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Report on South-South and Triangular
Cooperation in Ibero-America 2022

southsouth



Ibero-American General Secretariat (SEGIB)

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Note:

With reference to the inclusion of the term *Triangular* in the title of the Report, Brazil “*understands ‘Trilateral Cooperation’ is the most appropriate expression to refer to the type of cooperation that is executed between 3 international stakeholders*”.

Front cover photo:

Project *Preserving memory and reconstructing human-nature relations*. This initiative is part of the Ibero-American Program *Ibermemoria sonora y audiovisual* and it works on the sound and audiovisual recording of 100 bird species in order to disseminate the natural heritage of Cuernavaca and Morelos (Mexico). Image bank on South-South and Triangular Cooperation in Ibero-America. SEGIB-PIFCSS. 2021.

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Photo: Erika started her beauty and hairdressing business more than 16 years ago. Today, she also trains other women so that they can start their own. Bilateral SSC initiative between Chile and Peru *Program to strengthen women in entrepreneurship and innovation strategies in the regions of Tacna and Arica and Parinacota*. Image bank on South-South and Triangular Cooperation in Ibero-America. SEGIB-PIFCSS. 2021.

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Foreword

This *Report on South-South and Triangular Cooperation in Ibero-America 2022* is a turning point in the history of this publication which has a track record of more than 15 years and has gone from being a pioneering exercise at the multilateral level to consolidating as an international benchmark in the field.

This 14th edition marks the beginning of a biennial series in which the Report will be published every two years. This innovation has a positive impact on two aspects: on the one hand, it will be possible to adapt the registration process, data analysis and the report's drafting to the natural cycle of SSC in its different modalities; on the other hand, this means its publication will coincide with each Ibero-American Summit of Heads of State and Government, and that it will be possible to launch it in this framework; in this case, at the 28th Summit which will be held in Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic, on March 24th and 25th, 2023.

The Report focuses on South-South and Triangular Cooperation in which Ibero-American countries participated during the 2020-2021 period. These two years are associated with an absolutely exceptional moment we all had to face since, in March 2020, the World Health Organization (WHO) declared COVID-19 as a pandemic that resulted in a global crisis of unknown dimensions.

This situation, which began as a health emergency, rapidly became a multidimensional crisis that structurally overlapped with other vulnerabilities such as those derived from climate change and its effects on biodiversity or on food security, which affects

millions of people globally. These topics cut across this edition of the *Report on South-South and Triangular Cooperation in Ibero-America 2022*.

An in-depth analysis of the 2020-2021 data provides the opportunity to compare the evolution of the different modalities with the previous two-year period, and to identify the impact of the pandemic on this cooperation. However, possibly the most important aspect of this report is that it also sheds light on the strategies Ibero-American countries adopted to cope with COVID-19 and, especially, on how they used and continue to use South-South and Triangular Cooperation as an instrument to respond to the challenges of this multidimensional crisis.

In this sense, all the accumulated experience and the enormous amount of information that has been gathered since the first Report in 2007, allow this 2022 edition to include more detailed analysis on the role this cooperation is playing in this critical context. The capacities South-South and Triangular Cooperation generated at the country level and its various instruments are definitely making a substantial contribution to overcome major challenges.

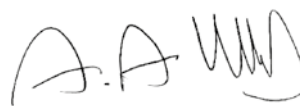
These reflections are combined with an approach to several examples through which this cooperation materializes, showing the "human face" of Ibero-American South-South and Triangular Cooperation. Thus, the different chapters combine data systematization and analysis with Cases, in order to illustrate some of the most emblematic projects and how these have an impact on people's lives.

This exercise is complemented by including photographs of the image bank on South-South and Triangular Cooperation in Ibero-America, which was compiled by SEGIB and the Ibero-American Program for the Strengthening of South-South Cooperation (PIFCSS by its Spanish acronym). In this sense, this 2022 edition contributes to build a new narrative on South-South and Triangular Cooperation, bringing it closer to people and making it more accessible by illustrating what it consists of, its purposes, its main stakeholders, its mechanisms and, above all, its outcomes and the positive impacts it has on sustainable human development and on the effective exercise of people's rights.

The Ibero-American General Secretariat (SEGIB by its Spanish acronym) reaffirms its firm commitment to South-South and Triangular Cooperation, based on countries' efforts to continue promoting it and through this Report, which makes it visible at the regional and global level. We firmly believe this cooperation will help our peoples advance the achievement of the 2030 Agenda despite the challenges this new context imposes, and we are grateful to each and every one of our countries for making this possible.

We are particularly proud of this Report and of this edition, which confirms its importance as a flagship for this institution. We trust it will be useful for all the members of the Ibero-American Community and for the regions with which Ibero-America cooperates. As a multilateral organization, we are pleased to substantially contribute to coordinate

and enhance our region's collective efforts to jointly respond to the national and regional challenges this *Report on South-South and Triangular Cooperation in Ibero-America* represents. We will continue to honor, with our best efforts, the responsibility that this means.



Andrés Allamand
IBERO-AMERICAN SECRETARY GENERAL



Lorena Laríos Rodríguez
SECRETARY FOR IBERO-AMERICAN COOPERATION



Photo: Through Bilateral SSC, Colombia and Costa Rica work on the management of marine protected areas in both territories. They also contribute to preserve biodiversity and protect fragile species and ecosystems. Image bank on South-South and Triangular Cooperation in Ibero-America. SEGIB-PIFCSS. 2022.

Ibero-American Heads of Cooperation

By December 31st, 2022

COUNTRY	NAME	INSTITUTION
ANDORRA	Florencia Aleix	Department of Multilateral Affairs and Cooperation. Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Institutional Relations
ARGENTINA	Sabina Frederic	Presidency. Argentinean Agency for International Cooperation and Humanitarian Assistance White Helmets. Ministry of Foreign Affairs, International Trade and Worship
BOLIVIA	Marcelo Laura Guarachi	Vice-Ministry for Public Investment and External Financing. Ministry of Development Planning
BRAZIL	Ruy Pereira	General Direction. Brazilian Cooperation Agency (ABC by its Spanish acronym)
CHILE	Enrique O'Farrill	Executive Direction. Chilean Agency for International Cooperation for Development (AGCID by its Spanish acronym)
COLOMBIA	Álvaro Calderón Ponce de León	Directorate for International Cooperation. Ministry of Foreign Affairs
COSTA RICA	Carlos Lizano	Directorate for International Cooperation. Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Worship
CUBA	Ana Teresita González Fraga	Vice-Ministry for Foreign Trade and Foreign Investment. Ministry of Foreign Trade and Foreign Investment
DOMINICAN REPUBLIC	Olaya Dotel	Vice-Ministry for International Cooperation. Ministry of Economy, Planning and Development
ECUADOR	Juan Manuel Escalante	Directorate-General for International, Bi-Multilateral and South-South Cooperation. Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Human Mobility
EL SALVADOR	Karla de Palma	General Direction. Agency for International Cooperation of El Salvador (ESCO by its Spanish acronym)
GUATEMALA	Franco Doménico Martínez Mont	Under-Secretariat for Cooperation and Partnerships for Development. Secretariat for Planning and Programming (SEGEPLAN by its Spanish acronym) of the Presidency of the Republic
HONDURAS	Cindy Larissa Rodríguez Mendoza	Under-Secretariat for Cooperation and International Promotion. Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation
MEXICO	Javier Dávila Torres	General Direction. Mexican Agency for International Development Cooperation (AMEXCID by its Spanish acronym)
NICARAGUA	Arlette Marengo Meza	Secretariat for Cooperation. Ministry of Foreign Affairs
PANAMA	Margelia Palacios	Directorate-General for International Cooperation. Ministry of Foreign Affairs
PARAGUAY	Martha Beatriz Medina	Directorate for International Cooperation. Ministry of Foreign Affairs
PERU	José Antonio González Norris	General Direction. Peruvian Agency for International Cooperation (APCI by its Spanish acronym)
PORTUGAL	Cristina Moniz	Vice-Presidency of the Executive Committee. Institute for Cooperation and Language (Camões)
SPAIN	Laura Oroz Ulibarri	Directorate for Cooperation with Latin-America and the Caribbean. Spanish Agency for International Development Cooperation (AECID by its Spanish acronym)
URUGUAY	Mariano Berro	Executive Direction. Uruguayan Agency for International Cooperation (AUCI by its Spanish acronym)
VENEZUELA	María Jacqueline Mendoza	Directorate for Political Coordination and Integration Mechanisms. Vice-Ministry for Multilateral Affairs. Minister of Popular Power for Foreign Affairs



Photo: Daniel Hernández irrigates vegetable crops in the Armando López community in the municipality of Jiquilisco, Usulután. He participates in the Bilateral SSC project between Mexico and El Salvador *Sembrando vida*, combining traditional crops with a system that alternates fruit trees with vegetables and timber. Image bank on South-South and Triangular Cooperation in Ibero-America. SEGIB-PIFCSS. 2021.

Highlights

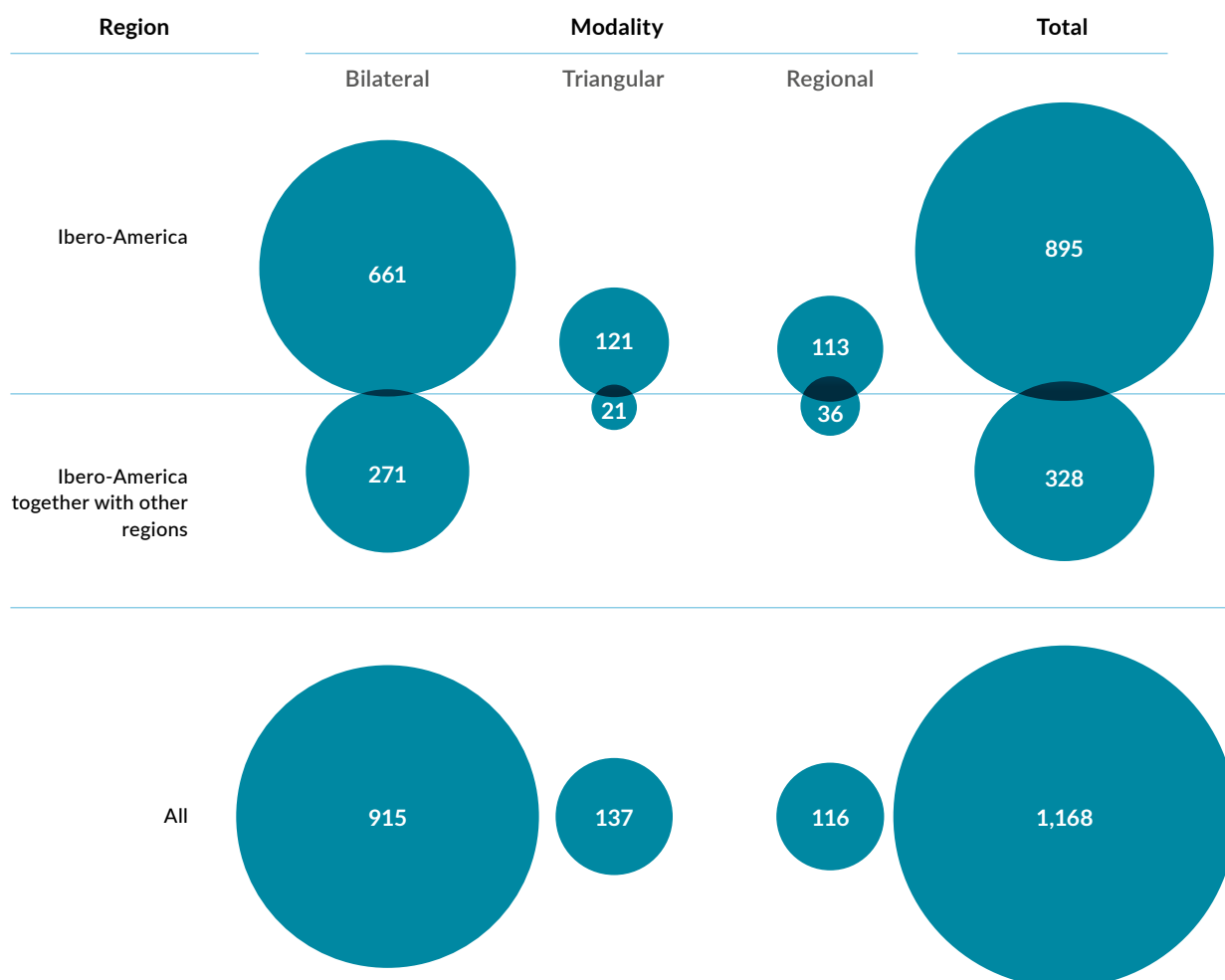
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During the 2020-2021 period and in the midst of the COVID-19 crisis, Ibero-American countries are able to carry out 1,168 South-South and Triangular Cooperation initiatives

