Outcome Report
African Peer Review Mechanism High-Level Forum for South-South and Triangular Cooperation (HLFSSTrC)
24-25 November 2021
Cairo, Egypt

Introduction
The African Peer Review Mechanism organized the first High-Level Forum for South-South and Triangular Cooperation from 24 to 25 November 2021 in Cairo in partnership with USAID, GIZ, and other development partners. The forum aimed to boost the cooperation and dialogue between African and Southern countries, to build agile resilient societies that can face and cope with ongoing and future crises on both societal, economical and sanitary levels, especially with the current context of COVID-19 Pandemics. The forum focused on thematic areas, including:

1. Level of implementation of the BAPA+40 document in Africa and progress made on building national and regional centres of excellence in Africa. Some good practices from African countries including Egypt, Rwanda, South Africa and Ghana are shared.
2. Synergies between national, regional, and international SSC initiatives for implementing Agenda 2063 and Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs);
3. The role of SSC and TrC in building resilience and responding to the COVID-19 pandemic in Africa; food security, health resilience, economic governance resilience, and social inclusion;
4. The role of academia, executive training centers, and civil society in raising awareness and enhance tracking SSC and TrC in African communities; and
5. Digital and innovative tools for capacity building on SSC and TrC, i.e., UNOSSC Galaxy, APRM and APC-Colombia

Day one: Stocktaking on implementing BAPA+40 outcome document in Africa and resilient practices in the face of COVID-19

Opening Ceremony
Professor Eddy Maloka, CEO of the African Peer Review Mechanism

The Opening ceremony of the forum was inaugurated by Professor Eddy Maloka, CEO of the African peer Review Mechanism (APRM). Prof. Maloka expressed the APRM appreciation to the Government and People of Egypt to host such a high-level while commending the Political leadership to support African efforts in combating COVID-19 impact on the continent. Prof. Maloka emphasized that the value-add of this regional forum is to offer a platform for member states to discuss potential collaboration under the SSTrC framework and sharing best practices on addressing the pandemic from different angles. He also explained that APRM has been diligently observing the daunting consequences of the pandemic on the socio-economic and political resilience of African countries and many societies across the globe. In the same vein, the mechanism has worked on providing necessary support precisely pertinent to

1 The outcome report is prepared by Agenda 2063 Unit, APRM Secretariat, Johannesburg (Ms. Rutendo Nazare-Agenda 2063 researcher &Ms. Sara Hamouda- Agenda 2063 Unit, officer in charge)
governance reforms for African countries to tackle such a shock while revising the APRM’s ‘modus operandi – methods of work’ to meet the needs of member states.

- H.E Ambassador Fatima Mohamed—Permanent Observer of the African Union to the United Nations

Mrs Mohamed began her speech by emphasizing on the vital role of collective efforts to scale up all means of cooperation. She also affirmed that the South-South Cooperation would help promote sustainable development goals and human rights, good governance practices, capacity building, equality, peace and security. She also mentioned that South-South Cooperation would be one of the most effective platforms to capacity building and for knowledge exchange, just as the African free trade area is. South-South Cooperation will also be a tool for diplomacy as it will assist in conflict resolution, nation building post crisis and economic stability and growth and to achieve the African initiative of 2030. She also added that southern countries became a destination of attraction of foreign investment and that multilateral cooperation is needed to enhance South-South Cooperation. Last but not least, she concluded by saying that South-South Cooperation will be a tool to enhance certain sectors including health, agriculture, infrastructure, peace keeping, and good governance and that strong international cooperation is a must achieve it.

Ms Leslie Reed, USAID Mission Director for Egypt

On behalf of Ms. Reed, Mr. Taylor, Chief of Economic Governance Program (EGP), appreciated efforts made by APRM to bring all these partners together that the lost ground could be regained through collective efforts and that plans should be made ahead to face future challenges and pandemics. He also explained that Covid-19 is a call of action to change the status co. She also added that Egypt is facing covid-19 through digital transformation and E-Governance. Also, she added that good governance is the key element to good governance is the key element to policy making and women's empowerment to achieve prosperity.

Dr. Khaled Sherif—Vice President - African Development Bank

Dr Sherif debuted by stating that South America and Africa are adopting open door cooperation policies. He added that the intra-African trade policies to face covid-19, and that Africa is trying to enter the international market, and this could be conducted through the African trade policies and agreements such as the African Continental Free Trade Area (ACFTA). He also referred to the significant role of public sector investments in promoting growth for any country. Dr. Sherif clarified that Africa needs transformational industrialization to further expand manufactured products rather than importing the continent’s raw materials. This shall enhance value chain production and African value-added products. Last, he concluded by stating that social responsibility is a must to enhance South-South Cooperation, also private sector shall help create job opportunities for the youth.

Ms Enga Baumgarten – Director of GIZ office to African Union.

Ms Baumgarten debuted by illustrating the effects of covid-19 on Africa. She highlighted the forum is opportunity to share best practices and solutions about social cohesion post covid-19. In addition, she emphasized that effective cooperation is essential to build a resilient Africa and help to achieve agenda 2063; also, the Sustainable Development Goals will be achievable through prosperous cooperation.

Ambassador Hassan Ahmed – Representative of HE Minister Sameh Shoukry, Ministry of Foreign Affairs Egypt
Amb. Ahmed mentioned that South-South Cooperation is essential for implementing Agenda 2063. He also emphasized that the forum’s timing is quite crucial to wipe off the consequences of covid-19. His Excellency displayed the efforts conducted by the Egyptian Agency for Partnership for Development (EAPD) to promote South-South Cooperation; in addition, of stating that COMESA and the Free African Trade Area (AfCFTA) are examples to facilitate SSC promoting among African countries. Lastly, he emphasized that investment in technologies is crucial to promote governance and engagement.

