons on development from the wide knowledge base of ADB and KDI as well as from development partners: The Asia Foundation and the International Initiative for Impact Evaluation, Inc. (3ie).
3. The event will present experience and lessons that ADB, KDI and the wider development community have recently produced in private sector development, knowledge sharing framework and metrics, and learning lessons from evaluation. The proceedings will be used by KDI and ADB to inform and guide future knowledge sharing activities that promote extended learning on development work.

B. BACKGROUND AND RATIONALE

4. The Asia and the Pacific region has achieved significant progress over the past decades. Majority of its countries are now classified as middle income owing to accelerated economic growth and development. Despite these advancements, new and more complex challenges have emerged impinging on their ability to achieve sustainable growth and development. In the face of these challenges, countries have increasingly recognized the value of the wide array of knowledge on development lessons and experiences. South-South cooperation in development

knowledge and expertise are becoming imperative for achieving the globally agreed Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

5. In this fast-growing Asia, now dominated by middle-income countries, knowledge is becoming one of the most valuable commodity. Knowledge is critical to developing effective institutions, building capacity and creating sustainable solutions to work towards greater growth and equity. Nevertheless, knowledge is not a static entity that is delivered unchanged between context. Successful knowledge sharing entails extending the learning process where development information is internalized, adapted and applied to specific context and development needs (i.e. geographic, local). Knowledge sharing mechanisms include: a) brokering mechanisms in matching demand and supply of knowledge; b) implementation support such as online databases, libraries, learning events and the like; and c) funding knowledge sharing operations to mobilize resources and partners.

6. Knowledge sharing is increasingly being a multi-directional dialogue given the vast knowledge base and greater stakeholder demand and participation. In this context, South-South cooperation and knowledge sharing have a key role to play in facilitating development transfer and initiatives that result in greater impact. South-South cooperation and knowledge sharing provides a platform for bringing countries together on common development issues and contributing further to support their development.

C. STRUCTURE OF EVENT

7. The learning event on *Advancing South-South Knowledge-Sharing in Asia*, is targeting government officials from the region, private sector representatives, civil society organizations, academics and members of the development community.

8. The event will comprise an opening session, featuring high-profile speakers from both inside and outside the Asia and the Pacific region. The purpose of the opening session will be to provide a framework for the succeeding and more operational sessions touching on broad challenges discussed above.

9. Each technical session will feature one speaker from Independent Evaluation, additional speakers from the wider evaluation community, governments, the private sector, academe and/or civil society organizations.

10. A special afternoon world café session will be organized with ADB, KDI, 3ie and The Asia Foundation on impact evaluation or lessons learned from evaluation to promote mutual exchanges and networking among participants on new development approaches, ideas, and experiences in growth and development.

(i) Opening Session- Knowledge-Sharing in Asia

11. The nature of South–South knowledge sharing has changed significantly in recent decades. In areas such as trade, investment, labor markets, technology, and policy coordination, regional cooperation between countries of the South and pro-market policies have supported a rapid growth in South–South linkages. Looking ahead, the prospects are that the changing architecture of international economic relations that South–South cooperation has underpinned will contribute to growth across the developing world.

12. Potential gains for the region include expanded opportunities to promote growth and productivity, widen and expand connectivity between and within countries, promote a stronger collective voice in global decision making, more effective regional institutions, and improved economic security and stability.

13. The opening session provides the overview and areas of discussion on South-South cooperation and knowledge sharing in the Asian region leading to increased development impact. A guiding framework on the importance of South-South cooperation and knowledge sharing will underpin the succeeding topics on evaluation and monitoring and enhancing the role of the private sector in development. Discussion topics can include the current state of South-South linkages and networks, emerging issues and challenges faced by the region on South-South cooperation, and promising innovative platforms in strengthening the synergies among the developing countries of Asia. Key questions include:

- What is the current dynamics of South-South Cooperation? What are the emerging developments and challenges faced that require most South-South cooperation and knowledge-sharing?
- What are existing evaluation and monitoring mechanisms on the region's foremost South-South collaborations? Is there a need for a unified system on measurement and impact?
- How extensive has the private sector participated in South-South cooperation initiatives? What role can the private sector play in knowledge sharing across Asia and the Pacific? Are there existing barriers in their increased participation?

(ii) Measuring the Impact of South-South Cooperation (SSC)

14. The aid and development landscape has changed dramatically in the 21st century. Traditional ODA is overshadowed by new forms of development finance and the rise of Asian led South-South and development cooperation. As Asian SSC (particularly from China and India) expands in scope and scale, it is increasingly scrutinized by traditional donors, partner countries, and Asian providers themselves.

15. Asian SSC providers have stepped up their monitoring, evaluation, and assessment of SSC programs, particularly as pressure mounts from partner countries for better and faster delivery. In the past, Asian providers followed a strict demand-driven principle and did not concern themselves with impacts, outcomes, or value for money. Most SSC providers also reject the complex and expensive monitoring and evaluation frameworks associated with traditional aid. At the same time, they struggle with how to assess longstanding SSC aims such as mutual benefit.

16. Today, government officials and academics in India, PRC, Korea, and Thailand have all embarked-on assessment exercises, developing their own evaluation frameworks to better understand the impact of their SSC efforts. The Network of Southern Thinktanks (NeST) has developed a monitoring and evaluation framework for SSC which is being tested in a number of countries. These bilateral and multilateral efforts represent movement towards a uniquely Southern approach to benchmarking SSC effectiveness.