All Ibero-American countries participate in this cooperation, in addition to other regions' developing nations, which were involved in 328 actions, projects and programs. Almost 8 out of 10 initiatives (915) take place in the framework of Bilateral SSC.

→ **South-South and Triangular Cooperation initiatives exchanged between Ibero-American countries and with other regions' developing countries, by modality. 2020-2021**

In units



Source: SEGIB based on Agencies and Directorates-General for Cooperation

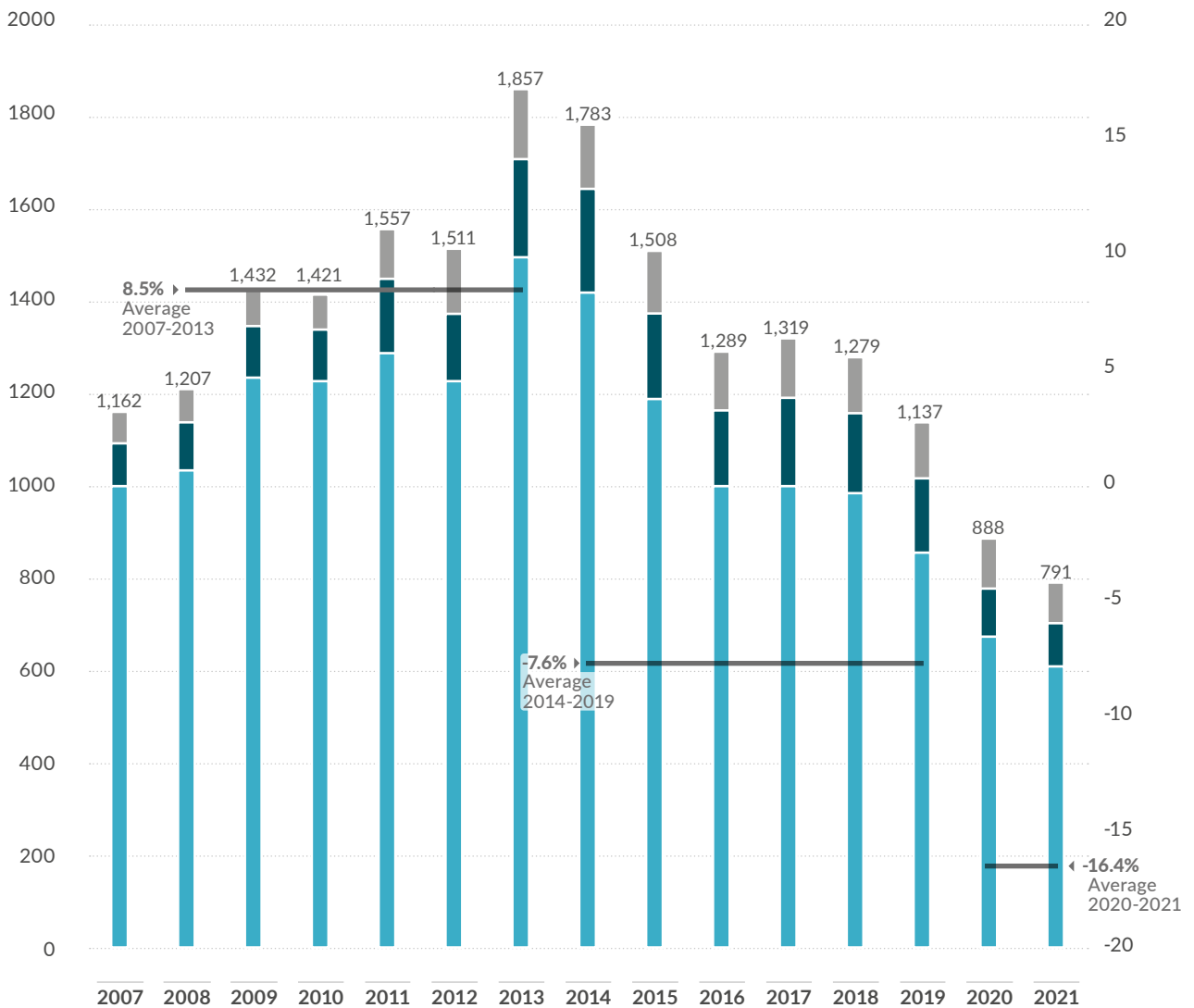
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In this context, and although the figure is 30% lower than in 2018-2019, the 1,168 South-South and Triangular Cooperation initiatives executed in the 2020-2021 period represent a remarkable volume

The COVID-19 crisis accentuates the decline that South-South and Triangular Cooperation was already showing. Three stages can be identified in this sense: between 2007 and 2013 initiatives increased at an average annual rate of 8.5%, reaching a maximum of 1,857 exchanges; from 2014 to 2019 the average annual drop was -7.6%; and, in 2020-2021, it reaches -16.4%.

→ Evolution of all Ibero-American South-South and Triangular Cooperation initiatives, by modality and by average growth rate at different times. 2007-2021

In units and percentage



● Bilateral SSC ● Triangular ● Regional SSC

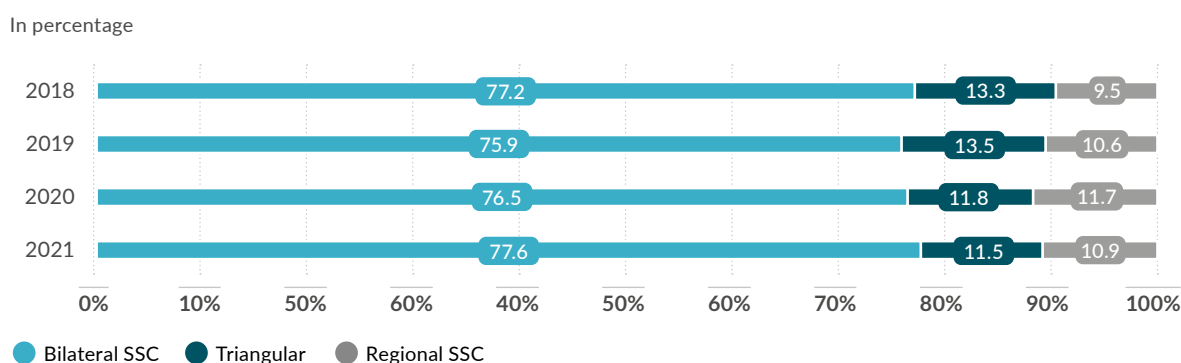
Source: SEGIB based on Agencies and Directorates-General for Cooperation

3

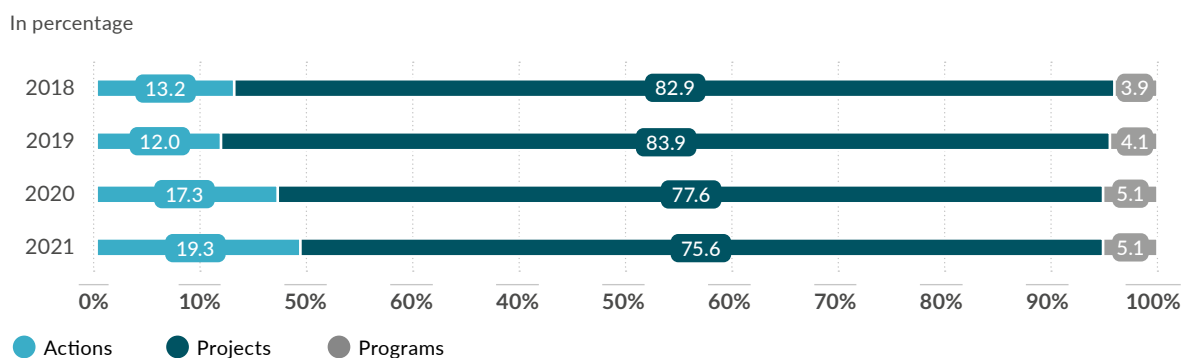
Countries develop strategies to dynamize and adapt South-South and Triangular Cooperation to pandemic times, in addition to making it an instrument to respond to the crisis caused by COVID-19

Actions' smaller relative size and their easier instrumentalization and adaptation to remote mechanisms has led to their growing importance in South-South and Triangular Cooperation initiatives as a whole. Most of these initiatives are promoted to face the COVID-19 crisis in its different dimensions. Specifically, the *Health* sector increases its importance over the total and, in 2021, accounts for 1 out of every 5 initiatives.

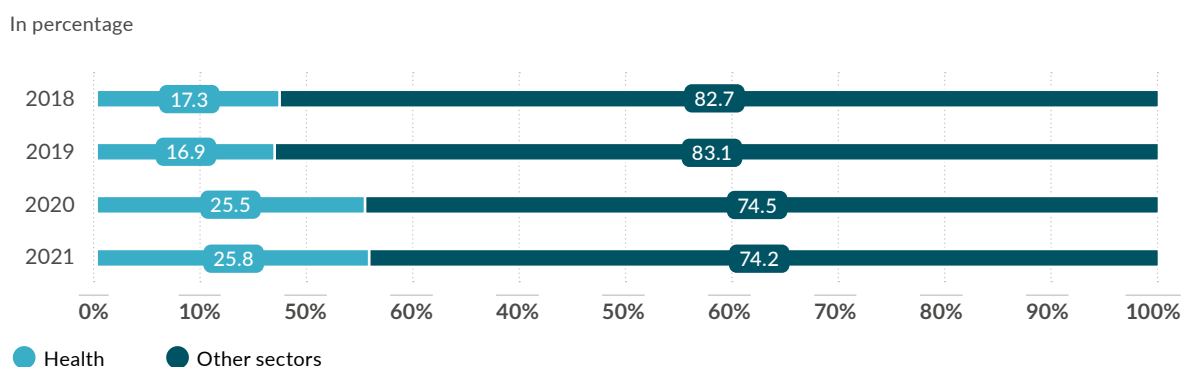
→ Distribution of initiatives in the COVID context, by modality. 2018-2021



→ Distribution of initiatives in the COVID context, by instrument. 2018-2021



→ The COVID context and the importance of the *Health* sector in the total number of initiatives. 2018-2021





In the context of COVID-19, Cuba, Colombia, Chile, Peru and Mexico, all involved in more than 250 initiatives, stand out for their especially active role in South-South and Triangular Cooperation

Argentina, Uruguay, Brazil and Costa Rica participate in between 150 and 200 exchanges. Most countries (from Panama to Ecuador) also implement between 100 and 150 South-South and Triangular Cooperation actions, projects and programs.

