

# CSO Partnership

for **Development Effectiveness**

## South-South Cooperation

March 2019







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## Presentation

This document is a preliminary report of the work carried out by the CPDE Regional Observatory to systematize the experiences and perceptions of the Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) on the South-South Cooperation (SSC) agenda and the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). As such, it will be complemented by a more comprehensive and comparative analysis.

It has been coordinated by Camilo Molina and Carlos Andrade of the Observatory of Development Cooperation in Ecuador and with contributions and translation by Nancy Landa and Carla Celi.

The valuable contributions of Pina Huamán, Francisco Rhon, the Faculty of Communication, Arts and Humanities of UTE-Ecuador are acknowledged in the process of participatory construction. We also grateful to the regional secretariat, with Karina Cáceres who has facilitated the presentations and information on the specific proposal, and the guidance of Anibal Cabrera. It is important to mention that the feedback obtained by the CPDE Regional Assembly in 2018, and several virtual meetings held with its members, with comments from Liliana Rodríguez, Susana Eróstegui, and Laura Becerra.

For this purpose, we carried out a dual exercise: from the review of data, with emphasis on the documents of the Ibero-America General Secretariat (*SEGIB*) and ECLAC, **the trends of South-South Cooperation in the last 5 years** were reflected, and CSOs were asked: 1. What have been the main cooperation programs in your country/sub-region? 2. What amounts were invested? and, 3. What are the main achievements?

In addition, a qualitative analysis was conducted to learn about the **State of South - South cooperation from the perspective of CSOs**, inquiring the following: 4. What cases can be highlighted? 5. How do CSOs understand South-South cooperation in their country? 6. What has been the participation of CSOs in the South-South Cooperation programs? 7. Is there an SSC coordinating entity in your country? 8. What type of relationship do CSOs in your country have with this entity? 9. Is there a normative framework that supports the actions and projects carried out so far? 10. What do you think about the presence of relevant actors in the region (BRICS, BASICS, others).

In this consultation, we particularly appreciate, the participating CPDE organizations: Bolivia, *Unión Nacional de Instituciones para el Trabajo de*

*Acción Social* (Unitas); Colombia, *Confederación Nacional Colombiana de ONG (CCONG)*; México, *Equipo Pueblo*; Peru, *Asociación Nacional de Centros (ANC)*; Jamaica, Association of Development Agencies (ADA); Venezuela, *SINERGIA*.

In addition to these organizations, the consultation counted with ALOP support from: Argentina, *SEHAS- Servicio Habitacional y de Acción Social*; Colombia, *Viva la Ciudadanía*; Mexico, *Equipo Pueblo*; Peru, *Centro de Asesoría Laboral del Perú (CEDAL)*; *Centro de Estudios y Promoción del Desarrollo (Desco)*; Uruguay, *Centro Latinoamericano de Economía Humana (CLAEH)*; Venezuela, *Acción Campesina*.

We also thank all the CSOs that participated in the methodological construction and data collection at the national level in interaction with the aforementioned organizations. We also extend our gratitude to the support of the AOED/CPDE global secretariat and the European Union as a partner of this project.

## What is the CPDE-LAC Regional Observatory?

The Regional Observatory (OR) of the CSOs Partnership for Development Effectiveness in Latin America and the Caribbean - CPDE LAC seeks to serve as a strategic tool to measure the level of effectiveness with which they contribute to development and democracy, as well as their national dynamics within the enabling environment, democratic appropriation and accountability, to compare and provide feedback on regional experiences and dynamics. The OR intends to function as a mechanism of integration and construction of partnerships between organizations to strengthen their role, action and advocacy in addition to development and democracy.

## What is the objective of the Regional Observatory?

The main objective of the OR is the strengthening of capacities of CSOs to generate strategic and monitoring information about the development effectiveness, emphasizing models of mutual accountability, enabling environment, democratic appropriation and inclusive partnerships.

Through an action-research approach based on indigenous peoples, it seeks to identify the needs and interests of people as the main beneficiaries of aid policies. Based on this approach, the mission of the OR is to become a strategic tool and a regional referent in the analysis of aid governance, its contribution to social change, in favor of the most in need.

## What is the CSOs Partnership for Development Effectiveness?

The CSOs Partnership for Development Effectiveness - CPDE is an open platform that brings together CSOs from around the world on the theme of Development Effectiveness and International Cooperation, particularly in the context of the Busan Partnership for development and the GPED. It is comprised of organizations representing the different regions of the world and by different sectors, such as Trade Union, Feminism, Rural/Peasant, Indigenous

Peoples, Youth Organizations, International Organizations and Faith-based Organizations. CPDE is open to the participation of all CSOs that approve its vision, its goals, believe in their objectives, and adhere to the Istanbul Principles.

Members of the partnership represent all the regions of the world –Africa, Asia Pacific, Europe, North Africa and the Middle East, and the CPDE-LAC is the regional chapter for Latin America and the Caribbean of the CPDE. The member organizations promote a world in which the following are respected and deepened; human rights, participatory democracy, justice and social and environmental sustainability, gender equality, decent work, sustainable change, peace and security.

At the regional level, we seek to strengthen a Regional Identity that allows us to contribute to the different areas of advocacy from a Latin America and the Caribbean perspective. Our principles and values are: mutual respect, gender equality, accountability to members and transparency in all decisions and actions. The members of the CSOs Partnership also assume the Istanbul Principles and the International Framework for CSO Development Effectiveness.

