



Partners in Population and Development (PPD)
An Inter-Governmental Organization
Promoting South-South Cooperation



18th International Inter-Ministerial Conference on South-South Cooperation in Population and Development

Sustained SSC programs for the achievement of ICPD and SDGs

15, 22 and 29 November 2021

CALL TO ACTION

**Adopted at the 18th International Inter-Ministerial Conferences on
South-South Cooperation in Population and Development**

“Sustained SSC programs for the achievement of ICPD and SDGs”

Held Virtually on 15, 22 & 29 November 2021



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We the delegates at this 18th International Inter-Ministerial Conference (IIMC) convened virtually on the 29th of November 2021, being conscious of the emerging critical role of South-South Cooperation (SSC) as a form of partnership which generates significant direct social returns on investment, make and adopt this “Call To Action” (CTA), to inspire, the 27 PPD alliance member countries, UNFPA and UN Agencies and key stakeholders, to scale up and re-invigorate SSC to Triangular Cooperation (SSTC), to speed-up progress towards the achievement of ICPD and SDGs, during and post, the COVID-19 era. SSTC shall be vital to ensure solidarity and cooperation in our search to address common critical challenges, especially arising from pandemics and with special attention to the process initiated today in Geneva, for Member Countries (MC), to establish an international binding instrument for managing and regulating practice of all countries, in future pandemics. A strong common voice of Member Countries through SSTC shall be the basis of a meaningful outcome.

The IIMC is an annual event which brings together high-level policy leaders from PPD member countries, other developing countries and global and regional stakeholders, academics, and Civil Society Organizations, engaged in the arena of RH, population and development. It and serves as a global platform for member countries and development stakeholders for peer review, exchange knowledge and experience, networking, policy dialogues, and bi-lateral commitments. The meeting sessions this year specifically focused discussion upon how to use SSTC in a post COVID context to sustain the achievements made by PPD member countries in sexual and reproductive health, gender equality, youth empowerment and population and development to contribute towards, (1) advocating and generating support for strong national leadership and ownership for the improvement of adolescents' access to sexual, reproductive health and family planning services, with adequate supply of RH commodities in PPD member countries during this global COVID-19 pandemic; (2) advocating for mobilization of resources at all levels (domestic, regional and global) to ensure affordable and accessible maternal and child healthcare services during COVID-19 crisis; and, (3) partnership building amongst member countries and other development agencies for global solidarity, multilateralism and South-South cooperation for the post COVID era.

Appreciating the Partners in Population and Development (PPD) and all its partners as well as the UNFPA¹ for hosting the meeting which enabled delegates to interface with high level policy leaders, experts, researchers, civil society voices and development partners;

Recalling the commitments made at the ICPD+25 Nairobi Summit and the BAPA+40 Plan of Action adopted in 2019; the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) adopted at the UN in September 2015, and at several IIMC meetings in the area of reproductive health, family planning, population and development;

¹ Support was received from the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA)



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Concerned that progress has been slow in most countries on implementing the ICPD Programme of Action yet gender equality, youth empowerment and development remain critically important for a social dividend in member countries yet it is unattainable unless every member country can ensure access for all ages, to health care including family planning and sexual reproductive health services and rights with a lesson that resilient health systems matter but are often lacking and a Re-thinking of Health Systems is needed to focus on people and the health of communities;

Concerned that COVID-19 presents a massive shock to already struggling health systems and economies threatening gains already made through the adverse effect of the pandemic, which has further retarded progress in PPD countries towards ICPD and SDG goals, specifically the adverse impact on access to sexual-reproductive health services, youth and adolescent services, including their education and the increasing trend of domestic violence;

Recognizing that a greater investment in health research, is required most importantly, in science, technology and basic infrastructure for scientific analysis, manufacture of supplies pharmaceuticals and vaccines, in addition to investment in social and economic policy analysis needed to apply scientifically evidence-based knowledge, in public policymaking, to ensure that ideologies do not distort evidence-based health decisions, and with a special focus on the field of “big data capabilities”, to move towards “Owning Data” which now “Means Owning the Future”.

Recognizing the institutional capacity gaps and as well as distortions in the skills space required to provide the required human and financial resources to develop the South-to-South cooperation initiatives and programs.

Recognizing that SSTC as a form of partnership yields many proven benefits and values to enhance progress towards ICPD and SDG objectives, including the generation of direct social returns on investment; it generates knowledge that is relevant to the unique development context and challenges faced by participating countries; facilitates the mobilization of domestic resources; provides resilience through sharing of knowledge; it is also an effective tool to mobilize global solidarity to protect development program gains, and in addition, has a significant knock on effect in the form of scale of partnership expansion to other thematic or geographic areas and general increase in harmony in intersectoral and inter-country contexts.