SESSION ONE: BAPA+40 outcome document implementation in Africa: reflections from the pandemic experience
Amb. Abdel-Latif, interim Director, UN Office for South-South Cooperation (UNOSSC)

H.E Abdel-Latif referred to the BAPA+40 outcome document which emanated from the 40 anniversary of the High-Level conference on South-South cooperation in Buenos Aires. He displayed that the Action (BAPA+ 40) was interrupted by covid-19 pandemic. However, it was a chance for the global south to prove working together results it better solutions. He also affirmed the significance of south-south and triangular cooperation in curbing the negative effects of COVID-19 in many countries as countries of the global south started since early sharing information, solutions, and innovations by working together to solve common problems by sharing common strategies to defend common objectives especially in efforts to save lives.

The UN system has already been leveraging SSTrC to support and facilitate policy dialogues, to provide technical assistance and provide normative support for collaborative alliances. Thus, this will lead to developing partnerships and mobilizing the development of finance from all sources.

Mrs. May Ali Babiker, Manager, Cairo Regional Hub, Islamic Development Bank talked about “The National Ecosystems for South-South and Triangular Cooperation (SSTrC)”. First, she summarized the foundation of the ISDB in 1975 to promote social and economic development in many African and Islamic countries. The Bank provides financing for public and private sector projects and supports capacity development in various sectors, including infrastructure, health, and education. She explained that ISDB has been leading efforts amongst its members to raise awareness of the value of SSTrC and BAPA+40 outcome document, which goes beyond just establishing a national agency for SSTrC. She discussed the major initiatives of IsDB to promote SSTrC in Africa explaining that the IsDB is adopting a dual approach: The first one, enabling the African countries to do more and better SSTrC projects, while giving priority to addressing the consequences of COVID-19.

The second approach relies on helping the African member countries to build their “national ecosystems for SSTrC”. The ISDB national ecosystem for SSTrC is a collection of interlinked institutional arrangements which harmoniously work together. The SSC ecosystem has six pillars, as explained in the figure below. She also highlighted some collaborative projects under the SSC portfolio. Finally, Ms. Babiker recommended that each country has to establish its own instance of SSTrC Ecosystem based on its own context and that the African Countries are encouraged to boost national ecosystem for SSTrC, in order to use this modality as an additional route towards achieving SDGs and Agenda 2063.

At the end of her presentation, she recommended which requires Undertaking methodological assessment of the current situation, preparing an action plan for building/strengthening each pillar of the
ecosystem for SSTrC, and implementing the actions plan, in parallel with doing more SSTrC projects that are in line with the country’s priorities.

✓ **Countries experiences from Egypt and Rwanda**

**Egypt: Ambassador Hazem Khairat. Head of International Cooperation Office. Ministry of Planning and Economic Development.**

Amb. Khairat highlighted the Egyptian government’s eagerness to promote SSC through the establishment of the EAPD at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, alongside other national efforts to support countries in the global south. He referred to various measures taking by the Ministry of Planning to curb COVID-19 pandemic guided by Agenda 2030 for Development. The pandemic also provided a chance to invest and provide innovative tools on new areas such as, education, digitalization, logistics, health, green economy, and agriculture. Egypt is eager to save the opportunity for the recent attention to the chairmanship of the COMESA summit, by emerging itself and producing a timeless legal document on South-South Cooperation. the pandemic also introduces new methods for SSTrC.

**Rwanda: Mrs. Urujeni Rosine, Acting CEO, Rwanda Cooperation Initiative**

Ms Rosine demonstrated Rwanda’s experience for integrating South-South Cooperation into National Development Plan (NDP). She gave a glimpse of Rwanda’s socio-economic and governance transformation over the past two decades. It has been guided by 2 major approaches:

- A concerted effort to identify home-grown initiatives (HGI) to address our development challenges,
- Learning from experiences of other countries to design Good Practices tailored to our realities.

Ms Rosine also highlighted that the main goal of Rwanda’s SSC Integration plan is to realize Rwanda’s 2050 vision for economic, social and transformational governance. She referred to the foundation of Rwanda Cooperation initiative in 2018 to streamline the coordination of Rwanda’s SSC activities as an institutional mechanism for Rwanda’s SSC plan.

The major SSC promotion initiatives are Study Visits & trainings coordination, Technical Cooperation through advisory services and project implementation and Rwandapedia which is the most extensive repository of information to all of Rwanda’s HGI, supported by up-to-date data, currently integrating an online learning feature, which will give users access to Rwanda’s Good Practices. And finally, SSTrC Inter-agency Cooperation by creating partnerships with other cooperation agencies to benchmark on each other’s successful approaches in implementing SSTrC.

**Key Recommendations:**

- Implementing BAPA+40 outcome document is imperative and applies for many African countries to maximize benefits from SSC initiatives.
- Peer-peer leaning on domestication and integration of SSC ecosystem is highly possible between Rwanda and other countries, i.e., Cameron, Egypt, Kenya and Uganda.

**SESSION TWO: Economic Governance and Diplomacy in the Covid-19 context: Accelerating Africa’s Economic Integration**

The session addressed Africa’s governance enablers and capacities for building resilient health systems against COVID-19 and future shocks. Experiences from Egypt, Kenya and Congo on economic governance reforms adopted to mitigate the pandemic were highlighted. Further, a kick-off presentation on APRM Paper on AfCFTA and Health Resilience in Africa was also conducted.
Prof. Aregbeshola R Adewale (Phd), APRM SSC Experts group presented the APRM Paper entitled “Anatomy of African Continental Free Trade Area—a focus on intra-continental medical approach”.

He explained the measuring Healthcare Resilience towards Pandemic - WHO Model: the main goal is to improve health and well-being for all at all ages through availability of essential services, coverage of essential interventions for SDG 3 target promotive, preventive, curative and palliative, financial risk protection from catastrophic health expenditures, service satisfaction, health security and coverage of social, economic, environmental and political targets.