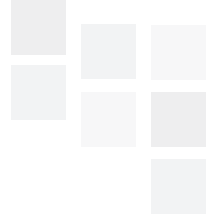
## Organization participation

Country	ODS	South-South	Contact
Argentina	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		SEHAS Habitational and Social Action Service - ALOP
Colombia	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		Long Live the Citizenship - ALOP
Mexico	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		Pueblo Team - ALOP
Peru	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		Labor Advisory Center of Peru (CEDAL) Center for Studies and Promotion of Development- Desco
Uruguay	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Claeh - Latin American Center for Human Economy
Venezuela	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Peasant Action

Country	ODS	South-South	Contact
Bolivia	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	National Union of Institutions for Social Action Work (Unitas)
Colombia	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Colombian Confederation of NGOs CCONG
Mexico	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		Pueblo Team
Peru	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		National Association of Centers -ANC
Jamaica	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Association of Development Agencies (ADA)
Venezuela	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	SINERGIA







## Introduction

South-South Cooperation (SSC) has shown an important momentum in recent years at a global level, perceived in active manner in Latin America and the Caribbean. The countries of the region participate more and more in the execution of these initiatives, as well as in triangular cooperation mechanisms with a growing prominence of initiatives developed in the region. As a result of this collective will, this type of cooperation has multiplied significantly in a decade.

From the perspective of the CSO Partnership for Development Effectiveness (CPDE<sup>1</sup>), a comparative exercise was carried out on the state and perception of the dynamics of SSC, confirming that rather than being a new topic, it has been present in the form of economic integration, exchanges in the cultural sector and technical cooperation for a long time. It is characterized by the equitable exchange between peers from countries with political and economic similarities, and it is sought to be governed by principles of equity, solidarity and horizontality, respect for diversity and independence, transparency and accountability; and it is mainly focused on technical cooperation and with an intergovernmental nature.

For the CSOs consulted, the topics addressed through this modality are part of SDG compliance, emphasizing mainly the strengthening of capacities. They also see SSC as a way to increase their own efficiency and to transfer knowledge in a democratic way. In fact, they express that a great opportunity exists for traditional development partners to take advantage of the existing capacities of the organizations and use them in a fair and equitable model, which increases the effectiveness of the interventions, therefore, achieving greater impact for both the territory and for the provider's own goals.

Based on what is established in each country, CSOs evaluate in a differentiated way the field of action of this type of cooperation. For some (for example, in Bolivia, Peru, Venezuela) it is limited or there is little access to CSOs, unlike the cooperation that is carried out through “traditional” and cooperation agencies.

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1 CPDE: CSO Partnership for Development Effectiveness: <https://www.csopartnership.org/>  
This document is a preliminary report commissioned by the CPDE Secretariat for Latin America and the Caribbean and the Observatory of Development Cooperation in Ecuador. It is part of project of the Regional CSOs Observatory for Development Effectiveness, and it was prepared by Camilo Molina and Carlos Andrade. We are especially grateful for the contributions of the organizations of the CPDE, the coordination with the secretariat of the CPDE in the region, Karina Cáceres, the editing support of Carla Celi, Laura Becerra and the translation and support of Nancy Landa.

Despite the significant impact achieved in the territories by the CSOs involved in SSC processes, their participation in the decision-making processes with the governmental institutions of these territories is limited. In some cases, they receive information, they are invited to events organized by these entities, but in rare instances to binding consultations for the establishment of policies.

This report has been prepared thanks to the collaboration of the CPDE networks with local CSO networks in the following countries:

- Argentina
- Ecuador
- Uruguay
- Bolivia
- Jamaica
- Venezuela
- Colombia
- Mexico
- Perú

## Methodology

This report was developed through an inductive methodology, using primary data on the perception of CSOs regarding the advancement of the 2030 Agenda and the contribution of SSC in these processes through a semi-structured information sheet circulated to experts from the region. The information collected and systematized was contrasted with official secondary information from the different countries analyzed.

It is worth mentioning that this quantitative data was used to compare with the vision of CSOs, especially using the reports of ECLAC, *SEGIB*, the United Nations and some national cooperation agencies. The following are the key findings:

**Bilateral Cooperation:** Emphasis on 721 projects and 155 actions of Bilateral SCC that the 19 Latin American countries exchanged among them, throughout 2015.

**Triangular Cooperation:** Emphasis on 94 projects and 65 actions that, as a whole, multiplied by 8 the records in 2006.

**Regional South-South Cooperation:** Emphasis on the 44 programs and 57 Regional CSS projects in which the countries expressed their participation throughout 2015. The most outstanding results are summarized in relation to those who participated and the type of problems the region addressed collectively through this modality of cooperation.

To summarize, in 2015, SSC took priority, which served to strengthen economic capacities. This purpose explained 40.1% of bilateral projects, 30.9% of triangular projects and 26.7% of regional initiatives.

To compile the information, the SSC trends in the region were reviewed in 9 countries that participated in the consultation to obtain primary information

from CSOs on the status of SSC in the following countries: Argentina, Bolivia, Colombia, Ecuador, Jamaica, Mexico, Peru, Uruguay and Venezuela.

