

# SSF The South-South Facility

Knowledge-sharing for Development



## Who we are

The South-South Facility (SSF) enables the sharing of development experiences and knowledge among developing and emerging countries by funding knowledge exchange activities. Launched in 2008 as a multi-donor trust fund administered by the World Bank, the SSF helps address development challenges and implementation bottlenecks. The SSF funds these knowledge exchanges based on demand expressed by the knowledge-requesting countries. The SSF comprises a diverse mix of partners including China, Colombia, Denmark, India, Indonesia, Mexico, Spain, Russia and the United Kingdom.

## What we do

The SSF provides financial and technical assistance for knowledge exchanges with a focus on achieving results. As of 2018, the SSF has supported 243 knowledge exchanges involving 131 countries. The SSF provides grants for two types of knowledge exchanges:

1. Stand-alone (just-in-time) exchanges for very agile and responsive interventions to meet immediate knowledge needs of a country, or to unlock implementation bottlenecks.
2. Programmatic exchanges build capacity for addressing long-term strategic challenges requiring deeper engagements. These exchanges involve several countries and consist of a series of knowledge sharing interventions that build on each other over one to three years.

### Fast fact

In 2018, each US\$ in SSF grants supports **US\$6,600** in development finance

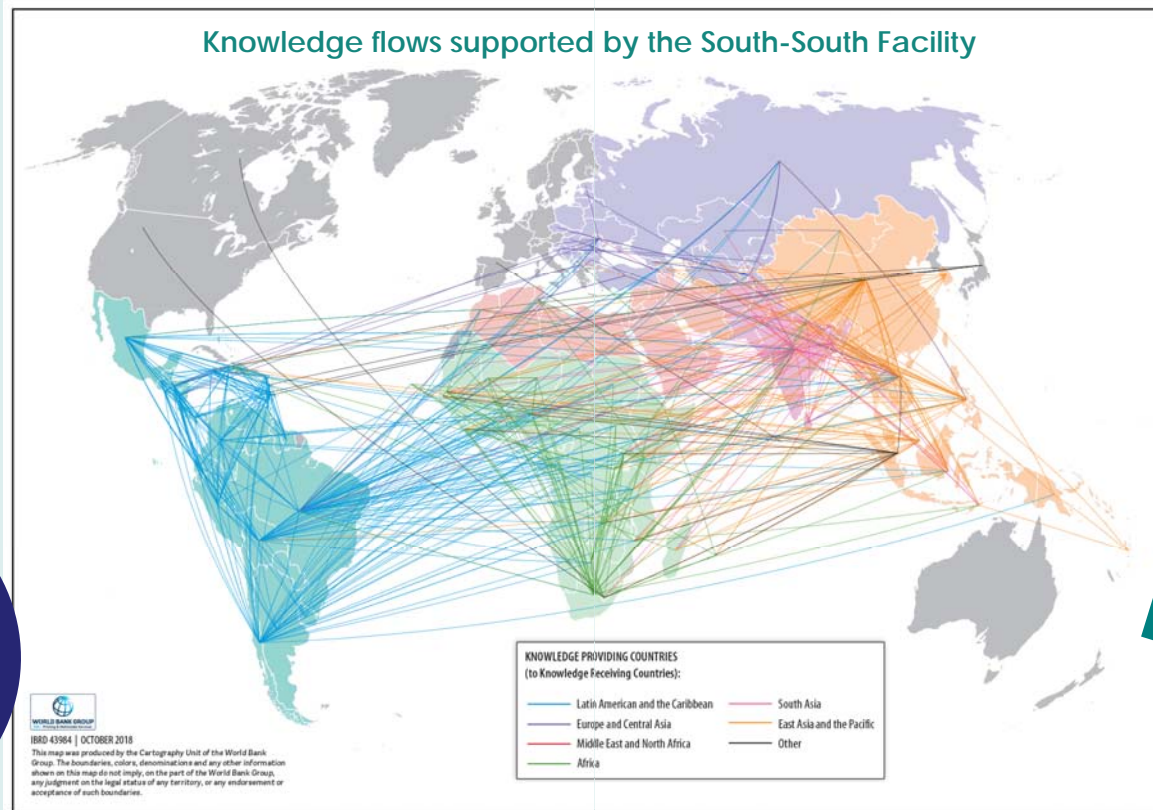
## How the SSF delivers results

Learning from peers is often far more convincing and powerful than learning from books or theoretical experts. It provides decision-makers with practical insights about approaches that work, and pitfalls to avoid. At the political level, peer-learning inspires leaders to implement reforms, while at the technical level it allows for exchanging practical 'how-to' knowledge for solving problems. Knowledge exchanges have therefore become an important building block towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

The SSF identified four preconditions for knowledge exchanges to be transformational: (1) relevant knowledge must be shared with (2) development practitioners and policy makers who are committed to addressing a problem and (3) in the position to bring desired change, while they also have (4) the means to implement change.

For maximum impact, the SSF therefore only supports knowledge exchanges that meet these four preconditions. To ensure a strong focus on results, SSF grantees receive technical assistance from knowledge exchange experts on

the design, implementation and monitoring of their knowledge exchange. In addition, knowledge-providers involved in the exchanges can also benefit from support to strengthen their knowledge-sharing capacity.



**Fast fact**  
In 2018, **27** knowledge exchanges are supporting **56** development projects totaling **US\$ 15.8 billion**

# Results

South-South peer-learning provides development practitioners and policy makers with relevant knowledge to spread and speed innovations and best-practices. When combined with investments (by World Bank or other development partners) allowing to apply the newly gained knowledge, knowledge exchanges can be instrumental in replicating best practices at scale. The SSF results are measured based on a set of performance indicators. Examples of how SSF knowledge exchanges have delivered development results are provided below.

## *Reducing stunting: MALAWI learns from Senegal*

### **CHALLENGE**

In 2010, 47% of Malawian children were stunted. Malnutrition has a negative impact on lifetime earnings and potentially traps people in a vicious cycle of malnutrition and poverty.

### **IMPACT**

A SSF-funded knowledge exchange in 2011 provided Malawians with first-hand insights in Senegal's best-practice on community-based nutrition interventions. Consequently, this approach was adopted and scaled-up through a \$57 million investment program in Malawi after which stunting came down by 10 percent in 2018. This means that 295,000 children who would otherwise have been stunted are now getting good nutrition.

## *Greening Transport: Vietnam learns from Brazil, China, Colombia and Indonesia*

### **CHALLENGE**

Traffic safety, congestion and air pollution are daily concerns for people living in Ho Chi Minh City with negative impact on their lives and the city's economic growth.

### **IMPACT**

In 2011, Vietnamese officials learned about Bus Rapid Transport (BRT) systems from their peers in Brazil, China, Colombia and Indonesia. This directly informed a \$124 million World Bank investment in Ho Chi Minh City's transport system. By 2025, BRT development in that project is expected to result in 23 minutes travel-time-savings per trip, reduced air pollution and improved road safety.



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