He emphasized the significance of Home-Grown Medical Intervention through AfCFTA through Human Resources Management to establish continental medical standards and codes and harmonizing curriculum and training toolkits for medical practitioners and caregivers across the continent. Prof. Adewale emphasized that the cooperation in this domain shall promote skills mobility and address shortage of medical workers across the continent. Another modality of emphasis is cooperation to produce Medicines and Medical Equipment Institutes at the continental level by strengthening “Africa Centre for Disease Control and Prevention” as the centrepiece of emergency medical interventions and exploring historical country-specific response patterns to medical shocks as a proactive strategy for future outbreaks. Finally, he urged African countries to come together to leverage the south-south cooperation modality to strengthen their capacities in overcoming future shocks.

✓ Experiences from Congo, Egypt and Kenya

**Congo:** Lomouel Jean-Bedel Tity, Advisor, Cabinet of the Minister of Economy, Planning, Statistics and Regional integration.

Mr Lomouel shared Congo’s experience in addressing economic challenges imposed by COVID-19. The country has adjusted NDP to address the consequent economic consequence of the pandemic. The Republic of Congo has also adopted 113 indicators for sustainable development goals. The Republic of Congo also conducted a follow-up report from 2018 to 2019 on NDP progress. Congo, as he referred, is continuously trying to conduct developmental methods to get the upmost results by 2030. Its national strategy aims to enhance the sum of its exports and to increase Congo's integration with the African continent and Agenda 2063.

**Kenya:** Hon. Amb. Ukur Yatani, Cabinet Secretary National Treasury Planning and APRM focal point.

Hon. Yatani, emphasized that the covid-19 pandemic was not only a health issue, but it rather triggers social, economic, political, religious, and cultural issues which needed multiple approaches to address. Therefore, as a country, Kenya put together the pandemic response guided by a coordinated leadership plan that drove memberships from the government, private sectors, professional bodies, and academic institutions. To address the pandemic and its impact, Kenya’s strategy to address the disease was by treating those who were infected, limiting the spread, preventing populations from being infected by several methods. In conclusion, Kenya continuous as a country to stand against the vaccine nationalism and is calling for fair vaccine distribution.

**Egypt:** Dr. Khaled Zakaria, Senior Economist, Ministry of Planning and Economic Development.

Dr. Zakaria addressed the status of Egyptian economy during COVID-19 and government opportunities to improve performance. He explained that Covid-19 crisis differs from previous crises because the crisis affected both supply and demand sides; it affected all sectors equally; it started in China and then spread to all economies worldwide. He also discussed the effect of the Pandemic on the global economy noting that there is a 20% decrease in employee remittance, a 13% decrease in international trade, a working hours loss equivalent to 400M job losses, 70-100 million are expected to go under the extreme poverty line and around 258 trillion $ global debt equivalent to 331% of the GDP. He pointed to the International Institutions (World Bank, EBRD and IMF) forecasts for Egypt’s GDP growth rates for 2020. These
predictions are revised down considering the repercussions of the crisis and the developments on the global, regional and domestic level. Further, Dr. Khaled discussed the resilience factors of the Egyptian economy including: the continuity of the economic and social reform program adopted by the Egyptian government in 2016 which help face the covid-19 crisis and the diversification of the Egyptian economy’s sectors (manufacturing, real-state, agriculture, tourism, transport, gas, petroleum, etc). He discussed the Egyptian strategy to contain the spread of covid-19 without causing an economic lockdown and the measures taken by the government to combat the crisis and the ones taken to mitigate the adverse impact of the crisis in several sectors (household, business, banking and financial, health and tourism sector). He explained Egypt continues the path of reform through an agreement with the IMF besides maintaining the gains of the reform program taking place through six main pillars:

1- Diversifying the production structure of the Egyptian Economy
2- Improving the business environment and developing the role of the private sector
3- Increasing the flexibility of the efficiency of training, the labour market and cruising
4- Financial Inclusion and access to finance
5- Efficiency of public institutions and governance
6- Human Capital development

He talked about the reform areas in Egypt: Business Climate, Sectoral reforms in priority sectors and enhancing role of the private sector. He also reviewed Egypt’s priorities after Covid-19 which are: expanding the construction of Industrial Zones and supporting the development of value chains, automation of government services and increasing constructions and realizing 30% of environmental sustainability and green economy principles and reaching 100% in the next three years. He pointed out the Importance of enhancing role of Egypt's Sovereign Fund (TSFE) as a major arm for investment, which started signing protocols, MOUs and start conducting partnerships with different private enterprises and stakeholders on the national, regional and international levels.

Key recommendations:

- African countries are encouraged to have peer-learning practices or consultation over economic recovery plans from COVID-19.
- Africa’s continental free trade area (AfCfTA) offers a silver line opportunity for African countries to practice solidarity towards a resilient health approach and recovery plan from the pandemic.

SESSION THREE: Food and Security Governance in the Context of COVID-19
Dr. Khaled El-Taweel, Regional Coordinator, Food and Agriculture organization -FAO, Italy

Dr. El-Taweel presented the Food Security crisis in COVID-19 alongside opportunities. He explained that COVID-19 has affected the pillars of Food Security. Including food Availability, Access, Utilization, and Stability. He pointed out that the world is not on track to achieve Agenda 2030 for several reasons, for example: Hunger is up to 811 million people in 2020 (161 million increase), 660 million people may still face hunger in 2030 in part because of lasting effects of the pandemic. He also referred to inequality of distribution of food insecurity: More than half of the world’s undernourished are in Asia and one-third in Africa and 46 million more unnourished people in Africa and 57 million in Asia in 2020. Then, he discussed the challenging situation of SDG2 in Africa. For example, about 21% faced hunger in 2020 (double the proportion of other regions), over 30% of Women suffer from Anemia vs. 14.6% in Northern America and Europe.

