



This year's observance of the [United Nations Day for South-South Cooperation](#) comes amid intensifying international efforts to accelerate progress on the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals by the end of 2015, the internationally agreed deadline. Concurrently, the South has assumed a greater role in the global development landscape. In many developing countries incomes are up, poverty is declining and hope is rising. The goal of reducing extreme poverty by half has been achieved. Equity in primary education -- attendance by girls and boys -- has been reached. Infant mortality has seen tremendous decreases, with five of nine developing regions reducing the under-five mortality rate by half. More than 2 billion people have gained access to clean drinking water. These and other economic achievements of the global South have given rise to a rapidly expanding middle class adding a strong voice to demands for more liberties, equity, decent jobs and a wide range of goods and services that are critical to genuine human progress.

Despite these positive trends, 1.2 billion people are still trapped in conditions of extreme poverty. Wide-ranging global discussions are under way to define a Post-2015 development agenda that will galvanize development efforts at all levels in the years and decades ahead. As that agenda takes shape, the international community is already united around the idea that South-South cooperation should remain an integral part of the global partnership for development.

Developing countries are turning to each other for lessons on innovative policies and schemes to address pressing development challenges. The Brazilian Bolsa Familia Programme, a cash transfer model, has helped improve childhood nutrition and education in Brazil, and the system has been successfully transplanted to Africa. India's National Rural Employment Guarantee scheme entitles each rural Indian household by law to one hundred days of unskilled work per year on public works programmes. China's emphasis on infrastructure development in other developing countries has resulted in improvements in electricity supply, an increase in railway connections and reduced prices for telecommunications services. More solutions are available across the global South which, if adequately harnessed, could make meaningful contributions across a range of urgent concerns, from hunger and health to education and sustainable energy.

South-South cooperation offers real, concrete solutions to common development challenges. Sharing best practices, funding pilot projects in far-flung locales, providing the capital to scale-up successful projects, supplying regional public goods, developing and adapting appropriate technologies —these are the opportunities that the international community needs to better leverage. On this United Nations Day for South-South cooperation, I call on all partners to redouble their efforts to harness the wealth of knowledge, expertise and development thinking in the Global South.

### **Additional links:**

- [United Nations Day for South-South Cooperation](#)