→ Ibero-American countries' participation in all South-South and Triangular Cooperation initiatives. 2020-2021

In units and percentage



Number of initiatives in which each country participated in 2020-2021

- More than 200
- Between 150 and 199
- Between 100 and 149
- Between 50 and 99
- Up to 49

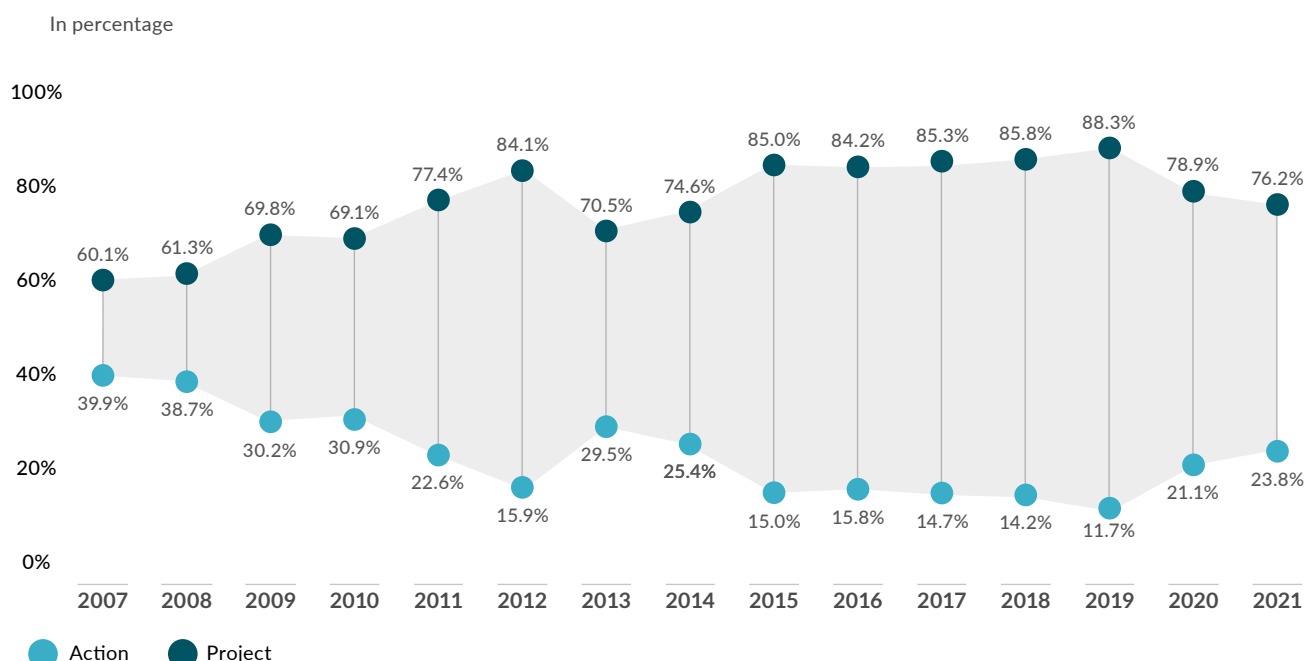
Source: SEGIB based on Agencies and Directorates-General for Cooperation

5

Actions, which enable exchanges of a more specific nature and that can be easily executed online, play a dynamic role in the 915 South-South Cooperation (SSC) initiatives that were bilaterally exchanged with all partners

The COVID-19 crisis reverses the trend of recent years in which actions were being progressively displaced by projects. The projects-actions ratio peaked in 2019 getting close to 90%-10%. The outbreak of the pandemic, with the restrictions it imposed, boosted actions' importance once again, bringing the proportions closer together, although they still remain at a remarkable 76%-24%.

→ Evolution of projects' and actions' share in the total number of Ibero-American Bilateral SSC initiatives with all partners. 2007-2021



Source: SEGIB based on Agencies and Directorates-General for Cooperation



Photo: Bilateral SSC project *Strengthening the productive capacities of the bee value chain and beekeeping in the regions of Tenza Valley and Lengupá in Boyacá* between Colombia and Paraguay. Image bank on South-South and Triangular Cooperation in Ibero-America. SEGIB-PIFCSS. 2021.

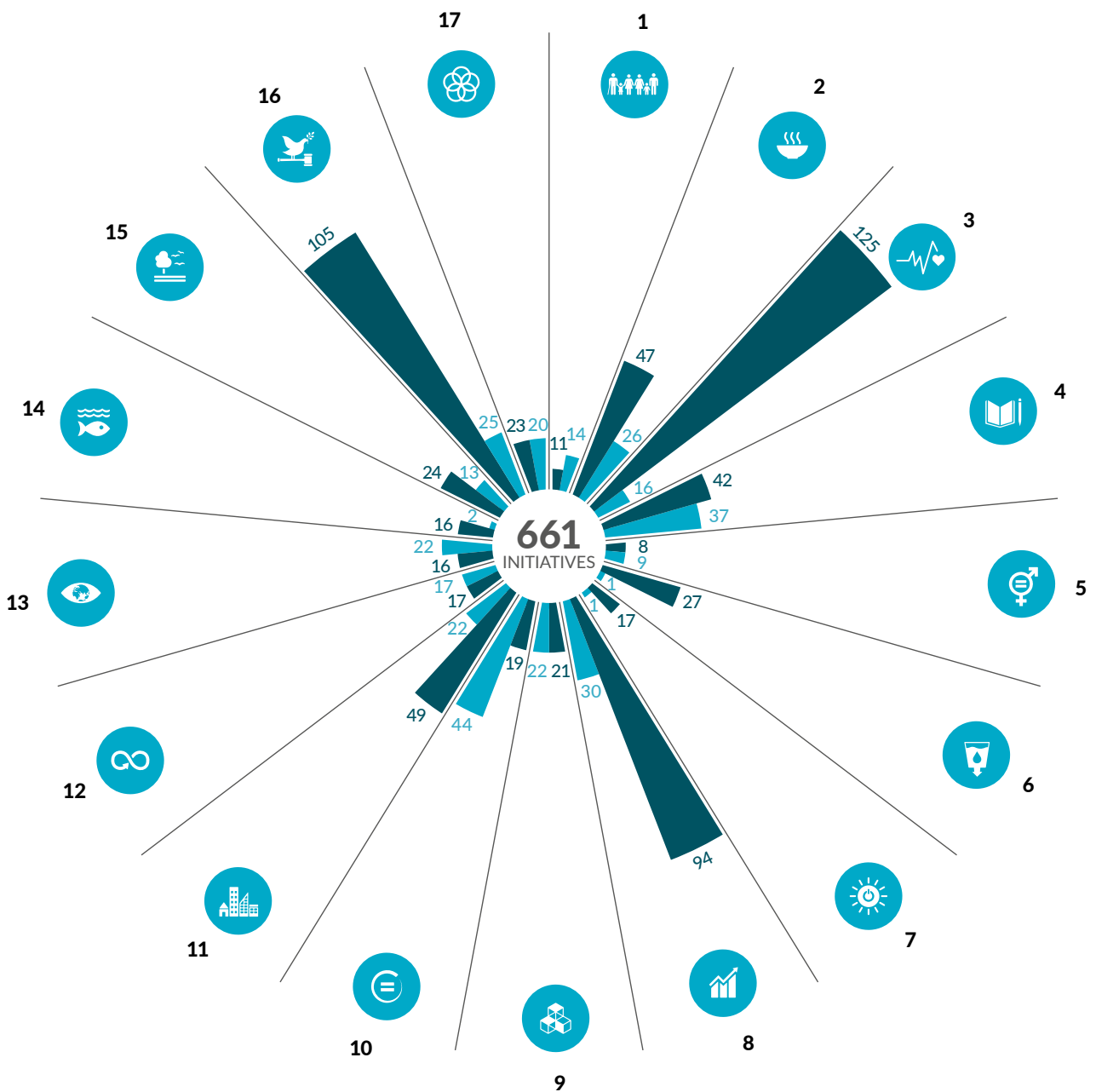


The topics addressed by the 661 SSC initiatives that were bilaterally exchanged confirm the region is still committed to the 2030 Agenda

During the 2020-2021 period, actions and projects combine the continuation of long-standing structural programs with the response to the COVID-19 crisis. As a result, SDG 3 (Good health and well-being), SDG 16 (Peace, justice and strong institutions) and SDG 8 (Decent work and economic growth) stand out in these years.

→ Distribution of Bilateral SSC initiatives exchanged in Ibero-America, by their potential alignment with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). 2020-2021

In units



● Main SDG ● Second SDG

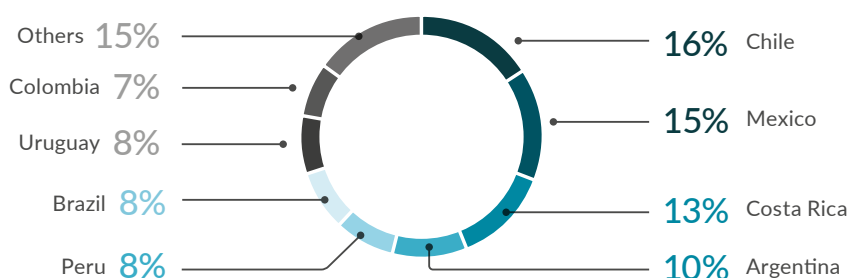
Chile, Mexico and Costa Rica stand out as first providers in the 121 Triangular Cooperation (TC) initiatives carried out in Ibero-America in 2020-2021; Germany and Spain were the most active countries as second providers, while Paraguay and Bolivia were key players as recipients

The TC of the European Union (EU) and its member countries and, in short, the bi-regional partnership between the EU and Latin-America, is becoming increasingly important, accounting for 2 out of 3 (64.8%) of the 121 TC actions and projects carried out during those years.