The following map illustrates the participation of CSOs in this process:



In order to contrast the primary data collected, secondary data was collected on the SDGs progress status of the following countries:

Argentina	Dominican Republic	Nicaragua
Barbados	Ecuador	Panama
Belize	El Salvador	Paraguay
Bolivia	Guatemala	Perú
Brazil	Guyana	Suriname
Chile	Haiti	Trinidad y Tobago
Colombia	Honduras	Uruguay
Costa Rica	Jamaica	Venezuela
Cuba	Mexico	

# South-South Cooperation Overview

The 2017 Report on South-South Cooperation in Ibero-America of the General Secretariat confirms the important momentum of SSC in our region. Ibero-American countries participate in the execution of 1,475 South-South Cooperation initiatives. Likewise, triangular cooperation continues to show a growing prominence with 159 initiatives developed in the region, which means that in a decade this type of cooperation has multiplied by eight. Another important event is the registration of 101 regional SSC initiatives and, throughout 2015, Ibero-America will participate in at least 378 SSC initiatives with other regions of the world. (Source: 2017 Report on South-South Cooperation in Latin America /Ibero-American General Secretariat)

## South-South Cooperation in Ibero-America. 2015

Initiatives in Units

	Modalities			Total
	Bilateral CSS	Triangular Cooperation	Regional SSC	
Programs	na	na	44	44
Projects	992	99	57	1148
Actions	214	69	na	283
	1206	168	101	1475

Note: N/A. Does not apply.

Source: SEGIB based on Agencies and Directorates General of Cooperation

## Relevant findings:

**Bilateral Cooperation:** The focus is placed on 721 projects and 155 Bilateral South-South Cooperation actions that the 19 Latin American countries exchanged with each other throughout 2015.

- a. Seven countries in the region were responsible for 90% of the 721 Bilateral South-South Cooperation projects in 2015: Argentina, the main provider with 180 projects under execution; Mexico and Brazil, follow with 125 and 110 projects; Chile and Cuba, who contributed 80 and 59 of these initiatives, equivalent to 20% of the total; and Uruguay and Colombia, which maintained remarkable records in the range between 40 and 50 projects. The remaining 10% of the cooperation was explained by ten countries: Ecuador and Costa Rica (about 25 projects each); Peru (14); and more precisely (between 1 and 3 projects) by seven other countries traditionally receptors that began to emerge as providers (Bolivia, El Salvador, Guatemala, Panama, Paraguay, Dominican Republic and Venezuela). Honduras and Nicaragua did not register any projects.

- b. On the other hand, the 19 Latin America countries (without exception) served as recipients of Bilateral SSC projects. El Salvador, the main recipient in 2015, stood out with 98 projects equivalent to 13.6% of the total. It was the only country with a share above 10%, since Bolivia and Argentina, as second and third largest recipients in 2015, each contributed to 68 and 57 projects (9.4% and 7.9%, respectively). Meanwhile, just over 30% of the projects were explained by the contribution of five countries: Mexico, Honduras, Costa Rica, Cuba and Uruguay, in a range that oscillated, in each case, between 40 and 50 initiatives. Six countries (Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, Guatemala, Peru and the Dominican Republic) each registered between 20 and 36 projects and complemented the previous eight to jointly explain nine out of ten projects in 2015. Finally, Brazil, Nicaragua, Panama and Venezuela contributed, in each case, between 11 and 17 projects.
- c. In relation to the capacities strengthened in the region through Bilateral SSC exchanges, most of the projects (more than 250 —40.1% of the total—) responded to economic objectives: eight of 10 were to strengthen productive sectors; the rest supported the generation of infrastructures and services of national economies. On the other hand, about 215 projects (one third of the total) sought to improve social welfare. Another hundred (15% of the 721) addressed the strengthening of government institutions and civil society. The remaining 11.6% were devoted, in a proportion of 6 to 4, to actions in the environmental and other activities such as culture.
- d. Among the projects with an economic focus, the most outstanding sector was agriculture, the second most important in 2015, being responsible for 16% of all projects (only below Health at 17.8%). In addition, nearly one hundred projects (14.7%) were aimed at institutional strengthening, particularly governments. The remaining of the economic sectors registered participation lower than 10%. It is worth mentioning those that had as an objective the strengthening of services and public policies (7.0% of the total); those related to the defense and protection of the environment (6.7%); and those dedicated to the Industry (5.9%).

**Triangular Cooperation:** Focus on 94 projects and 65 actions that, as a whole, practically multiplied records by eight in 2006.

- a. Twelve of the 19 countries in the region were transferrers of capacities in the role of first provider. Four of them were explained by almost three out of four of the 94 projects offered: Chile, responsible for 29.8% of the projects; Brazil, first provider in 18.1% of the initiatives; and Mexico and Argentina, with relative shares of 16% and 9.6%. Other countries in the region that also transferred their capacities in a more specific way were Uruguay, Peru and Costa Rica (five times each); Colombia (in four); El Salvador (in two); as well as Panama, Ecuador and the Dominican Republic (in one).
- b. More than twenty actors supported financially, technically and institutionally, the Triangular Cooperation in 2015. In fact, from the role of second provider, Germany stood out, present in more than a fifth of the projects; Spain and Japan, with 17 projects each explained 36.2% of the cooperation; and the United States, the fourth most active country, present

in 7 out of 10 initiatives. They also highlighted multilateral organizations of the United Nations System, several Development Banks and some institutions of sub-regional scope (in the case of the OAS).

- c. On the other hand, the role of recipient was usually shared by several countries at the same time (actually, in practically one third of the triangular projects of 2015). With participations at the individual level, Paraguay and El Salvador stood out (in 23.4% of the rest of the initiatives), Guatemala (in 9.6%) and Honduras (in 8.5%).
- d. In terms of capacity building, 30.9% of the Triangular Cooperation projects in 2015 served an economic purpose. Among these stood out (9 out of 10) those that supported the productive sectors. Likewise, the second most relevant area of action was social, which involved 25% of the projects. The Triangular Cooperation in 2015 was practically completed with 40% of the projects that, in similar proportions, were dedicated to the environment and institutional strengthening.
- e. By sectors, 20% of the projects were oriented to institutionally strengthen the governments of the recipient countries. Another third is explained by the support provided through the triangular cooperation which was given to the preservation and protection of the environment and agricultural activity (around 16-17% of the total, in each case). With contributions close to or equal to 10%, it is worth mentioning the support related to social services and policies (10.6%) and health (8.5%).