He explained that COVID-19 exposed Agri-food systems Vulnerabilities: External Drivers (conflicts or climate shocks, and economic slowdown; COVID-19). Internal Drivers (e.g., low productivity and
inefficient food supply chains; high cost of healthy diets and inequality). He also explained that the Food Systems summit recognizes those drivers and set the stage for food systems transformation to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals by 2030. And then, he pointed out that World Economies are Recovering: there will be a global growth of 6.0% in 2021 and 4.9% in 2022 and the recovery will vary across countries. He discussed also the food prices that continue to increase: the FAO Food Price Index reached the highest level since July 2011 (reached 133.2 points in October 2021) (3% increase from September and 31.3% increase from October 2020. He pointed to the resilience demonstrated by the agriculture and food sector in face of the global COVID-19 pandemic, but he emphasizes that the compounding effect of income losses and inflation has affected access to healthy diets.

He also discussed the FAO COVID-19 Response and Recovery Programme, including the economic inclusion and social protection to reduce poverty, boosting smallholder resilience for recovery, Global Humanitarian Response Plan. He also discussed the FAO Strategic Framework 2022-2031 that aims to support the transformation to more efficient, inclusive, resilient and sustainable agri-food systems for better production, better nutrition, a better environment and a better life, leaving no one behind.

He explained that FAO has a new initiative named Hand in Hand Initiative to reduce poverty, eliminate hunger and increase agriculture productivity and rural living standards by using geo-spatial modelling to identify the biggest opportunities to raise income and reduce inequalities and by focusing on LDCs, Landlocked, SIDS, highly populated, and Food Crises countries.

Mr. Khaled also discussed the importance of the South-South and Triangular Cooperation as a key delivery modality to catalyse agricultural development, food security, rural development, poverty reduction, and nutrition. Finally, Dr. El-Taweel highlighted six pathways to agri-food systems transformation according to FAO’s vision:

1. Formulation of comprehensive portfolios of policies, investments, and legislation along several pathways simultaneously.
2. Coherence among food, health, social protection, and environmental systems is essential.
3. Accelerators as effective and inclusive governance mechanisms and access to technology, data and innovation.
4. Environmental systems interact with food systems at the production level.
5. Health systems ensure people are able to use foods.
6. Social protection systems address vulnerabilities to poverty through the reduction of financial barriers to food access.

At the end of his speech, he concluded that COVID-19 is a wake-up call on the fragility of our agri-food systems. He recommended that using agri-food system lens is so important to understand the interactions between food security drivers and other systems to identify points of interventions. Besides that, we have to put food security on top of the international agenda and transform agri-food systems to provide affordable health diets that are sustainable and inclusive. Finally, he explained the importance of partnerships between FAO and the African Union as a key to achieve Agenda 2030 and Agenda 2063.

Uganda: Hon. Justine Kasule Lumumba, Minister of General Duties. Hon. Minister Lumumba shared Uganda’s experiences on food security governance in the COVID-19 times: challenges and opportunities. She expressed her pleasure and honour to have been invited to this forum to share Uganda’s experiences on food security governance during COVID-19 times explaining that Uganda is endowed with favourable Agro-ecological conditions that can support all year-round food production and supply. Uganda is a net producer and exporter of food to several neighbouring countries and the region, however, the COVID-19
pandemic disrupted food supply chains and exacerbated food insecurity situation in Urban households, poor households in North-eastern part of the country (Karamoja) and refugee settlements.

Minister Lumumba also displayed Uganda’s opportunities to invest in Agri-products including the comparative good weather and a conducive environment that enables two or more seasons for crop production annually, presence of organic and fertile soils, production and export of organic foods with capacity to feed 200 million people, agriculture accounted for about 20% of GDP in fiscal year 2018/2019, and 37.5% of export earnings in 2020. On another note, she highlighted challenges of low investment in food systems research, science, technology and innovations, the limited social protection services and coverage across the countries and poor-quality products that affect heath and market competitiveness of foods and products.

She also discussed the Impact of the Covid-19 on food production and market systems. Uganda experienced limited movement of labour, raw materials, access to markets and loss of jobs. The government intervened with short-term measures, such as distribution of food to urban households and cash handouts to vulnerable households.

She explained the impact of Covid-19 pandemic on food security, the SDGs/Agenda 2063, the measures and initiatives taken to address food insecurity challenges like empowerment of smallholder farmers, women, youth in the food chain with inclusive, job creating and livelihood opportunities. She also discussed the policy measures to address food insecurity challenges. For example: Uganda looks forward to enhancing partnership with other AU Member States and UN Agencies in the sustainable transformation of food systems across the world. She also emphasized the role of AU/APRM in assisting member states in mitigating the impact of food insecurity by mobilizing the resources and capital for investment and development in agriculture, provide an avenue for sharing, peer-peer learning, especially among women and the youth. Finally, she recommended efforts shall be also inclusive for all stakeholders and Uganda remains committed to partnerships and collaboration to improve policy, strategic planning and regional programming and financing towards food security to meet the SDG targets.

Key recommendations:

- Better coordination, collaboration, and promotion of an enabling environment in addressing food insecurity. Further, robust early warning systems to detect and alert actors for better mitigation shall be put in place to support countries in shocks time, i.e., COVID-19.
- Coordination with APRM and other AU organs to provide accurate data on food insecurity in Africa is highly welcomed by specialized organs like FAO.

Hon. Minister Khayar Oumar Defallah, APRM Focal Point. CHAD

Minister Khayar Oumar Defallah debuted by a welcome note to all honourable panellists and participants of the forum. Afterwards, his Excellency deliberately illustrated the various effects of the ongoing pandemic of COVID-19 on his homeland. The ongoing pandemic shaded lights on the existing glitches of the health insurance systems in Africa. His Excellency also stated that, the sector of health research should significantly increase in Africa. Last, his excellency pointed out that there should be stakes to face lenient systems.