Recognizing that PPD has developed a credible and well-founded reputation for pursuing commitments and successfully implementing policies and programs through Meaningful advocacy, policy dialogues, information exchange and encouraging the best practices for conducting research and sustaining training in technical cooperation for the SDG work stream, which focuses on population dynamics to ensure healthy lives and promote wellbeing for all.

Recognizing that there is international recognition and acceptance of SSTC as a key mechanism for sustainable development as reflected in the BAPA+40 outcome document, the



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ICPD+25 Nairobi Commitments and the SDG 17 to “Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development” for the Goals”

Reiterating commitment to Buenos Aires Plan Of Action Plus 40 (BAPA+40) for Member Countries to realize the full potential of SSTC for moving towards the achievement of ICPD objectives in the 2030 SDG agenda by establishing structures and processes for ecosystems of national SSTC strategies to serve as guides for collaboration initiatives and institutional frameworks, both as providers and beneficiary of SSTC.

Realizing that the quality of cooperation between member countries is of vital importance towards effectively fighting against these challenges arising from the pandemic and that only a crisis – actual or perceived – produces real change ² and that when it occurs, the actions that are taken depend on the ideas that are lying around, to take advantage of for solutions;

Realizing the strategic value of SSTC as a unique form of partnership between two or more developing countries supported by developed country or multilateral organization in a relationship with mutual benefits from development learning that avoids the traditional North-South collaboration of a one directional flow of ideas, knowledge, skills and resources so as to promote knowledge sharing, through the exchange of best practices, facilitation of policy dialogue and identification of innovative practices to the attainment of national, regional and global goals on reproductive health, population and sustainable development;

Realizing that there is more to do to address the unfinished agenda on ICPD and emerging challenges to progress with the SDG 2030 Agenda, as the COVID-19 pandemic is not just a health crisis but a multifaceted socio-economic complex of challenges that have unmasked, re-enforced and introduced new forms of structural inequalities in society and which raises flags for the need of a whole of government approach in the pursuit of SDGs to ensure safeguarding the planetary environment due to climate change issues that the world is facing in achieving sustainable ecological and economic mix but in the face of global health practices that perpetuate the very power imbalances they claim to rectify, through vertical colonial extractive attitudes, and policies that concentrate resources, expertise, data and branding within institutions of the Global North, placing PPD member countries at a great disadvantage for gainful participation in the governance power dynamics that are shaping health policies at the global level.

Noting the emergence of some leadership and governance delays in follow up for political commitment required to implement agreed actions for sharing of important technology and expertise with member countries that produce or reproduce health commodities, including for instance research and production of vaccines as well as all other medicines and in particular Data Modalities of SSC as one of the big areas to focus upon, because it **holds the largest potential for returns on investment for health systems development** in the global south.

² Quote by Milton Friedman



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Mindful of the critical role of Ministers and development stakeholder partners, in resource mobilisation at all levels as well as in oversight for all national processes towards the achievement of national, regional and global development goals and targets, including the the ICPD and SDGs;

Now therefore we adopt this Call to Action as a basis for “Sustained SSC Programs for the Achievement of ICPD and SDGs”.

We accordingly call for:

Country Leadership represented as Board Members (Ministers):

1. To speed-up the process of strengthening and building-back-better, resilient networks of health services outlet systems, based upon existing capacities of indigenous research institutions, think tanks and industrial production firms by generously supporting them to contribute to moving towards universal health coverage with specific focus upon SRHR, adolescents and youth health services.
2. To invest in and advocate for member country experiences, knowledge, and innovation, as a meaningful vehicle for bilateral entrance to initiate agreements that enable products and service transfers, between member countries and which aim towards resolving common challenges at national level.
3. To allocate fixed funding streams for the promotion of services and cooperation in productive health, youth, and population development regionally and globally.
4. To establish a national task force as an entry point toward the institutionalization and integration of SSTC into national development programs.
5. To identify or nominate a national focal person to coordinate the institutionalisation and integration of SSTC initiatives and programs.

Capacity development for SSTC:

1. To build and strengthen of centres of excellence on SSTC as an immediate priority to take forward. This requires medium to long term joint research programs.
2. To invest in population and system data modalities of SSTC to generate data for decision making and for tracking of progress of SSTC on accelerating performance on moving towards ICPD and SDGs.
3. To conduct as priority research for explicit evidence, to guide the range of skilled cadres required at the very minimum, to deliver SRHR, adolescents and youth health services.



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On Strengthening PPD

1. To facilitate the mapping of centres of excellence and skill sets of professionals to implement SSTC.
2. To establish SSTC networks of health professional and exchange programs that will catalyse the establishment of centres of excellence /think Tanks.
3. To conduct Evaluation studies of SSC health project will assist the definition of system gaps that need to be addressed.

On all the Partners and stakeholders

To sustain the support to PPD by the entire donor community and development partners in their respective niche and areas of strength to enable PPD in its promotion of social cooperation in reproductive health, youth, and population development.

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