**South-South Regional Cooperation:** Focus on the 44 programs and 57 projects of South-South Regional Cooperation in which the countries said to participate throughout 2015. The most outstanding results are summarized in relation to those who participated and the type of problems that the region addressed collectively through this cooperation modality.

- a. In 2015, Mexico was the country that participated in the largest number of Regional South-South Cooperation initiatives: a total of 68. It was followed by Argentina, Brazil, Colombia, Costa Rica and Peru, all of them present in between 50 and 60 programs and projects. On the other hand, Chile, Panama, Paraguay and Uruguay formed the group of countries whose participation ranged from a total of 40 to 50 experiences of Regional SSC. Present in between 30 and 40 initiatives, were Guatemala, Ecuador, El Salvador, Honduras, Nicaragua and the Dominican Republic. Bolivia, Spain and Venezuela participated in approximately 20 to 30 programs and projects; while, Cuba and Portugal registered relatively lower participation (17 and 11 initiatives), but notably higher than those registered by Andorra (2).
- b. The multilateral organizations were also relevant actors of the Regional South-South Cooperation in 2015, participating in 89 of the 101 registered initiatives. It is worth highlighting the role played by Ibero-American organizations, present in a total of 26 programs and projects. It was followed by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), under whose ARCAL Program had 13 projects. The Inter-American Development Bank (IADB) and MERCOSUR participated, in each case, in a dozen exchanges. The OAS (7 initiatives), SICA (7 others), Pacific Alliance (4), ECLAC (3)

and the ILO, ACTO and FAO (2 each) were found with notable but lower participation. FMI, CAN and PAHO registered specific participations, of 1 program or project, in each case.

- c. More than half of the programs and projects of South-South Regional Cooperation executed in 2015 had the purpose of addressing problems of a social (26.7%) and economic nature (another 26.7% dedicated to the generation of infrastructure and services for the economy). A notable 16% grouped initiatives aimed at institutional strengthening of the governments of the region. An additional 15% was dedicated to other areas of action, in which culture was predominant. The last 16% of the initiatives addressed, in identical proportions, the preservation of the environment and the productive sectors.
- d. From a disaggregated perspective, the most relevant sector in 2015 did not respond to an economic or social orientation: it tried to institutionally strengthen the governments of the region (15.9% of the 101 initiatives). Culture was also emphasized, in which 14% of the Regional CSS in 2015 was oriented. Meanwhile, the programs and projects dedicated to the promotion and development of science and technology explained an estimated additional 12% of the cooperation promoted under this modality. Health was the fourth most important sector, representing one in ten of the registered initiatives. With participation of less than 10%, the initiatives that strengthened the services sector and social policies (almost 7% of the total), care and preservation of the environment (6.9%), education systems (5.9%) and energy (another 5.9%).

In 2015, South-South Cooperation took priority, which served to strengthen economic capacities. This purpose explained 40.1% of bilateral projects, 30.9% of triangular projects and 26.7% of regional initiatives.

## Cooperation Tendencies

According to the South - South Cooperation Report in Ibero - America, it was identified that around 60% of cooperation projects in the minor to two SDGs.

## Main programs and cases

In Bolivia, official data on South-South Cooperation (SSC) is limited and even when it is accessible, the information is outdated, dispersed and/or without specific details. According to data compiled by the *SEGIB*, in 2015 Bolivia was positioned as the second country recipient of Bilateral SSC, after El Salvador, with a total of 68 projects (9.4% of the total); also being highlighted for starting to participate as a provider in cooperation projects (two projects). Bolivia, such as countries like Cuba, Paraguay, Chile and Venezuela, was characterized, in its role as recipient, by its high dependence on a few providers. In fact, of 8 countries, the flow of projects is concentrated, mostly (79%) in three providers: Argentina, Mexico and Colombia. It should be noted that many of these projects were addressed in a triangular manner, that is, with the collaboration of a third partner. For that manner, the cooperation of countries such as Germany and Spain had a significant weight in these projects.

In relation to the amounts invested, the Central Bank reports a regressive trend in the amounts of non-reimbursable cooperation in the country. In 2016, donation transfers totaled \$152 million dollars (a decrease of 43.4% in funds compared to 2010); this in spite of the consideration of Bolivia as a medium-low income country. In quantitative terms, the SSC had a residual participation in relation to traditional cooperation. Of the 21 cooperating agencies that disbursed donation funds in 2016, none corresponded to the SSC. However, preliminary data for the first semester of 2017 show that the cooperation of the People's Republic of China acquired a preponderant weight, representing 86% of the total donations of this period with a sum of \$10.6 million dollars. The remaining 14% of donations corresponded to organizations from developed countries (International Fund for Agricultural Development, Inter-American Development Bank, etc.). Thus, Bilateral SSC between Latin American countries focused more on socially oriented technical cooperation projects (Ibero-American General Secretariat, 2017). In fact, 20.6% of these were allocated to the health sectors (nutrition, childhood cancer and improvement of medicinal techniques) and improvement of agricultural production (livestock and improvement of soil yields); 15% were destined to improve tourism and commerce; 10% to institutional strengthening (human rights, trafficking and child exploitation); 8.8% for the environment; 7.4% in education projects; among others. These projects were of smaller dimension and scope in contrast to those of traditional cooperation.