SESSION FOUR- Peer-leaning on Resilient Health and Social Recovery Policies against Covid-19 and significance of South-South Cooperation

Mr. Thulani Tshefuta, Chairperson of the APRM National Governance Council

Mt. Tshefuta explained that the pandemic only helped to expose long existing faultiness that were already there. The interventions that have been implemented by the South African Government were based on
social mobilization and leveraging social capital. A couple of these interventions were delivery of water supply for the people to consistently take sanitation measures as a mean of protection from covid-19 and another intervention was the reliefs for the employed and unemployed in the lockdown.

In South Africa, because of the pandemic, a couple of big-ticket lessons were learned. First, the need for Universal Basic Income Grant and second, National Health Insurance, which is the equality between all nationals on their right to health insurance. Another positive impact that was because of the pandemic was the need to communicate virtually, which led to forced digitalization.

Hon. Amara Khallon Deputy Minister of Political and Public Affairs

Mr. Khallon referred to the devastating challenges Sierra Leone faced with the outbreak of COVID-19. He highlighted the efforts exerted by the Gov to curb the pandemic, including the economic and health relief plans. The country also founded an emergency operation center (EOC) alongside the Establishment of the National Ebola Response Center (NERC) and district structure. He emphasised that this crisis provided some lessons learned, to include the significance of political will, civil engagement on social mobilization and health financing. Emerged learned lessons from Ebola experience into the covid experience: leadership and governance, preparations and responses.

Deputy Minister also referred to the quick action economic response (QUAREP) plan, which provided financial support to the less fortunate through national commission at social action. The plan includes a psychological pillar to support women and children during lockdown. Amongst other pillars are also offered under the plan; 1) Financial support scheme and support small and medium enterprises (SMES); 2) Service delivery; 3) Health information; 4) Health financing; 5) Human resources; 6) The number of test laboratories increased; 7) Increased bed capacity and delivery during quarantine facilities; 8) Full engagement and participation of the public, CSO’s, internet groups alongside the massive recruitment of health care works, which increased up to 4 co-workers. He lastly referred to the APRM support to conduct a targeted governance review on the country’s health resilience and governance approach during COVID-19 times, which resulted in a specific action plan focusing on preparedness strategy for such crisis. These covers: 1) transfer of technology and best practices across member states; 2) strengthening national disaster of management systems; and 3) establishment earlier warming and earlier response mechanisms.

Day Two: Role of business, academia, civil society, and partnerships in boosting SSC among countries of Global South

SESSION FIVE: Financial stability and role of private sector in the face of COVID-19
Dr. Ashraf El-Arabi, API and EGA Senior Advisor, Egypt’s Former Minister of Planning, Monitoring, and Administrative Reform

Dr. El-Arabi noted the severe adverse effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on African economies. Notably, industries such as tourism, transport and trade were significantly affected and continue to be disrupted by the different COVID-19 waves. The decline of economic growth world-wide because of the pandemic, which has caused declines in revenue, public investment, and supply chain. This has affected social protection and business support environments. The presenter highlighted enabling policies that the government introduced on social protection services to avoid a crisis for the most vulnerable groups of the population. In addition, the Egyptian Government also put in place a provision to guarantee adequate resources to limit the negative economic consequences from a loss of jobs with companies shutting down. Women were identified as a key demographic as a target for the policy with the aim of ensuring this important segment of society was not disproportionately affected.
Key Recommendations

An example of the provisions that were put in place by the Egyptian Government to actively limit the disruptive economic consequences of COVID-19 to the most vulnerable groups through social protection packages is a commendable practice that requires to be institutionalised by African countries against potential risks.

Dr Sherif El Gabali, Head of the African Parliamentary Committee and Board member of the Egyptian Businessmen’s Association

The presentation focused on the increased risk to financial stability, which is currently witnessed by African and less developed countries. The presenter noted that this can be attributed to the structural weaknesses which are embedded in those economies. The Covid-19 pandemic intensified existing challenges as well as create new ones. At the macroeconomic level, fiscal targets and external balances have been affected by the slowdown in economic growth, lower foreign direct investment, unexpected heavy spending on health, and social protection, as well as low tax revenues. Many businesses have also been negatively affected, and some pushed to bankruptcy. To mitigate some consequences, the government expanded the coverage of social assistance to vulnerable groups. The presentation highlighted that the Covid-19 pandemic calls for the need to speed up the structural reforms to remove impediments to private sector development and participation. Notably, the presentation emphasised that there is a possibility of the crisis reopening the debate on the size of the State and possibly reinforcing inclinations for more and quality State interventions.

Key Recommendation

Rigorous structural reforms on the Continent with the aim of improving resilience and more inclusive and sustainable private sector participation, are needed. This shall enhance financing to recover from the effects of the pandemic. This would require effective and equitable resource allocations in a time when there is more pressure for government financing.

Djibouti: Mr. Adoulkarim Aden Cher, Minister of Budget

The presentation focused on the negative effects of the pandemics on rising economies in Africa and the need for more self-reliance in Africa. He noted that six (6) African countries were amongst the highest in GDP growth worldwide. Highlighted was the need for greater support to ensure that African countries can withstand the current pandemic. The presentation noted other factors that are negatively affecting economies on the Continent which include the debt to GDP ratio. This was previously high and has only been worsened by the pandemic, as a significant portion of potential revenues have been lost due to disruptions in economic activities. The pandemic has left lots of people without jobs in the informal and the formal sectors and increased the economic vulnerability of women and children. Supply chains and imports were disrupted and from now on, it is important that Africa focuses on becoming more self-reliant considering its abundant resources. The Continent currently spends approximately 35 billion dollars per year of food despite availability of land and other resources. The pandemic serves as a lesson for Africa to come together and put together plans for development and explore solutions to address these problems collectively through regional integration.

Key Recommendation
The need to develop industries across the Continent that add value to the raw materials that is available in abundance, thus enhance Africa’s manufacturing capacity for increased intra-Africa trade. Highlighted as a key area to fulfil this vision is investment in agriculture to guarantee food security, jobs and livelihoods on the Continent.