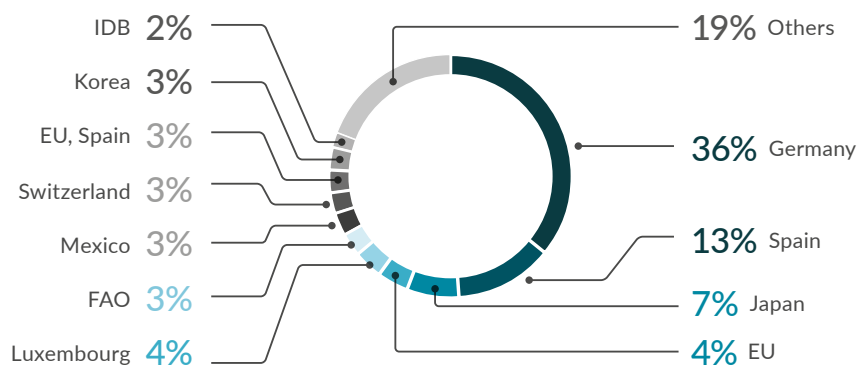
→ Distribution of Triangular Cooperation initiatives in Ibero-America, by roles and partners. 2020-2021

In percentage

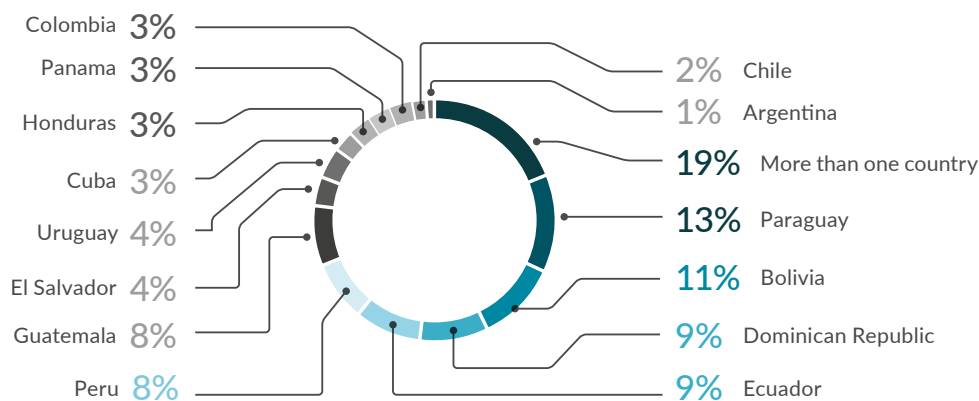
A. First provider



B. Second provider

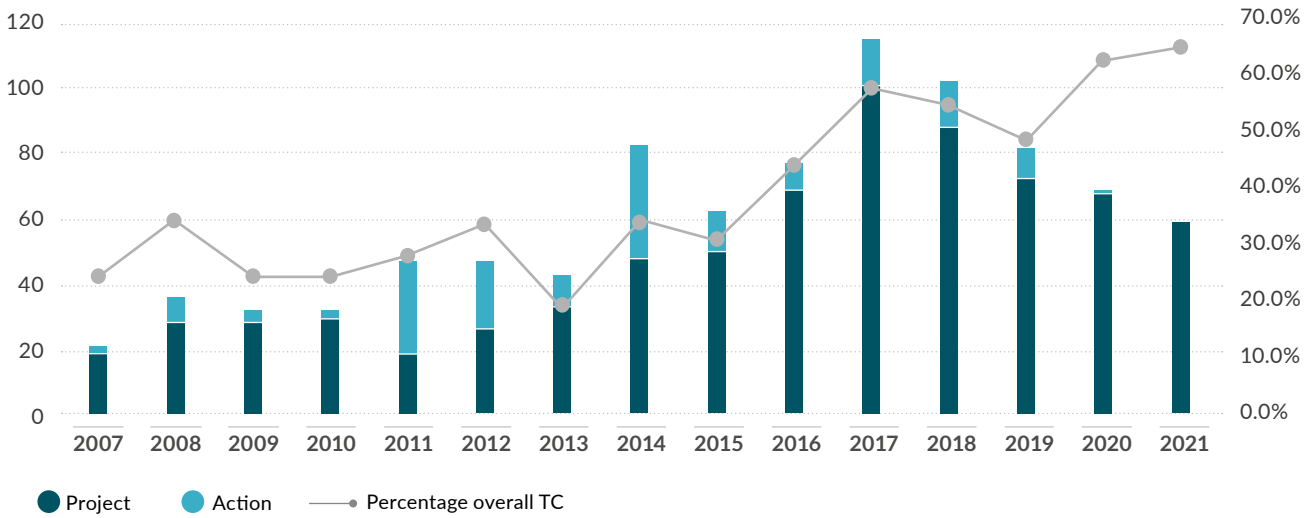


C. Recipient



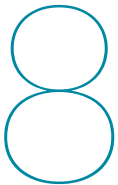
→ Evolution of EU-LAC Triangular Cooperation projects and actions and its percentage overall Triangular Cooperation in Ibero-America. 2007-2021 (*)

In units and percentage



(*) EU-LAC initiatives are those in which at least one European Union member country, or the European Commission as such, and at least one country of Latin-America and the Caribbean participates.

Source: SEGIB based on Agencies and Directorates-General for Cooperation

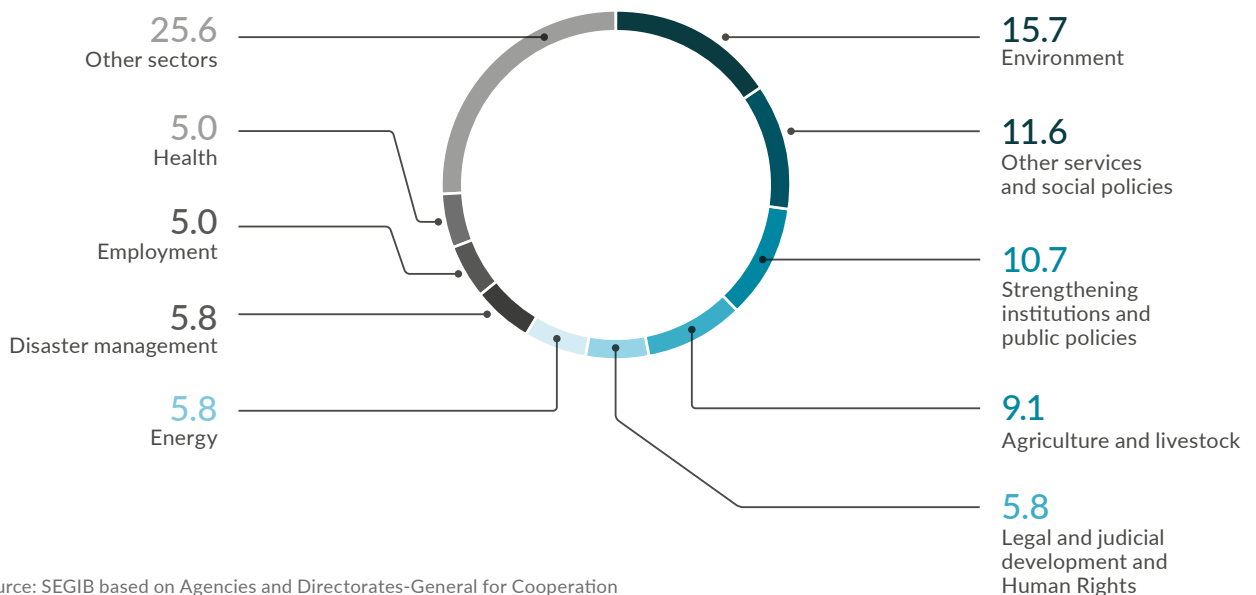


During the 2020-2021 period, Ibero-America continues to pay special attention to the protection and care of the *Environment*, which consolidates as the most important sector in this modality.

This trend suggests Triangular Cooperation - which over the years is increasingly involving a growing number of stakeholders - tends to address the provision of global public goods.

→ Distribution of Triangular Cooperation initiatives exchanged in Ibero-America, by the main activity sectors. 2020-2021

In percentage



Source: SEGIB based on Agencies and Directorates-General for Cooperation

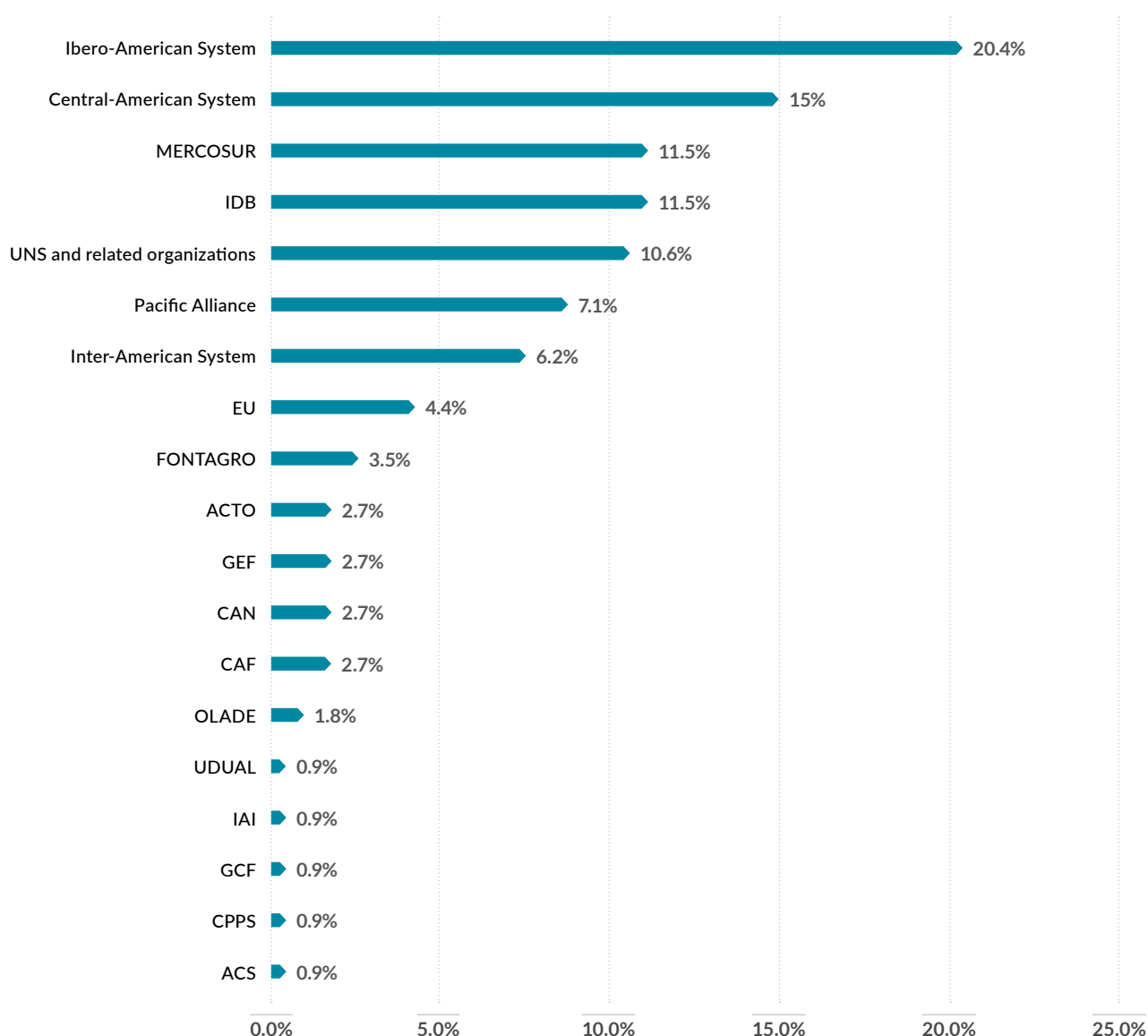


Multilateral organizations join Ibero-American countries in each and every one of the 113 Regional SSC initiatives that are implemented in the region in the 2020-2021 period

The organizations that make up the Ibero-American and Central-American systems participate in 20.4% and 15% of these 113 initiatives respectively. Special reference should also be made to the participation of the Southern Common Market (MERCOSUR), the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) and the organizations of the United Nations System.