It can be highlighted by the relevance of its results and the involvement of more than one cooperating agent, the case of the program *Amazonía sin Fuego* (Amazon without Fire, *PASF*), an initiative that originated in Brazil in the 90s, and that due to its positive results it was replicated in Bolivia. In fact, the Program is being developed in Bolivia from 2011 to-date, under the guidance of the Brazilian Institute of Environment and Natural Resources (IBAMA), the financial support and technical assistance from the Government of Italy, the Government of Brazil and CAF, and the execution of the Ministry of Environment and Water of Bolivia.

There is an interesting analysis that is made from Mexican CSOs to specify the process of the competent body: the Mexican Agency for International Development Cooperation (*AMEXCID*), functions as a deconcentrated entity of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (*SRE*), since September of 2011. Among its attributions to address issues related to cooperation, it created a legal framework with the Law of International Cooperation for Development (*Ley de Cooperación Internacional para el Desarrollo*, April 6, 2011), which did not incorporate non-governmental actors. Later in 2014, a Consultative Council and five Technical Councils were created, one of which is the Social Technical Council where CSOs participate. In its official presentation, *AMEXCID* affirms its status as a cooperation provider, focused on technical and scientific cooperation in priority sectors (health, environment, education, infrastructure, science and technology), sharing of experiences, good practices and knowledge of Mexican institutions acquired by turning development challenges into opportunities. At the same time, it maintains its status as a recipient to consolidate collaborative programs that contribute to the country's priorities and the needs. An important regional



mention is made, recognizing the region of Mesoamerica and the Caribbean as a priority to promote integration and achieve shared development.<sup>2</sup>

To conclude, *AMEXICD* is expected to continue to face the challenge of increasing its functions, of improving its transparency and accountability, of being more active in the search for financing for development to advance compliance with the 2030 Agenda, as well as improve the quality and results of the consultation spaces that have been created (Technical Councils). In addition, it should be more active and proactive in the international debate on Financing for Development, and as its documents mention: “Continue to improve the country’s information management systems and build capacity to use data from development cooperation to guide dialogue and decision-making.”

In the case of Colombia, relationships have been strengthened with the countries in Latin America and the Caribbean, Africa and Asia under the concepts of equity, trust and collaborative work. Basically, it has established Bilateral Cooperation Commissions with 18 countries with the joint commission mechanism. In terms of SSC relationships, the country has reached 130 countries (between 2012 and 2017). According to *APC*, in 2017 it was possible to develop cooperation with 53 countries, but the Colombian Foreign Ministry notes that there were 71 countries. There is inaccuracy in the official data. Colombian CSOs are present in 60, with education, productive issues and technical, methodological and scientific research, in general.


Within the framework of the Project, Mesoamerica leads strategies with the Caribbean (disaster risk management, environment, food and nutrition security and technical training for work), the Southeast Asia countries (climate change, risk management and disaster prevention, innovation in the agricultural sector, tourism, knowledge promotion), Eurasia (promotion of productive development, mining-energy development, public management and good governance) and Africa (promotion and social protection, income generation, culture, education and sport, disarmament, reintegration and reconciliation, tourism and humanitarian assistance). Additionally, the country has an International Cooperation in Comprehensive Security strategy.

Between 2012-2017 the Agency for International Cooperation of Colombia accounted for 1402 SSC activities, which include those related to volunteers and teacher and student mobility. It should be noted that 407 took place in 2017. Only in the Mesoamerica strategy did it consider 98 beneficiaries. In general, from 2012 to 2017, Colombia has invested \$39,064,938,475 COP in CSS, with \$14,427,000,000 COP in 2017, but there is no official information on the amount of specific resources invested through CSOs or direct investments that civil society organizations may have made, be it NGOs, business foundations or other non-profit entities. In the 2017 Accountability Report presented in 2018, the Presidential Agency for International Cooperation of Colombia states that 2,138 people have benefited from the CSS programs managed by *APC*.

Although in the *APC* official documents, the Clayuca Corporation, the *Minuto de Dios* University Corporation, the Colombian Agricultural Research Corporation,

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2 (<https://www.gob.mx/amexcid/que-hacemos>)




the La Salle University, the Organizmo Foundation (of the National Professional Council of Architecture and its Auxiliary Professions), the Kangaroo Foundation, the Kangaroo Mother Method, Profamilia, the Cinde Foundation, the Nueva Foundation School, the works carried out by the National Secretariat for Social Pastoral Care-Caritas Colombia on hunger and natural disasters, so as not to extend the traditional humanitarian aid they are carrying out in accordance with their mission. It is necessary to note the projection of the National Federation of Coffee Growers, the largest agricultural organization in Latin America, and the good practices of the Colombian NGO Confederation; the work with adolescent mothers in situation of extreme poverty promoted by the Juan Felipe Gómez Escobar Foundation. There are also universities that, within the framework of the SSC, are developing teacher and student mobility projects, especially for teaching Spanish and, in general, in social sciences.

In the case of Venezuela, SSC has focused on the issues of strengthening civil society organizations for citizen advocacy; the dialogue and articulation and political advocacy for plural spaces of civil society; the documentation, denunciation and dissemination of violation of the rights of association and participation (preparation of *EPU* reports and *PIDESC PDCP* Committees); and information, training, promotion of citizen follow-up of the 2030 Agenda in Venezuela.

The amount invested is an estimated \$200,000.00 USD. Approximately 500 CSOs and community-based organizations (CBOs) have been impacted throughout the national territory with an estimated 2,000 citizens directly involved. With an indirect potential reach of 15,000 people. The increase of articulated action by CSOs for short-term and strategic issues are highlighted as products; the positive impact of these alliances on advocacy at regional and global human rights protection agencies; the design and execution of actions for citizen participation in the fulfillment and follow-up of the SDGs in the country and the generation of activities and meeting spaces for citizens directly or not involved with organizations or civil society movements.