Ghana: Mrs. Winniefred Akoto-Sampong, NGC-APRM

The presentation noted the critical role of the private sector regarding the recovery and stabilization of the Republic of Ghana’s economy. Highlighted were several key areas in which the private sector could effectively contribute. These included employment and income generation, provision of essential consumer goods and services, as well as investments in infrastructure. Noted was the need for public and private sector collaboration in the Republic of Ghana to achieve economic growth and development. The presenter noted that the private sector has been recognized as the main engine of economic growth during this COVID-19 period. Therefore, it was outlined that it is worth developing the private sector to increase the pace and quality of growth, innovation, and employment generation. Ghana has a few registered taxpayers. In to maximise benefits from the private sector, the Government took steps to create conducive environments for businesses. An extended credit facility program was introduced in 2019, financed by the IMF through a fund which sought to protect businesses during the pandemic.

Key Recommendation

Governments are better placed to take action towards putting in place enabling environments for businesses in managing risk, which includes dedicated funds to offer relief to businesses in times of crisis and pandemics, thus cushion the economy.

Session 5: Deliberations, Discussions and Recommendations

✓ Need to increase cooperation and self-reliance on the Continent in order to address structural challenges faced by African economies
✓ More efforts to be focused towards supporting informal sectors across the continent which contribute significantly to economies

SESSION SIX: South-South cooperation initiatives for youth and Women empowerment

Uganda: Mr. Daniel Obal, Aide in charge of Youth Affairs office of the Presidency

The presentation focused on the role of youths and women in promoting SSC in Africa. The presenter noted that women and youth make up a large proportion of the population in Africa. As a result, they should be the at the core of implementing SSC on the Continent. The presenter noted this demographic should not be viewed as beneficiaries but as drivers of SSC. Enhanced institutional capacities, improved access to land and technology on the Continent and efficient businesses were highlighted as key to impactful and results-oriented SSC initiatives. Noted were SSC efforts undertaken by Uganda, which include the development of a road network in the Democratic Republic of Congo, an oil pipeline through the Republic of Tanzania and the AMISOM Peacekeeping.

Key Recommendation

Proposed towards enhanced South-South Cooperation were several measures which included - collaborative agricultural efforts, integrating SSC in National Development Plan and increased Inter-African recognition of educational qualifications to allow for the continent to benefit from expertise available across borders
Cameroon: Ms. Keira Ndoumbe, Diplomat, Ministry of Foreign Affairs

The presentation focused on the importance of a network that supports and encourages young women on the Continent to engage in diplomacy and international affairs. The presenter provided information on the establishment of YAWIDIAN, a Pan-African network of young women in diplomacy and international affairs. The network started originally with women from 9 African countries, namely. Gabon, Nigeria, Angola, South Africa, Uganda, Tanzania, Ghana, and Kenya. The network is spearheading several projects such as the cross-border collaboration with SAIMUN Kenya which focused on knowledge and experience sharing and collaboration with the United Nations, and capacity-building seminars in Liberia, Somalia amongst others. The presentation noted challenges faced by the network, such as a lack of resources and domestication of similar networks. Highlighted were lessons learnt which included the need for strong partnerships and effective collaboration to achieve workable solutions for youth on the Continent.

Key Recommendation

Need for more strong and systematic efforts to promote Pan-Africanism amongst Africa’s youth, thus opening them up to possibilities they may not have been exposed to. A mentorship programme and the 2nd APRM HLSSC annual forum in 2022, as well as the utilization of digital platforms are needed to raise awareness, were outlined as next steps for the network.

Egypt, Mr. Hassan Gazali, Nasser, Youth Movement Coordinator, Ministry of Youth

The presentation focused on the importance of continued and structured exchanges of experiences and lessons towards the achievement of SDGs. The presenter highlighted the North African Office 2011 initiative within the Ministry of Youth and Sports. This initiative targets young African leaders but is not limited to the Continent and includes the Global South, Asia, and Latin America. One aim of the programme is to increase cooperation and solidarity in the Global South. From the volunteer groups, 230 individuals now occupy positions within the African Union, which is a remarkable result. The programme aims to afford the volunteers the opportunity to share lessons and learn from other experiences regarding the building and consolidation of institutions. The overall aim to facilitate the empowerment of a new generation of transformative leaders in the Global South. Outlined was the unique nature of the programme, which focuses on politics and leadership, as opposed to technical fields of development. A song about African Unity was developed to increase awareness as part of the program.

Key Recommendation

Africa’s youth and future leaders can benefit from platforms offered by the Global South under SSC through unique programmes that focus on “politics and leadership” besides the technical aspects of development.

Session 6: Deliberations, Discussions and Recommendations

- The Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) invited the African Union and APRM to collaborate on programmes geared towards the youth and hunger eradication.
- Suggested collaboration between the African Peer Review Mechanism and the YAWIDIAN network
- Development of an APRM platform for youth to share experiences and lessons learnt
SESSION Seven: Building synergies among SSC partners for accelerating Agenda 2063 & SDGs implementation

Ambassador Mohamed Khalil, Egyptian Agency for Partnerships for Development

The presentation focused on the work of the Egyptian Agency, which includes training and capacity building programs to empower citizens of the Continent towards the achievement of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals. The Agency is engaged in SSC and triangular cooperation which diversifies its partnership base. The presenter noted that the aim of the organization is to share experiences, facilitate knowledge transfer and enhance intra-Africa South-South Cooperation as a key instrument for integration among the African countries. The importance of vocational training was outlined as constituting an integral part of developing human capital. Vocational training was highlighted as key to facilitating the increase in the number of skilled employees and citizens occupying decent jobs in the Arab Republic of Egypt. The presentation noted the importance of the BAPA+ 40 Outcomes document, which identifies the key modalities for prioritisation.