→ Multilateral organizations' participation in Regional SSC initiatives in Ibero-America. 2020-2021

In percentage



Methodological note: The analysis considers the number of initiatives in which each organization participates (both individually and when grouped with those of the system to which they belong) and their importance in the total. In this sense, and given that several organizations can simultaneously participate in the same initiative, some initiatives are counted more than once. This means the percentages associated with each organization and/or group cannot be aggregated and in no case can the total add up to 100%.

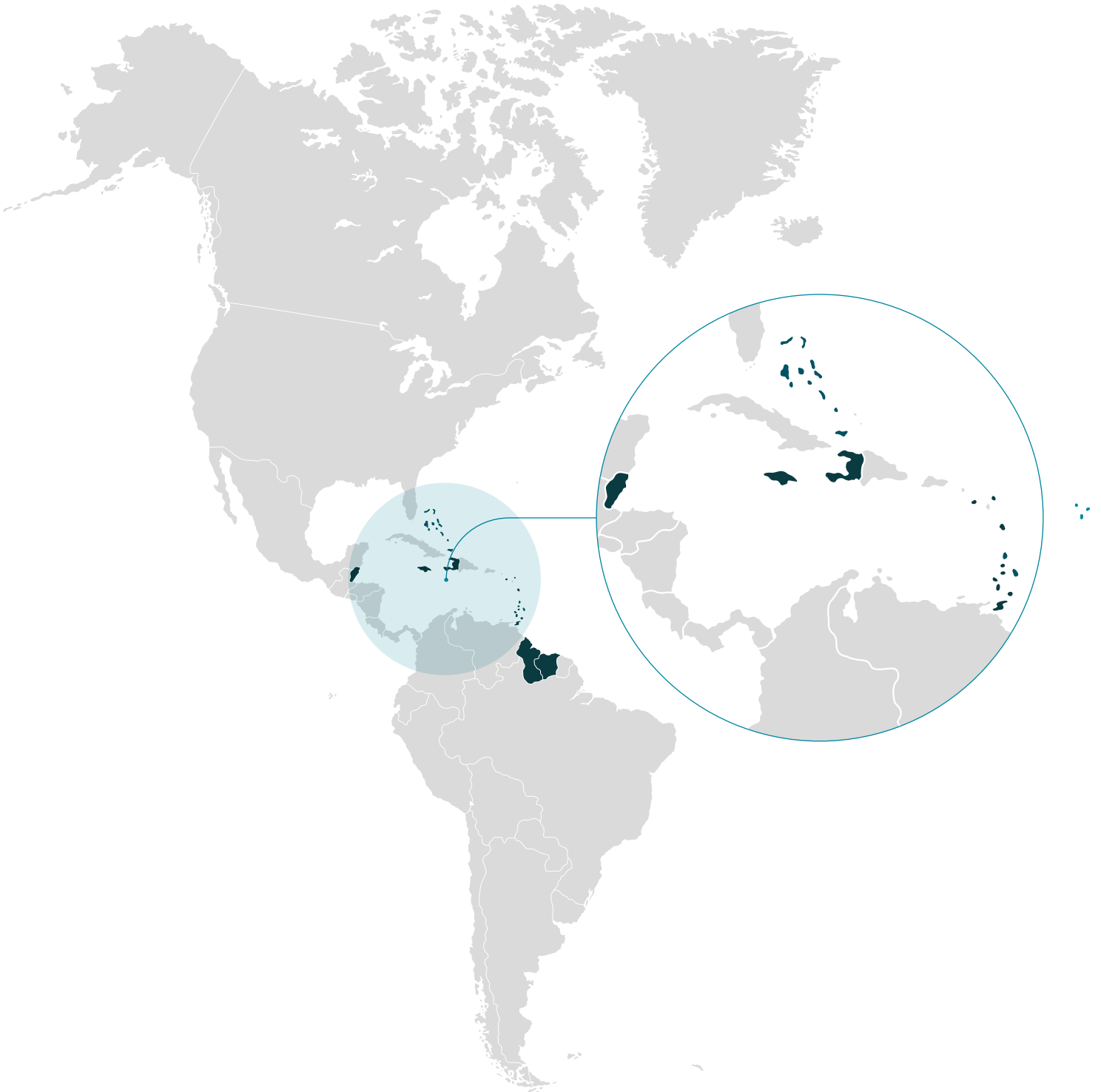
Source: SEGIB based on Agencies and Directorates-General for Cooperation

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In 2020-2021, Ibero-American countries promote 328 South-South and Triangular Cooperation initiatives in which 83 developing countries of other regions also participate

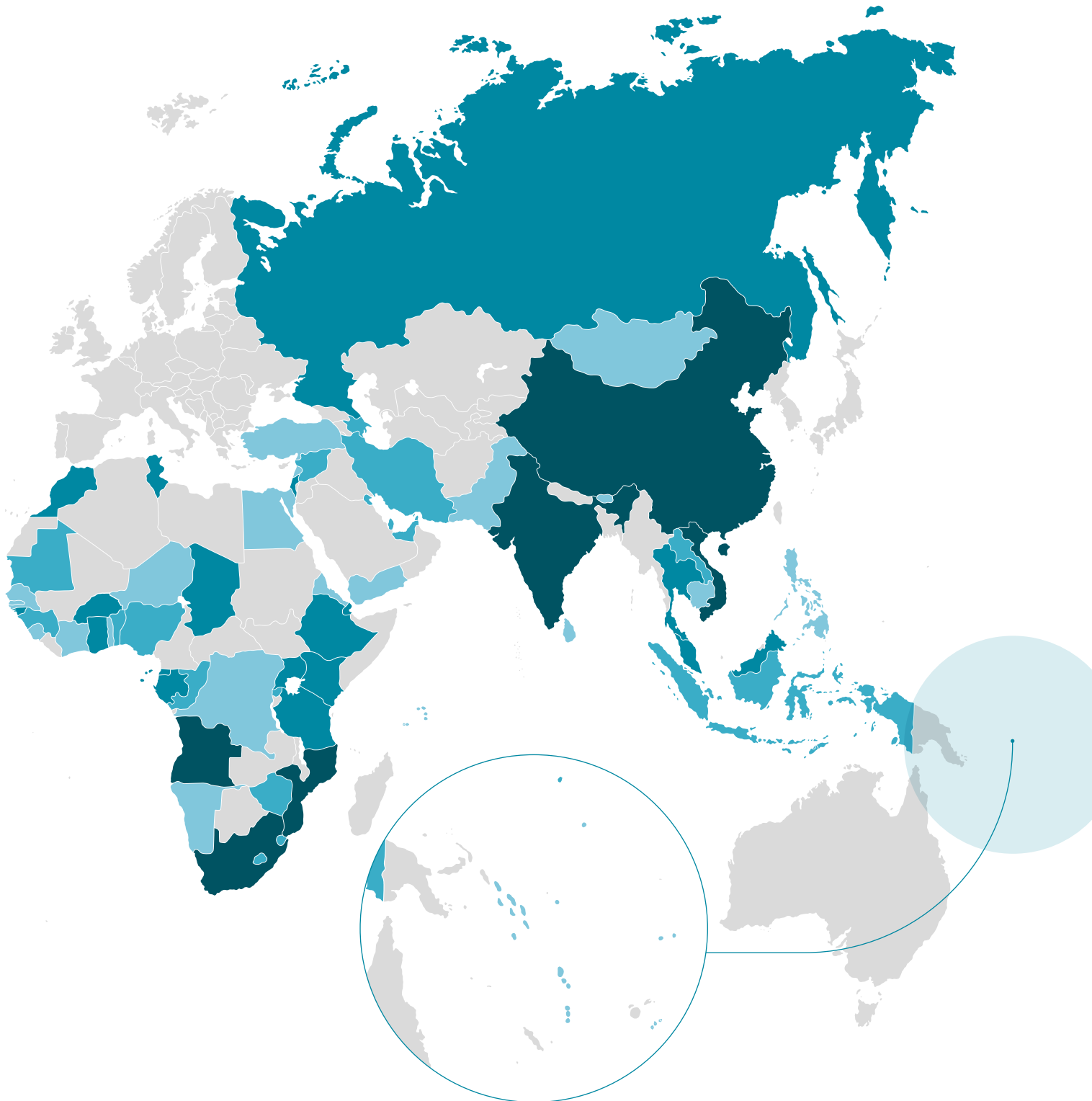
→ **Other regions' developing countries' participation in South-South and Triangular Cooperation initiatives carried out with Ibero-American countries. 2020-2021**

In units



In almost half of these, Ibero-America associates with the non-Ibero-American Caribbean. It is also possible to identify a preferential partnership with Africa (more than 100 initiatives, 1 out

of 3 of those exchanged), as well as with Asia (42 initiatives). These figures are explained, to a large extent, by Cuba's essential role to support the global fight against COVID-19.



Number of initiatives in which each country participated in 2020-2021, regardless of role and modality

- More than 15
- 6 to 15
- 3 to 5
- 2
- 1
- No initiatives registered

Source: SEGIB based on Agencies and Directorates-General for Cooperation



Photo: Bilateral SSC project *Strengthening the productive capacities of the bee value chain and beekeeping in the regions of Tenza Valley and Lengupá in Boyacá* between Colombia and Paraguay. Image bank on South-South and Triangular Cooperation in Ibero-America. SEGIB-PIFCSS. 2021.

Acronyms

ABC (by its Portuguese acronym)	Brazilian Cooperation Agency
ACS	Association of Caribbean States
ACTO	Amazon Cooperation Treaty Organization
AECID (by its Spanish acronym)	Spanish Agency for International Development Cooperation
AIDS	Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
ALADI (by its Spanish acronym)	Latin-American Integration Association
AMEXCID (by its Spanish acronym)	Mexican Agency for International Development Cooperation
APC-Colombia (by its Spanish acronym)	Colombian Presidential Agency for International Cooperation
APCI (by its Spanish acronym)	Peruvian Agency for International Cooperation
BAPA	Buenos Aires Plan of Action
BAPA+40	Buenos Aires Plan of Action + 40
BMZ (by its German acronym)	Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development
CAF (by its former acronym)	Latin-America Development Bank
CAN (by its Spanish acronym)	Andean Community
CARICOM	Caribbean Community
CBD	Convention on Biological Diversity
CCAD (by its Spanish acronym)	Central-American Commission on Environment and Development
CELAC (by its Spanish acronym)	Community of Latin-American and Caribbean States
CENFOTUR (by its Spanish acronym)	Tourism Training Center of Peru
CHCP (by its Spanish acronym)	Culture of Peace Toolbox