The training and advising of organizations in their participation in the preparation of reports for the Universal Periodic Examination, as well as the coordination of efforts in the presentation of thematic reports to the Inter-American System and the Universal Human Rights System, stand out as relevant events. These efforts of social integration have had an influence on the perspective from which the situation of Venezuela is currently being viewed, which should not be dismissed. The determination to internally establish alliances, through joint action in training programs, communication campaigns and joint documents (communiqués and statements, among others) has had a similar impact in the sense of allowing, with the onslaught of governmental actors towards the civil society, for protection actions to be activated for activists and organizations.

In Uruguay, we can point out that the six sectors that bring together the largest number of international cooperation projects - regardless of the modalities, as in 2014 - are Health, Environment, Agriculture, Governance, Social Protection, Poverty and Social Cohesion, and Industry and SMEs. The novelty with respect to the previous report (2014) is that agriculture now occupies the third place, before it was in the sixth place, tied with Governance.



The projects of these six sectors represent 63% of the total. The majority of these were initiated in 2016, together with Transportation and Communications. The transversal lines that are most frequent in active initiatives in 2016 are technology (15%), climate change (12%) and research (11%). The research line is strongest in the South-South in the regional and multi-country, with 18% and 15% respectively.

Similarly, the 2016 Uruguay Accountability Report asserts that the funds contributed by the international cooperation represent more than 13% of the total budget of the set of 109 organizations to which this document gives account. However, no details on the group of beneficiaries are found.

We highlight the importance of the initiatives of the Transplant Management System in the Southern Cone, between Argentina, Chile and Uruguay. It promotes mutual knowledge of health systems with the purpose of contributing to regional integration in health and to the guarantee of the universal right to access health services. In the same manner, the work of the Uruguayan Federation of Housing Cooperatives for mutual aid (*FUCVAM*), winner of the World Habitat Award.

In the case of Jamaica and its 14 CARICOM partners, they are advancing in the process of deepening South-South cooperation and have signed official documents in Kingston. The aim is to announce the Single Market and Economy of CARICOM (*CSME*), so that a single economy is established to achieve this objective. To fulfill this objective, Jamaica-CARICOM, through its Council for Trade and Economic Development (COTED), has held talks with MERCOSUR, the regional trade bloc of Latin America, which is the fourth largest in the world, which is comprised of Brazil, Argentina, Uruguay and Paraguay. The association will seek to build and strengthen South-South alliances.

Jamaica-CARICOM has allocated \$70 million USD to be used for a period of ten years. Another likely benefit of such an alliance would be to improve commercial relations with the European Union (EU), which is MERCOSUR's main trading partner, investor and development aid provider.

It should be noted that the Foreign Trade Unit of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade considers that the implementation of the *CSME* is an example of South-South integration, which will help cushion the impact of the drastic liberalization of the market. The recent PetroCaribe agreement between Jamaica and Venezuela; and the collaborations developed with Brazil in alternatives to sugar, such as the ethanol plant, are only early examples of deliberate attempts to deepen and expand South-South cooperation.

## Participation and vision of CSOs in South-South Cooperation

From the perspective of the civil society of the countries that participated in this study, South-South cooperation is not a new issue, it has been present in the form of economic integration, exchanges in the cultural sector and technical cooperation. It is characterized by the equitable exchange between peers from developing countries with political and economic similarities, is governed

by principles of equity, solidarity and horizontality, respect for diversity and independence, transparency and accountability; and it is mainly focused on technical cooperation and intergovernmental cooperation.

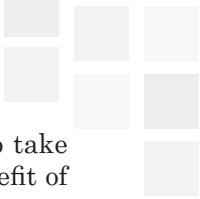
In this - as in other issues - there is a lack of detailed information or precise data on the participation of CSOs in SSC programs to allow for a more in-depth evaluation of their impacts in the countries. If information is found on the programs implemented, some figures invested from the experience of SSC among Latin American countries, which allows the CSOs to outline a notion of its scope. It is about cooperation for development consisting of the transfer of knowledge of their own experiences (programs or projects) in areas of mutual interest; the strengthening of institutional capacities (organization and financing of workshops, seminars, etc.); training through exchange programs, such as university scholarships or the receipt of experts, internships or technical assistance; transfer and exchange of technology, among the most prominent and recurrent.

In Colombia, the work in mobility (students and teachers) stands out, which has been carried out from *ESAL* universities, and which is consolidated as a geopolitical promise in the medium and long term, precisely to learn more about the Global South and to insert itself in another way with the world, because it is not only the language or the specific knowledge of the program in which the exchange takes place, but there is hybridization of cultural knowledge and pathways are opened to acquire other competences or simply to develop more trade among those involved.

Based on what is established in their countries as SSC, CSOs evaluate in a differentiated way the field of action of this type of cooperation. For some (Bolivia, Peru, Venezuela) it is limited or of little access for CSOs, unlike the cooperation that is carried out through “traditional” and cooperation agencies. The participation of Bolivian CSOs in SSC is minimal, or non-existent. The projects reviewed involved the participation of state institutions, both from provider countries and recipients of cooperation, and from some international organizations, and not from CSOs. As an example, we can mention the case of the UNITAS NETWORK and its associated institutions; of the 153 projects executed in 2016, none involved the participation of a cooperating agency or agency of the countries of the global south.

Something similar happens in Peru, which, being a middle-income country and having become a dual country (recipient of donations and international cooperation as well as a cooperation provider to other countries), has increased SSC and Triangular Cooperation in recent years. As a result, in 2015, the Peruvian Agency for International Cooperation published a Catalog of the Offer of International Technical Cooperation of Peru, where it shows 104 successful experiences of 40 Peruvian institutions, and where we can see that none had the participation of civil society.