Key Recommendation

- SSC platforms have huge potential to support peer-learning in various industries across economies, which could lead to significant regional development outcomes and economic integration. The Agency also welcomes new opportunities for collaboration with African countries, including Uganda, Kenya, Cameroon.

Mr. Yoshifumi Omura, Chief Representative, Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) - Egypt Office

The presentation focused on the areas of intervention by JICA to support resilience and development in Africa. It noted the centrality of South-South Cooperation to the work of JICA in enhancing infrastructure development. The presenter further highlighted various initiatives that JICA jointly undertakes with academic institutions, which include training programmes offered to graduates from Egypt as part of the human capacity development and technology transfer initiatives for improved bottom-up development outcomes. Noted was the expansion of training to the various countries on the Continent and dedication to research through international cooperation.

Key Recommendation

Human capacity development and technology transfer initiatives can be successfully championed through innovative intra-Africa and South-South Cooperation activities.

Dr. Sabyasachi Saha (JNU), Associate Professor & Editor of South Asia Economic Journal (Sage), India

The presentation highlighted the role of the IBSA fund and the initiatives it has undertaken over the last 17 years. Noted were key strategic partners that the organization works with, such as the United Nations Development Programme and United Nations Office of South-South Cooperation. The presentation also highlighted the convergence of South-South Cooperation with the UN Sustainable Development Goal 17 on partnerships and IBSA’s contributions in this area towards the achievement of SDGs. Further noted was the importance of data in monitoring SSC initiatives, particularly in transferring knowledge specifically for resilience in this Covid-19 period.

Dr. Maged George Amin, Chairman of pharmaceutical Export Board, Egypt
The presentation focused on the future of medical industries in Africa despite the current dependence of African countries on pharmaceutical imports. South Africa was highlighted as the only country on the Continent that features in the top 20 exporters of pharmaceuticals. There is a need for more African countries to be included on the list through a growth in the industrial base. The presentation highlighted the efforts made by Egypt to produce medicines for the Corona virus and vaccines.

Outlined was Egypt’s ability to share experiences on the training of doctors and medical staff as well as how to enhance and promote successful national health insurance schemes in Africa. Non-tariff barriers negatively affect trade between African countries and particularly in pharmaceuticals and efforts are being made to allow freer access across the Continent as this will also help the industry grow. Noted were plans to reduce the reliance on imported products and enhance the usage of resources available in Africa. These include the establishment of 12 pharmaceutical factories which will supply local markets and act as hubs for export to the surrounding countries. It is envisaged that during the period 2026-2030, the 12 factories will supply local markets and serve as hubs for export.

**Key Recommendation**

- South-South Cooperation is an effective mechanism for cooperation, not just among Governments for public services, but also among manufacturers and private sector at large.
- Regional cooperation is necessary to develop pharmaceutical industries on the continent.
- Africa should take steps to utilize resources and expertise available to develop own vaccines for the health of citizens.

**SESSION EIGHT: role of academia, Civil Society and digitalization in promoting SSC initiatives in the Global South**

Dr. Karin Vazquez, Associate Professor and Assistant Dean at O.P. Jindal Global University

The presentation focused on the role of academia in enhancing the impact of South-South Cooperation. The presenter proposed the need to institutionalise the development of systematic reports and other knowledge products by various institutions across the Continent in creating an Africa-owned resource base. Further, the involvement of academia in policy dialogue for development was cited as essential. Another key area highlighted was the investment in institutions that examine the specific mechanisms through which knowledge exchange, technology transfer and development can be facilitated through South-South and Triangular Cooperation to enable countries to address structural development challenges and pursue more resilient and sustainable development. Lastly, the presentation suggested the development of teaching and research programs at universities across the globe to promote the study of South-South and triangular cooperation. Besides this, the diversification of expert networks and the development of more innovative initiatives to form the next generation of South-South Cooperation and increase development effectiveness was presented as critical.

**Key Recommendation**

- The development of teaching and research programs at universities across the globe to promote the study of South-South and triangular cooperation will be key in the future.
- APRM is highly encouraged to integrate SSC into Africa Governance programs, i.e. AU Campus .etc
Dr. Philani Mthembu, Executive Director, Institute for Global Dialogue UNISA

The presentation focused on the importance of a multi-Stakeholder approach to South-South Cooperation. The presenter outlined the value of including a broad-range of actors, including grassroots movements and think-tanks in South-South Cooperation. Highlighted was the typically unrecognized value and involvement of Think Tank in the agenda-setting of South-South Cooperation dialogues. Importantly, the think tank networks within the global South, including in Africa such as the network of Southern think tanks, and Southern Voice, have been making impact. These are networks of think tanks within the global South are undertaking empirical research and policy analysis, which is crucial. These think tanks help to ensure that SSC is not only the domain of State actors to embrace non-state actors. They play a critical role in providing empirical research, but more importantly, theoretical research. These non-state actors face challenges regarding financing and should they receive funding from foreign actors they are viewed with distrust and labelled as representing external interests and influenced by the donors. The presenter outlined the similarity between non-state actors and the African Union’s receipt of donor money, which doesn’t necessarily guarantee that the actor will be influenced by interests of the donor. Last, the presentation highlighted the need to develop monitoring and evaluation tools for South-South cooperation to measure effectiveness.

Key Recommendation

The need for the Global South to invest in developing robust and context-relevant monitoring and evaluation tools for South-South Cooperation to measure effectiveness thus help to track, monitor, evaluate and report on results for up-scaling or recalibration of methods and initiatives.