CMAC	Cambodian Mine Action Center
COVID-19	Coronavirus Disease 2019
CPPS (by its Spanish acronym)	Permanent Commission for the South Pacific
CURE (by its Spanish acronym)	Regional University Center of Uruguay
EC	European Commission
ECLAC	Economic Commission for Latin-America and the Caribbean
EEA	European Environment Agency
EMBRAPA (by its Portuguese acronym)	Brazilian Agricultural Research Corporation
ESCO (by its Spanish acronym)	Agency for International Cooperation of El Salvador
EU	European Union
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization
FILAC (by its Spanish acronym)	Fund for the Development of Indigenous Peoples of Latin-America and the Caribbean
FO.AR (by its Spanish acronym)	Argentine Fund for International Cooperation
FOCEM (by its Spanish acronym)	MERCOSUR's Structural Convergence Fund
FONAG (by its Spanish acronym)	Environmental Fund for Water Protection
FONCODES (by its Spanish acronym)	Cooperation Fund for Social Development
FONTAGRO (by its Spanish acronym)	Regional Agricultural Technology Fund
FOSAL (by its Spanish acronym)	Salvadorean Fund for South-South and Triangular Cooperation
GCF	Green Climate Fund
GEF	Global Environment Facility
GIZ (by its German acronym)	German Society for International Cooperation
GPI	Global Partnership Initiative
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
IAI (by its Spanish acronym)	Inter-American Institute for Global Change Research

IDB	Inter-American Development Bank
IDE (by its Spanish acronym)	Geospatial Data Infrastructure of Chile
IFAD	International Fund for Agricultural Development
IFPRI	International Food Policy Research Institute
IICA (by its Spanish acronym)	Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture
ILO	International Labor Organization
IMF	International Monetary Fund
INABIO (by its Spanish acronym)	National Biodiversity Institute of Ecuador
INAIGEM (by its Spanish acronym)	National Institute for Research on Glaciers and Mountain Ecosystems of Peru
INCAR (by its Spanish acronym)	Interdisciplinary Center for Aquaculture Research of Chile
INEGI (by its Spanish acronym)	National Institute of Statistics and Geography of Mexico
IOM	International Organization for Migration
IPBES	Inter-governmental Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services
IPCC	Inter-governmental Panel on Climate Change
IPPC	International Plant Protection Convention
ISGlobal	Barcelona Institute for Global Health
JICA	Japan International Cooperation Agency
LAC	Latin-America and the Caribbean
LGTBI+	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Queer
LPI	Living Planet Index
MDH (by its Portuguese acronym)	Ministry of Women, Family and Human Rights of Brazil
MECSS (by its Spanish acronym)	Structured Mechanism for the Exchange of Experiences of South-South Cooperation
MERCOSUR (by its Spanish acronym)	Southern Common Market
MIDES (by its Spanish acronym)	Ministry of Social Development of Uruguay

MINAM (by its Spanish acronym)	Ministry of Environment of Peru
MOFA	Ministry of Food and Agriculture of Ghana
MSC	Marine Stewardship Council
MSME	Micro, Small and Medium-sized Enterprise
OAS	Organization of American States
OEI (by its Spanish acronym)	Organization of Ibero-American States for Education, Science and Culture
OHCHR	Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights
OISS (by its Spanish acronym)	Ibero-American Organization for Social Security
OLADE (by its Spanish acronym)	Latin-American Energy Organization
PA	Pacific Alliance
PAHO	Pan-American Health Organization
PIFCSS (by its Spanish acronym)	Ibero-American Program for the Strengthening of South-South Cooperation
PIPA (by its Spanish acronym)	Ibero-American Cooperation Programs, Initiatives and Ascribed Projects
POP	Persistent Organic Pollutants
PROCAGICA (by its Spanish acronym)	Central-American Program for Integrated Coffee Rust Management
RPG	Regional Public Goods
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
SEGIB (by its Spanish acronym)	Ibero-American General Secretariat
SICA (by its Spanish acronym)	Central-American Integration System
SIDICSS (by its Spanish acronym)	Ibero-American Integrated Data System on South-South and Triangular Cooperation
SME	Small and Medium-sized Enterprise
SNIT (by its Spanish acronym)	System for the Coordination of Territorial Information of Chile
SSC	South-South Cooperation
STI	Science, Technology and Innovation
TC	Triangular Cooperation

TICA	Thailand International Cooperation Agency
UDUAL (by its Spanish acronym)	Union of Universities of Latin-America and the Caribbean
UN	United Nations Organization
UNCTAD	United Nations Conference on Trade and Development
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
UNEP	United Nations Environment Program
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNFCCC	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund (formerly United Nations Fund for Population Activities)
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund (formerly United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund)
UNOSSC	United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation
UNS	United Nations System
UNSDG	United Nations Sustainable Development Group
UNStats	United Nations Statistics Division
WFP	World Food Program
WHO	World Health Organization
WIPO	World Intellectual Property Organization
WWF	World Wildlife Fund



Photo: Miguel Ángel Velásquez, farmer in the Dry Corridor, shows part of his corn harvest in Jiquilisco, Usulután, El Salvador. Bilateral SSC project between Mexico and El Salvador *Sembrando vida*. Image bank on South-South and Triangular Cooperation in Ibero-America. SEGIB-PIFCSS. 2021.

CHAPTER 1

South-South and Triangular Cooperation to support post-pandemic sustainable development in Ibero-America: contributions and challenges*

The humanitarian and health emergency caused by the COVID-19 pandemic at the global level has stressed the need to strengthen new types of partnerships through international cooperation. At the same time, it has called upon Ibero-America to adapt to a context of challenging problems, by transforming South-South and Triangular Cooperation, and it has revealed the need to deepen multi-stakeholder and multilevel partnerships, as well as to consolidate these modalities' evaluation and measurement mechanisms.

In addition to all the above, a series of direct and indirect effects of the pandemic have exposed our countries' limitations to achieve recovery and development. In this sense, it is important for Ibero-America to promote a greater regional strengthening through its cooperation, encouraging the generation of public policies and their reinforcement, as well as the implementation of impact initiatives that contribute to the socioeconomic development of the population.

1.1 South-South and Triangular Cooperation in the post-pandemic scenario: preventing crisis and promoting the region's growth

More than two years have passed since the COVID-19 pandemic spread around the world, highlighting the fragility of some Latin-American countries and their difficulties to face a widespread health crisis. According to the Economic Commission for Latin-America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), this region was the most impacted by the pandemic as a whole, being the most indebted in the developing world in 2020 and, at the same time, the one that faced an economic contraction equivalent to -7.7%, the sharpest in 120 years (ECLAC, 2021).

Problems of a structural nature have worsened in the region, and these have resulted in a severe economic decline, a raise of unemployment and an increase of migration flows. Likewise, strategic sectors have been affected throughout their productive structure, especially trade, industry, hotel services, tourism, culture, among others; and the need to strengthen public health, risk management and social protection systems has become evident.

* This chapter was prepared and agreed upon the 22 Ibero-American Heads of Cooperation and it is based on an original version prepared by Ecuador together with Brazil, Chile and Peru.

As a result, Latin-America is facing a complicated scenario in which barriers to growth have increased and limited resources hinder, at least in the short term and in several countries, an adequate post-pandemic development, undermining national efforts.

In this context, the international cooperation system and, especially, South-South and Triangular Cooperation, can contribute through the exchange, systematization and dissemination of successful experiences and best practices, technology transfer and mutual support, both at the national and regional levels. These mechanisms, all of them inherent to both modalities, are favored by the digital transformation and the use of technologies that enable the international community to develop innovative solutions and effective recovery initiatives. This has the dual purpose of achieving systemic prevention and promoting socioeconomic growth and it has allowed the continuation of many initiatives despite mobility restrictions imposed by the pandemic.

— It is important for Ibero-America to promote a deeper regional strengthening through its cooperation

Ibero-America can increase its presence in the global scenario, showcasing its capacities and presenting its vulnerabilities in international platforms and, from a South-South and Triangular Cooperation perspective, especially focusing on the Global South as a strategic partner. In spite of their high heterogeneity, developing countries face common and persistent problems that can be addressed by proven solutions.

Strategies must be redesigned to face challenges arising in the post-pandemic context. As it was demonstrated during the most critical moments of this period, this requires the commitment of all stakeholders in order to develop actions to prevent and mitigate crisis. South-South and Triangular Cooperation initiatives implemented during the pandemic clearly confirmed the importance of sharing experiences and of other activities to transfer good practices and specific knowledge between countries.

It is necessary to reframe the international cooperation system, developing adaptable strategies in line with a post-pandemic socioeconomic scenario which includes all countries, without exclusion, contributing to build a knowledge community. This new system should also be strengthened with multilevel and multi-stakeholder

cooperation, including bilateral, multilateral and regional platforms, and it should also promote technical assistance and financing modalities, with technology transfer and the creation of strategic partnerships.

1.2 South-South and Triangular Cooperation and the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in Ibero-America

The 2030 Agenda and its 17 SDGs are a guiding reference for the region. They have paved the way for the alignment of national development plans with these global objectives, based on the common goal to achieve sustainable and inclusive development with an approach that focuses on human rights and social security, as well as on the economic dimension, in harmony with the environment. It should be noted that the SDGs, their 17 goals and 169 targets all respond to the three dimensions of sustainable development: economic, social and environmental. In this context, the role that national governments have in their implementation and in the coordination of multiple stakeholders for their achievement and reporting, together with local governments and public institutions, is especially worthy of mention.

South-South and Triangular Cooperation and its principles promote respect for sovereignty, national ownership and independence, equality, non-conditionality, non-interference, mutual benefit, and it must be efficiently and effectively implemented to contribute to the achievement of the ambitious and transformative 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Through this modality, each stakeholder contributes according to its capacities and has differentiated responsibilities and commitments in the framework of the international development agenda.

In 2020, the 2030 Agenda increased South-South and Triangular Cooperation's visibility by setting indicator 17.3.1, which measures "Foreign direct investments (FDI), official development assistance and South-South Cooperation as a proportion of total domestic budget" (UNSTATS, 2022). The challenge, therefore, lies in governments' capacities to allocate human (technical capacities) and economic resources (national budgets) to meet South-South and Triangular Cooperation's challenges.

So far, and as a result of partnerships in Ibero-America, most cooperation initiatives implemented by the region have been considered contributions to SDG 17. However, as the agencies and ministries responsible for international cooperation in Ibero-American countries are well aware, their importance goes well beyond this, since their implementation and results also have positive impacts on other development goals.

Although the countries of the region have intensified their efforts to strengthen institutional frameworks for the implementation of the Agenda, as revealed in numerous voluntary national reviews, it is necessary to promote political dialogue on the importance of South-South and Triangular Cooperation as an effective instrument for the development of initiatives that favor the achievement of the SDGs and their targets.

In the regional and multilateral context, commitments have been made to promote work between governments and organizations to foster the creation of funds for South-South and Triangular Cooperation and to implement programs with greater efficiency and flexibility, according to countries' demands. The Ibero-American General Secretariat (SEGIB by its Spanish acronym), for example, has been working for more than a decade to strengthen South-South and Triangular Cooperation and to enhance its value in terms of information systematization and knowledge generation, as well as to support the international positioning of this cooperation modality. In this sense, it is also worth to highlight the relevance given by the United Nations to South-South Cooperation (SSC), which is considered in more than 80 UNDG assistance and cooperation frameworks (UN, 2021).

The promotion of partnerships for development (SDG 17, Partnerships for the goals) is consolidating in the region through the strengthening of South-South and Triangular Cooperation

The opportunity to contribute to development will significantly depend on the instruments, mechanisms and procedures that are available in each country. In addition, although capacity strengthening in terms of methodologies for South-South and Triangular Cooperation's valorization continues to be a challenge that must be addressed, important efforts have been made by Ibero-American countries to register information and the region has become a model for other stakeholders in the Global South.