17. This session will synthesize and discuss approaches across countries such as PRC, India, Korea, and Thailand as well as insights on regional blocks like Latin America and Africa. Basic questions include:

- Why is there a need for evaluation and monitoring of South-South cooperation impacts? Are there existing frameworks for this?
- What would be the ideal measurement system for South-South cooperation in Asia?
- How are these measurement systems linking to current development paradigms such as the SDGs?

(iii) What Can We Learn from Evaluators? - A World Café Session on Evaluation

18. This session will have a World Café methodology, which emphasizes the power of simple conversation about relevant questions and themes of evaluation. Here participants are encouraged to take part in a collaborative conversation with 4 different institutions namely –ADB, KDI, 3ie and The Asia Foundation.

19. Succinct presentations (10 minutes) on proposed topics for the following institutions are:

- ADB – Facilitating South-South Cooperation on Sharing Development Knowledge and Experiences.** With 50 years of development experience, ADB is widely regarded as a knowledge bank supporting its developing member countries in identifying and seeking out knowledge solutions to their development challenges either individually or collectively. South-South cooperation figures prominently as one of the main strategies adopted by ADB is on regional cooperation which seeks to harness increased development benefits through improved cooperation and integration. Moreover, ADB identified knowledge solutions as one of the main drivers of change that includes knowledge sharing among its member countries. ADB experiences in South-South cooperation and knowledge sharing can provide the learning event participants insights on areas such as support and facilitation of country collaborations as well as across regional economic blocks such as with Latin America.
- KDI – Korea’s Experience in sharing knowledge in Implementing Infrastructure PPPs/Korea’s Experience in Supporting Private Sector for Development.** Developing Asia is expected to need at least \$1.7 trillion per year of infrastructure investments until 2030 to sustain its development efforts on maintaining its growth trajectory, reducing poverty and responding to climate change challenges. However, meeting the financing needs remains a major obstacle given the limited resources of governments and aid agencies alike. Tapping the vast private sector resources and know how is expected to significantly bridge this gap. The Republic of Korea has wide experiences in taking advantage of private sector synergies in transforming its economic development particularly in public-private partnerships in infrastructure investments and private sector development in general. Korea’s knowledge sharing experience via its South-South cooperation ties can provide invaluable information to participants.
- The Asia Foundation – Asian Approaches to Development Cooperation: Looking at South-South Cooperation through the Years.** Since 2010, the Asian Approaches to Development Cooperation, jointly done with KDI, has provided a regular platform for Asian officials, experts, policymakers and practitioners of development via South-South cooperation in addressing the development challenges of the region. The Asia Foundation’s continuing work on this provides a unique multi-year perspective on South-South cooperation and knowledge sharing as well as apprise participants on emerging challenges facing South-South cooperation.

- d. **3ie – Impact Evaluation and South-South Cooperation: Learning Lessons from Asian and African Development.** 3ie has had extensive South-South exchanges in relation to thematic evaluations in water and sanitation and more generally in social sectors in South Asia. They have extensive experiences in capacity building work on evaluation in Africa that can provide additional learning lessons in development for Asia. These include building networks of evidence-informed policymaking and enhancing their capacity to use the evidence effectively across African countries.

(iv) The Role of the Private Sector in South-South Collaboration

20. The development community widely agrees that the private sector provides an important role for sustaining and accelerating growth in the economy as it drives job creation, innovation and creativity in boosting productivity, and increasing source of public revenues for development finance. Knowledge on appropriate policy interventions and reform processes to provide the necessary building blocks are among the key information that developing countries are keen to know and understand new ways and ideas to put into action in their development processes.

21. South-South cooperation and knowledge sharing can provide this common platform among Asian countries on private sector development best practices. This mutual platform can bring together-countries in jointly finding solutions to common problems on facilitating and expanding private sector growth.

22. This session will analyze country experiences to promote the transformation of the economy through private sector development and entrepreneurship and how was South-South collaboration applied to share these. The discussions will focus on reform initiatives and policies to support the latent development of the private sector such as horizontal measures to strengthen the business environment and the rule of law and knowledge sharing and application among developing countries. Given the diversity of the private sector and competitiveness conditions, discussions will also tackle the nature of private sector participation and extent. Salient questions will include:

- How has sharing of private sector development experiences through South-South cooperation been done? Are there specific examples of these?
- Are big companies the only ones participating in these exchanges? Is there a further need to widen participation in existing or potential South-South cooperation?
- Are there new business models that South-South cooperation need to be aware of (i.e. start-ups, crowd funding, equity financing innovations)?

D. LOGISTICS

23. The venue for the event will be at the Global Knowledge Exchange and Development Center in Seoul, South Korea.

24. Invitations will be sent to experts from the international evaluation community (for example, through the ECG, IDEAS, Eval Partners, etc.) government officials from middle-income countries (in consultation with the different operational departments), representatives of international organizations, the academe, civil society and the private sector.

25. Media coverage will be organized in cooperation with KDI and might include the desks of international newspapers based in Seoul and local media.

26. The cost of programmed activities will be charged, as appropriate, to either IED's ongoing administered TAs projects or internal administrative expense budget for knowledge sharing and outreach. KDI will be co-financing though hosting the event at the campus, technical requirements during the event as well as cocktails. The evaluation event funding will primarily be sourced from RETA 9172- Selected Evaluation Studies for 2017 (Subproject 2)

27. KDI commits to providing support on the ground during preparations, including the identification of speakers and participants, and execution.