For Venezuelan CSOs, given the political positions of the government and their relationship with governments in the region, the effective development of SSC is still subordinated to these positions. The efforts to democratize and to make this



cooperation more diverse still face resistance imposed by governments to take advantage of resources and exchanges between countries for the true benefit of our societies and citizens.

For others, such as the experience of some Colombian CSOs, the SCC has enabled the strengthening of human resources, the construction of social capital, incentive for research, development and innovation, which is what the Global South requires; however, the impulse of the national government is still required for it to be strengthened and to allow the work of the CSOs to be visualized by their own value offer. Several CSOs, especially trade unions, and NGOs have been active in intergovernmental organizations such as the Andean Community and the Organization of American States, where they have partaken in forums, seminars and congresses. In the Pacific Alliance, the active participation of several *ESAL* universities stands out. In the Mesoamerica Integration and Development project, the one related to family farming is emblematic, in which it has taken an active part in some of the 13 cooperation activities with a regional scope. However, the participation effectiveness in the forums and programs must be analyzed. There is a perception that it limits itself to the recognition of experiences and does not address, for example, the exchange and real implementation of the programs.

In Jamaica, CSOs also believe that some of CARICOM's development responses reside in SSC, although further development is needed and deliberate efforts to deepen and expand it.

In Uruguay, civil society has played an important role in South-South Cooperation, either through the creation of networks and platforms, participation in regional and global forums or the creation and execution of projects. In 2012, \$40 million USD of international cooperation was mobilized, without counting the counterparts, and in that year CSOs participated in 24% of the total initiatives (317 initiatives surveyed), according to the research: Contribution to the generation of proposals for financing mechanisms of NGOs in the Southern Cone and Brazil, carried out by the Institute of Communication and Development (ICD) of 2014.

### ***Is there an SSC coordinating entity in your country?***

In all the countries there is a body or entity that coordinates the issues of non-reimbursable international cooperation and has specific responsibilities in charge of SSC. In most cases, these instances are Cooperation Agencies that depend on the Ministries of Foreign Affairs or the Presidency of the Republic. There are norms that regulate them in their policy guidelines and management. All have joined *SEGIB*. In all cases they are also the ones who maintain the relationship, supervision or audit of CSOs, especially NGOs.

In Bolivia, activities related to cooperation are coordinated by the Ministry of Development Planning, specifically under the direction of the External Financing Management Directorate of the Vice Ministry of Public Investment and External Financing (*VIPFE*). The *VIPFE* has the power, in view of the 2009 Supreme Decree N°29894, to manage, develop, administer, negotiate, coordinate, program and

sign external financing agreements and manage the Investment and Financing Information Systems. In May 2012, the Ministry of Planning for Development and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs issued the Bi-Ministerial Guidelines Resolution 003 for the Management of Technical Cooperation among Developing Countries, a normative tool that regulates the terms of this activity. Accordingly, the cooperation agreements established between the parties (provider and recipient) must be framed within these guidelines and the Bolivian Economic and Social Development Plan. The document recognizes that cooperation among developing countries is characterized by the transfer of technical resources between countries with a level of relative economic development.


In Colombia, foreign relations policies are headed by the Presidency of the Republic, which has the Presidential Agency for International Cooperation (*APC*), but in the Foreign Affairs Ministry there is an Office for the Planning of Joint Commissions for Technical and Scientific Cooperation.

The Uruguayan Agency for International Cooperation (*AUCI*) is responsible for coordinating the non-reimbursable international cooperation that Uruguay receives and provides. This institution was created by law 18.719 in December 2010 and works in the realm of the Presidency of the Republic. The *AUCI* is working on a 2030 Cooperation Roadmap, which entails a participatory process with organizations. It has developed the Uruguay Integrated System of International Cooperation (*SICI-Uy*). Incorporating this dimension in the Ibero-American Integrated Data System on South-South and Triangular Cooperation (*SIDICCSS*).

In Peru, the Peruvian Agency for International Cooperation (*APCI*) is the governing institution of the country's international technical cooperation, on which both SSC and Triangular Cooperation depend. There is an SSC General Directorate. In legislative terms there are 4 laws or decrees that guide its actions, Law of Science, Technology and Innovation, *STI* (DL 719), *DS* 015-92-PCM that approves the regulation of the Law of *STI*. It has an international cooperation policy approved in 2012 by *DS* 050-2012-MRE that establishes the long-term principles and guidelines of *STI* within the framework of Global Agendas and National Plans and the Annual *STI* Plan of 2013 that provides guidelines for the management of the *STI* and includes SSC.

Only in the case of Venezuela is it considered that apart from the particular experiences carried out with allies of the Latin American region and other practical and academic approaches to the topic, from the CSOs linked to *Sinergia*, there is no information on policies, strategies and programs that the Venezuelan State carries out on SSC (see: <http://mesadearticulacion.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/10/Estudio-Mecanismo-Financiamiento.pdf>).

The main CSOs link with these agencies is supervision and control. CSOs report to these agencies. Bolivia and Peru use similar mechanisms. They submit annual reports to these state institutions, and the agencies approve their registration to be considered recipients of public and external funds. In Colombia, the two organisms that govern the issue of cooperation work and interact with CSOs, but separately.



Although there are multiple mechanisms of institutionalized citizen participation in Uruguay, established in the regulations of the organizations (decrees, resolutions, etc.), the legal system does not have general norms that regulate the actions of CSOs in said spaces, nor is there an organization that systematically analyzes, programs, manages or coordinates the activity of the public sector and civil society.