In short, South-South and Triangular Cooperation plays an important role in the achievement of the 2030 Agenda and creates opportunities to establish partnerships to support national, regional and global strategies that provide solutions to structural problems, including inequality, technological and productive backwardness, and environmental threats.

1.3 The contribution of South-South and Triangular Cooperation to Ibero-American partnerships for sustainable development

Strengthened South-South and Triangular Cooperation in the region is consolidating the promotion of partnerships for development, as stated in SDG 17. Currently, these cooperation initiatives (multi-stakeholder, multilevel, public-private) include the participation of non-traditional stakeholders that broaden the scope of cooperation beyond traditional government-to-government relations, thus fostering the desired generation of partnerships and constructive dialogue at all levels.

At the multilateral level, the most important global effort in recent years to stress how South-South Cooperation contributes to the achievement of the SDGs, and to make this visible, was the Second United Nations High-Level Conference on South-South Cooperation (BAPA+40), where Ibero-American countries played an important role, presenting how this cooperation modality is implemented.

In addition, several organizations in Latin-America aim to generate and promote integration policies and regional strengthening, such as the Central-American Integration System (SICA by its Spanish acronym), the Andean Community (CAN by its Spanish acronym), the Southern Common Market (MERCOSUR by its Spanish acronym), the Latin-American Integration Association (ALADI by its Spanish acronym), the Pacific Alliance and the Community of Latin-American and Caribbean States (CELAC by its Spanish acronym). These institutions complement each other in the region's search for innovative solutions for economic and social development, with the participation of inclusive multi-stakeholder partnerships.

SEGIB, as an organization within the Ibero-American Conference, promotes regional dialogue enabling the exchange of perspectives on international cooperation for development, as well as on South-South and Triangular Cooperation. In this framework, the contribution made by PIFCSS to knowledge management and training for offices responsible for international cooperation in the 22 Ibero-American countries and for other institutions that are part of national cooperation systems, should be specially highlighted.

Likewise, Triangular Cooperation (TC) fosters partnerships between regional stakeholders and other partners in developed countries, and Latin-America is very enthusiastic about this modality. The search for strategies through these associations is a way to encourage traditional and emerging partners to promote new modalities to implement projects between regional and extra-regional stakeholders, and with a greater sense of belonging. In addition, TC materializes the contribution of traditional and south-south partners, fostering partnerships in the most diverse sectors.

— SEGIB makes a significant contribution by systematizing South-South and Triangular Cooperation initiatives

The establishment of these alliances, both in the Ibero-American space and with stakeholders of other regions, can broaden the results of South-South and Triangular Cooperation projects, which implementation generates positive impacts, quality results and effectiveness in the sectors of intervention. In addition, partnerships can strengthen South-South and Triangular Cooperation to contribute to overcome Ibero-American countries' structural challenges as well as those of other regions.

1.4 South-South and Triangular Cooperation: measurement and evaluation as a response to the challenges of sustainable development in the region

The mobilization of technical resources for exchanges and for the strengthening of institutional capacities are examples of how South-South and Triangular Cooperation provides flexible and adaptable solutions to development challenges and of how it supports the execution of national plans. However, the absence of clear mechanisms to measure the scope and impact of this cooperation in Ibero-American countries interferes with the possibility to make the magnitude of these contributions visible.

In 1978, the Buenos Aires Plan of Action (BAPA) pointed out the need for SSC to be subject to evaluation, to assess the impact of initiatives implemented in the framework of peer country exchanges, and to strengthen this cooperation mechanism, which is complementary to traditional cooperation. In this sense, South-South and Triangular Cooperation stakeholders are aware that evaluation systems are necessary to provide lessons to be shared, leading to a better implementation of the 2030 Agenda.

In recent years, significant progress has been made at the theoretical and methodological levels, as evidenced in annual statistics reports, in bilateral and triangular mechanisms to identify best practices, and in joint evaluations implemented among the countries of the region. Currently, countries have different capacities and institutional frameworks to address this issue. However, they agree on the importance of South-South and Triangular Cooperation's registration and valorization. Technical guidelines designed for measurement and evaluation processes have contributed to deepen the common interest to quantify and demonstrate the actual contributions of cooperation for sustainable development.

SEGIB has a very significant role in this through the systematization of South-South and Triangular Cooperation initiatives implemented by Ibero-American countries. This has materialized in the Report on South-South and Triangular Cooperation in Ibero-America, which has been published for more than 10 years.

In addition, and supported by PIFCSS, countries have shared their experiences and best practices on South-South and Triangular Cooperation's management, measurement and evaluation, contributing to the generation of knowledge and consensus on these modalities. This has allowed for debate and reflection

on minimum criteria that should be considered in order to valorize this type of cooperation. Other less tangible but real aspects of the short, medium and long term benefits of South-South and Triangular Cooperation are related to the generation of bonds between countries and their institutions, and to the possibility to shorten learning curves through knowledge exchange.

In this regard, it is worth noting that Ibero-America has been a pioneering region in the intergovernmental debate on how to measure South-South and Triangular Cooperation. In this sense, and as a result of Brazil's, Mexico's and Colombia's initiative, a methodology to measure SSC was developed and approved by the United Nations in the framework of sustainable development indicator number 17.3.1. This methodology, of which the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) is the custodian agency, is currently being applied.

Although the COVID-19 pandemic caused a slowdown in activities and plans to tackle this issue, 2022 renewed the opportunity to advance towards the definition of practical guidelines and standards for the evaluation of South-South and Triangular Cooperation in Ibero-America. Reaching a consensus on minimum criteria and finding complementarities among data platforms in order to minimize the likelihood of duplicating the registration of initiatives are among the main challenges to overcome.

However, progress has indeed been made within the Ibero-American space, where countries have agreed on the relevance of South-South and Triangular Cooperation's evaluation. This has already been identified as a challenge that must be jointly addressed and is considered an opportunity to establish common minimum criteria among the 22 countries.



Photo: Researchers from Mexico and Uruguay work to map viral diseases of economic impact for poultry farming in order to identify the genetic characteristics of the agents that cause them. Bilateral SSC project between Mexico and Uruguay *Development and application of biotechnological tools in animal health for the implementation of a research network on viral diseases affecting commercial poultry farming*. Image bank on South-South and Triangular Cooperation in Ibero-America. SEGIB-PIFCSS. 2021.



Photo: Artisanal fishermen work in the pink shrimp harvest in Castillos Lagoon, Rocha, in the East of Uruguay. Bilateral SSC project between Uruguay and Chile *Capacity strengthening to assess the vulnerability of pink shrimp fisheries to climate change in Uruguay's coastal areas*. Image bank on South-South and Triangular Cooperation in Ibero-America. SEGIB-PIFCSS. 2021.

CHAPTER 2

Ibero-America and Bilateral South-South Cooperation

Ibero-American countries developed strategies to dynamize and adapt Bilateral SSC to pandemic times.

The outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic in early 2020 has undoubtedly determined the way South-South Cooperation (SSC) was implemented during 2020 and 2021. This chapter analyzes bilateral relations considering not only how the crisis affected the possible exchanges between Ibero-American countries, but also how these exchanges adapted to address this multidimensional crisis that severely affected the region, while ratifying countries' firm commitment to contribute to "leaving no one behind" through SSC and its alignment with the 2030 Agenda.

2.1 The COVID-19 crisis and Ibero-American Bilateral SSC in 2020 and 2021: a first approach

Ever since the beginning of the pandemic, forecasts of the possible impacts the crisis could have on the execution of the different SSC initiatives in which Ibero-American countries were participating, could only predict a strong impasse in all exchanges. Indeed, COVID-19 and the restrictive measures its management required - including strict confinements and restrictions on mobility - led to the cancellation of previously scheduled activities and/or to a partial or total suspension of many of them. This issue is particularly critical for this type of cooperation which strength usually lies on on-site visits and exchanges between countries' officials and technical experts.

Early data for 2020 and 2021 suggests these forecasts were only partially reliable. Indeed, as will be described below, the drop in the number of initiatives in which Ibero-American countries participated was significant, but it only intensified - although in an extraordinary way - a downward trend that had already been occurring for some years. However, this same data suggests that, in spite of the adverse circumstances, countries demonstrated a great capacity to adapt and respond to the new context. This ability revealed in the redesign of existing initiatives and even in the promotion of new ones (mainly specific SSC actions) - online and mainly focused on the response to the challenges imposed by COVID - situation that contributed to prevent a greater drop in the total number of initiatives.

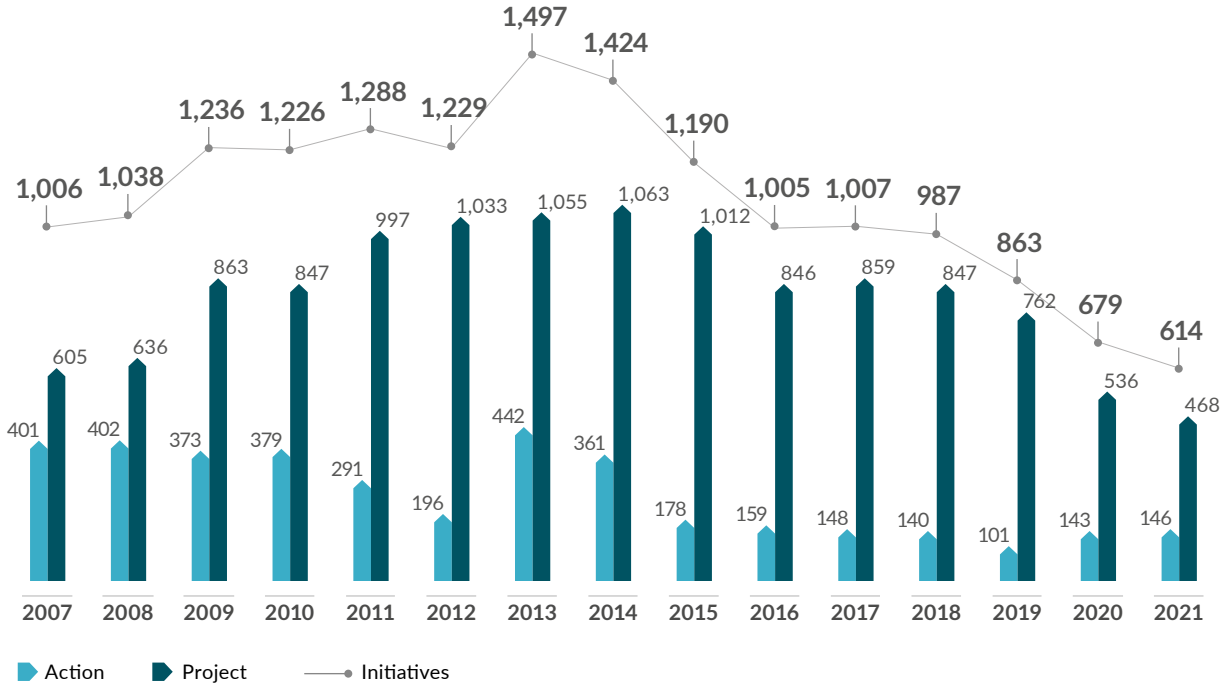
Graph 2.1 confirms the first dynamic suggested above. Specifically, this graph displays SSC actions, projects and initiatives - bilaterally exchanged by Ibero-American countries with partners around the world - that were under execution in at least some moment of the 2007-2021 period. In this regard, it is possible to identify two contrasting trends: the first one, which shows an intense growth in the total number of initiatives (from 1,006 in 2007 to a maximum of nearly 1,500 initiatives in 2013, when the annual average increase reached 7.3%); and a second stage, of a sharp - although irregular - fall, leading to a minimum of 614 initiatives registered in 2021, with negative annual average variation rates of 10.3%.