Dr Sherifa Sherif, Executive Director, Centre for Good governance and sustainable Development, Egypt

The presentation focused on the role of the National Institute for Governance and Sustainable Development (NIGSD) as an advisory body and the training arm of the Egyptian Ministry of Planning and Economic Development. The presenter noted the importance of developing human capital in the country and the digitalization of trainings for impact. Outlined were several programmes that are being undertaken by the institution which included the digital education platform which was specifically designed for African countries with the support of the German Agency for International Cooperation (GIZ). The platform aims to improve vocational training through e-learning in the face of inadequate education opportunities. Other initiatives include the SDG training and a programme called ‘Bridging the Digital Divide’ which aims to increase the access of women to technology as they are the most vulnerable. The programme aims to train 2000 women by the end of 2021 and 8000 by 2022. The programme has received support from UNDP and CISCO. The presenter also highlighted that there is an existing MoU between the APRM and NIGSD which shows the willingness of the organization to develop more digital initiatives geared to serve the Continent.

Key Recommendation

There is huge scope to provide up-to-date opportunities for less advantaged and vulnerable groups such as women to enhance access to technology and digital education platforms through South-South and Triangular Cooperation.
Dr. Noha Bakr, Board member, Egyptian Human Rights Council

The presentation focused on the need for concerted efforts to define how stakeholders can effectively work together using the South-South Cooperation platform for development. Noted were areas that require improvement in academia towards a robust contribution to South-South Cooperation. This will also support and prepare people to work in the field of south-south cooperation to develop key skill sets. The presenter further proposed the development of a more holistic and unified approach to South-South cooperation, and deepening engagement with local communities for better outcomes.

Key Recommendation

The need for formal training on SSC in academic institutions to support and prepare people to work in the field of south-south and triangular cooperation to develop key skill sets to help institutionalise the modality and enhance development outcomes in the Global South.

Ms. Viviana Manrique, director general, APC Columbia

The presentation highlighted the work of the APC Columbia, which is governed by principles of SSC which include solidarity, mutual benefit, respect for sovereignty and non-conditionality, among others. Experience and knowledge sharing were highlighted as key advantages of participating in SSC. The presenter noted that APC Columbia has developed a Knowledge Hub of social cooperation which aims to identify good practices, offer training, facilitate online learning, and work networks, by creating space to share knowledge from Colombia with the Global South. The Hub comprises three main models. A virtual campus, which will offer short courses, thus promote learning as well as articulate national and regional priorities. The second component will be a collaborative space through which it will be possible to identify, formulate and implement and monitor South-South and Triangular cooperation projects that APC Columbia executes with partner countries in the global south.

Lastly, Ms. Manrique shared the developed initiative by APC-Colombia called a Community of Practice, which will be a space for learning to build knowledge, and dialogue, as well as strengthen networks and promote knowledge products on SSC and TrC between Africa and Colombia. This platform will work in collaboration with similar spaces to provide systemic and accessible information on international cooperation by including various stakeholders. This will provide an open space for information, dialogue and monitoring to influence the formulation of public policies of international cooperation based on evidence. The aim is to ultimately increase the effectiveness of international cooperation to foster development and ultimately achieve better results in increasing the quality of life of our societies.

Key Recommendations

There are several innovative platforms that emerge that can be made accessible and scaled up towards to specifically identify, formulate and implement as well as monitor South-South and Triangular cooperation projects such the one by APC Columbia.

The participants took note of the presentations and suggested the Continent expand efforts to bridge the gender digital divide and increase collaborative efforts beyond Africa.

Concluding Remarks

The CEO of the APRM Secretariat Prof Eddy Maloka
The CEO of the APRM Secretariat Prof Eddy Maloka expressed his appreciation to all participants for attending the High-Level Forum. The CEO commended the quality of engagements and success in achieving the expected outcomes of the Forum which was to share experiences among countries. Within the framework of SSC, he noted that the Forum had been instrumental in helping to enrich solidarity between African countries, especially during this Covid-19 period. The CEO noted that throughout the two-day forum several valuable experiences were shared on cooperation, planning, and the development of African institutions that are dedicated to the citizens on the Continent. Outlined were various topics discussed which included the role of the private sector, the role of the youth and regional integration initiatives to strengthen pharmaceutical industries, which the APRM is willing to help operationalize. One of the key initiatives emanating from this forum is the learning exercise between Cameroon and Rwanda on domesticating South-South Cooperation plans.

The CEO further applauded the willingness of Egypt, Sierra Leone, and Uganda to collaborate in implementing projects related to youth and women empowerment. In conclusion, the CEO of the APRM thanked strategic partners such as the UNOSCC, UNDP, the Egyptian Government and USAID amongst others, and the participants for the fruitful deliberations and their commitment to enhancing SSC in Africa.

Amb. Ashraf Rashed, Chairperson of the APRM National Commission, Egypt

Ambassador Rashed expressed his gratitude to all strategic partners who were involved in the organization of the meeting. From the deliberations it was noted that there is need to create synergies, coordinate and utilize what emanates from such an experience sharing and learning platform based on the important outcomes. He reiterated that despite the specifics of each nation, it was important to invest efforts to strengthen cooperation among African countries towards improving Continental and regional cooperation. South-South Cooperation provides mutual support and solidarity among Africans towards the achievement of Agenda 2063 and the UN SDGs globally. As such this modality should be optimised and aligned to Africa’s development priorities.

In closing the meeting, the representative of USAID thanked all participants for their active participation over the two-day engagement and expressed that he had been honoured to support and be part of the preparations for the Forum. He thanked APRM on behalf of USAID for the collaborating on the High-Level Forum which had provided an opportunity for countries to share experiences and learn from each other towards improving SSC policy and practice for better development results. He noted that the aim of USAID is to facilitate and help foster inclusiveness in governance processes. The USAID representative highlighted discussions from the second day which emphasized the need to bring all stakeholders together to implement South-South Cooperation. Appreciation was expressed again for the efforts made to organize the meeting and commitment of all participants.

Conclusion

The APRM remains committed to support this high-level dialogue between Africa economists, politicians and youth activists to promote South-South and Triangular cooperation amongst nations of global south. While various speakers emphasized challenges imposed by the pandemic, various initiatives and recommendations out of the forum as discussed above. It has been also agreed that the second version of the forum will be taking place in Uganda under the auspices of the Government of Uganda.
END