In all cases, the NGOs state that there is little consultation in the decision-making process. In some cases, they receive information, are invited to events organized by these entities, but in rare cases to binding consultations for the establishment of policies.

## The BRICS, BASICS

The relationship with actors from member countries of groups such as BRICS or BASICS is limited. CSOs, for the most part, do not know how they operate. Only Bolivia points out that in fact, Brazilian cooperation, in charge of the Brazilian Cooperation Agency (*ABC*), and Chinese cooperation, are the only relevant ones in this regard. Until 2012, *ABC*, according to *VIPFE* sources, executed 14 technical cooperation projects in the country (including the aforementioned *Amazonía sin Fuego*), although there was no specific cooperation program.

On the other hand, Chinese participation is fundamentally based on reimbursable financial cooperation. The “goodness” of these funds is linked more to the ease of obtaining them than to low or flexible interest rates. These credits were destined mainly to integration projects through highways and hydrocarbon exploration and production projects, which provoked arduous criticism in public opinion and from the CSOs themselves, in view of their impact on the quality of life to local communities, of the violation of the labor rights of its workers and their possible environmental impacts.

Unlike projects with favorable results, such as the *Amazonía sin Fuego* program, in recent years the involvement of China in productive projects (energy and hydrocarbons) and integration through road construction, through offering credit, has raised severe criticism in the country. The close Sino-Bolivian cooperation relationship is not limited to the volume of credits or the ease of their allocation. As researcher Juan Pablo Neri (2018) indicates, “all the projects financed by China have been executed by Chinese companies and/or have derived in the purchase of Chinese equipment.” In this way, the effects of Chinese financial cooperation are not limited to offering credit, but include the participation of their companies - the majority being from the state - in the country.

Despite complaints on their actions - violation of labor rights, environmental impacts, etc. - participation extends to the execution of large projects financed, including through other sources. According to the author, following the data published by the State Contracting System, “the amount of contracts executed by Chinese companies amounts to 2,700 million dollars” (*ibid.*).

Venezuela, as already mentioned, has an SSC approach marked by government interests regarding the implementation of SSC that should be consolidated

with the principles of transparency, independence, priority and relevance in addressing the social problems faced by the countries of the Latin American region, which promote the work of CSOs related to *Sinergia* and the networks that it integrates. For this reason, the proposal would come in the direction of promoting greater and better spaces for exchange that allow the relevant actors in BRIC or BASIC to be linked more transparently to the social action of the regions. Fundamentally, it has been seen that the impact of SSC promoted by these countries responds in a relevant way to their political interests and to a lesser extent to the social interests of the societies they support financially.

Most of the multilateral organizations in the region are venturing into South-South cooperation in some way, and at the regional level there have been many opportunities for action and attempts to coordinate international cooperation, on the one hand, sometimes even renaming cooperation programs and initiatives, now labeled south-south cooperation. The UNDP, as well as ECLAC, the OAS, the Latin American Economic System (*SELA*) and new organizations such as CELAC or UNASUR promote a south-south cooperation agenda, while the Ibero-American South-South Cooperation Program has its technical secretariat in Montevideo. However, civil society of the Southern Cone countries and Brazil seem to be absent from this process, either by choice or because they have not been invited.<sup>3</sup>

## CSOs Perspective on South-South Cooperation

SSC has increased and has a greater and better record, but it still has a secondary role in the countries of the region. It represents an excellent opportunity for CSOs if it is transformed into a South-South learning exercise and a tool to generate a change in policies and institutions.

Given the new orientations and situation of International Cooperation and the risk of sustainability for CSOs, organizations are constantly looking for new alternatives to maintain their role in society, SSC can be envisioned for that purpose, new forms and types of work to undertake emerge, but without losing its mission and vision.


South-South cooperation is a way to increase effectiveness and to transfer knowledge in a democratic way. Providers should take advantage of the existing capacities of organizations and use them in a fair and equitable model. It is important to ensure that actions, projects and programs have a component of institutional strengthening and training.

Likewise, in light of the failures reported in some of the projects executed with reimbursable financial cooperation, it is recommended that the national regulatory standards and those required by the cooperating agencies themselves be fully applied. The major problems that involve these projects are related to

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3 <http://mesadearticulacion.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/07/Mecanismos-de-financiamiento-Conosur.pdf>





the violation of the collective rights of indigenous peoples, the non-observance of environmental regulations and the non-compliance with workers' labor rights. Both the State and the providers must ensure compliance with these regulations, imposing greater controls and sanctions, in addition to demanding transparency from executing companies, be it public or private.

Undoubtedly, CSOs need a more enabling environment or supportive environment to undertake their activities, both internal and international cooperation, especially in the SSC modality. In the dimension of access to resources, greater limitation can be noted because they could play a role in triangular cooperation, but there are legal limitations for contracting.

National NGO associations in the region are working in accountability processes in an articulated manner and this is essential to achieve greater acceptance and to promote their own value offer.

For a more effective SSC in terms of its positive effect on social problems of the region, we believe that a greater focus on human rights is needed for an equilibrium in the approaches to power scale that have driven this type of cooperation. Accordingly, triangular cooperation has played a more balanced role, even though it still has pending tasks in that area.

In the region there is a systematization of successful practices in different countries that may point to "established capacities" for their transfer in south-south communication models. The knowledge produced in these reflection processes are important for action. CSOs must socialize this knowledge and advance in transferring practices and accountability, as well as in research on how to enter the market without losing sight of the organizations' mission or vision and evaluate alternative financing mechanisms.

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