Indeed, as mentioned, the drop in the total number of initiatives between 2013 and 2021 has gone through different stages. Up to 2016 and in just 3 years, total Bilateral SSC actions and projects in which Ibero-American countries participated suffered a significant reduction of -12.3% per year, bringing the final figure to 1,005 initiatives, almost identical to that of 2007. During the following two years and, to a certain extent, this situation tended to stabilize, with annual reductions

→ GRAPH 2.1

Evolution of Bilateral SSC actions, projects and initiatives exchanged by Ibero-American countries with partners from the rest of the world. 2007-2021

In units



Source: SEGIB based on Agencies and Directorates-General for Cooperation

of -0.9%. This kept the total number of initiatives in 2018 just below 1,000 (987). Since then, figures show a sequence of very sharp drops, with averages of more than two digits per year (-14.5%), including a historic decrease of -21.3% in 2020, which coincided with the most severe restrictions of the COVID-19 crisis.

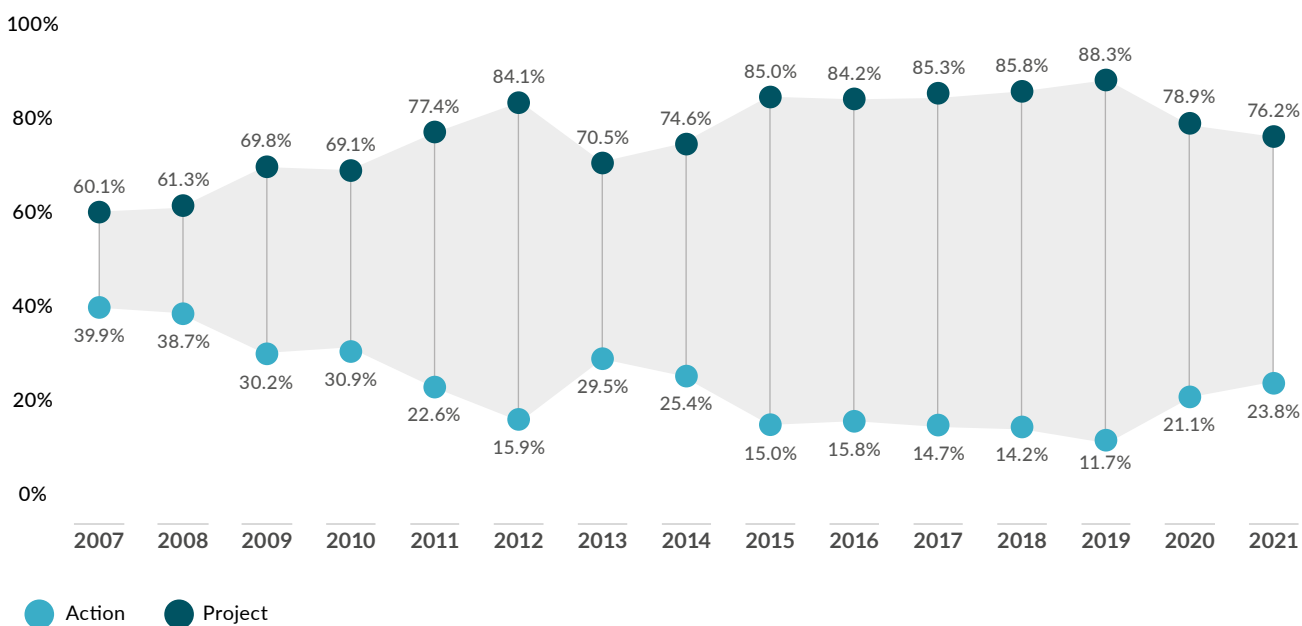
Graph 2.2, in turn, confirms the second predicted trend and reveals the dynamizing role SSC actions played in the adverse conditions caused by the pandemic. In fact, this graph shows the evolution of projects' and actions' share in the total number of Ibero-American Bilateral SSC initiatives implemented in the same period. As depicted, before the pandemic, the evolution of these two instruments had been clearly divergent, with a clear focus on projects - of greater relative dimension - to the detriment of more specific actions.

Thus, while in 2007 the project/action ratio stood at 60%-40%, by 2019, this same ratio had increased to a maximum close to 90%-10%. The outbreak of the pandemic and imposed restrictions revalued actions' role, as they enable the implementation of exchanges of a more specific and probably remote nature. This brought proportions closer together once again, although the ratio remains at a remarkable 76%-24%.

→ GRAPH 2.2

Evolution of projects' and actions' share in the total number of Ibero-American Bilateral SSC initiatives with all partners. 2007-2021

In percentage



Source: SEGIB based on Agencies and Directorates-General for Cooperation

2.2 Narrowing the analysis: the 2020-2021 period and Bilateral SSC in Ibero-America

The first approach to Bilateral SSC in which Ibero-America participated during the two years of the pandemic considered all SSC initiatives in which Ibero-American countries bilaterally participated, regardless of the developing region with which these initiatives were carried out. This analysis also took actions and projects that had annually been implemented in the 2007-2021 period as the main reference. This enabled to individually focus on the two most difficult years of the pandemic, 2020 and 2021.

However, the exceptional nature of the context calls for an aggregate analysis of both years, in order to review SSC initiatives that were under execution at some point during this time frame. This way, a comparative analysis can be made between the 2020-2021 period and the two immediately previous years (2018-2019). This may reveal changes or trends related to the necessary adaptation to the COVID-19, which differ from the pre-pandemic stage.

On the other hand, for methodological reasons and to ensure consistency with this Report's structure, this chapter does not focus on *Ibero-American* Bilateral SSC. It analyzes SSC that takes place *in Ibero-America*, i.e., exchanges between countries in the region. *Ibero-American* SSC together with other developing regions will be later addressed in another chapter.

The outbreak of the pandemic boosts the role of actions once again, as they enable exchanges of a more specific nature that can probably be implemented online

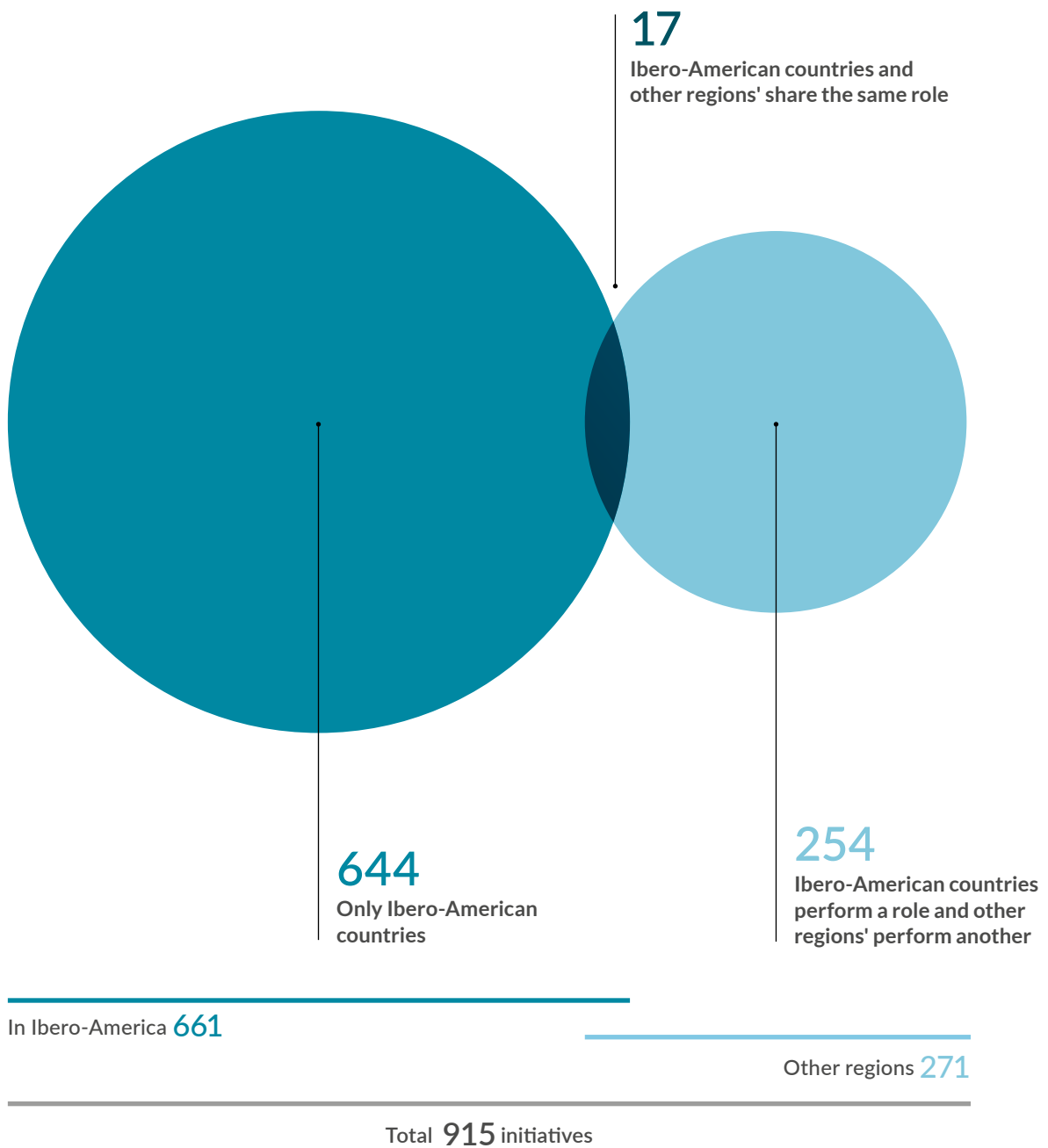
Graph 2.3 details the figures associated with these two different approaches (*Ibero-American* SSC with other regions and SSC in *Ibero-America*). It considers the total number of Bilateral SSC initiatives in which Ibero-American countries participated during the 2020-2021 period (915) and distributes them according to the region with which exchanges were carried out. Thus, a distinction is made between the initiatives exchanged *in Ibero-America* (661, only between member countries) and those which Ibero-American countries exchanged - under the different roles - with partners in other developing regions (271).

This graph also illustrates the number of actions and projects (only 17) in which countries from different regions coincide in the exercise of at least one of the roles (usually recipient).

→ GRAPH 2.3

Distribution of Ibero-American Bilateral SSC initiatives, by the region with which they were exchanged. 2020-2021

In units



Note: A distinction is made between: 1) initiatives exchanged in Ibero-America, among the countries of the region where one or several Ibero-American countries act as provider, recipient or "both"; 2) initiatives exchanged between Ibero-American countries and other developing regions, exercising different roles in each case; and 3) initiatives in which countries of at least two different regions coincide in the exercise of one of the two roles (usually recipient).

Source: SEGIB based on Agencies and Directorates-General for Cooperation

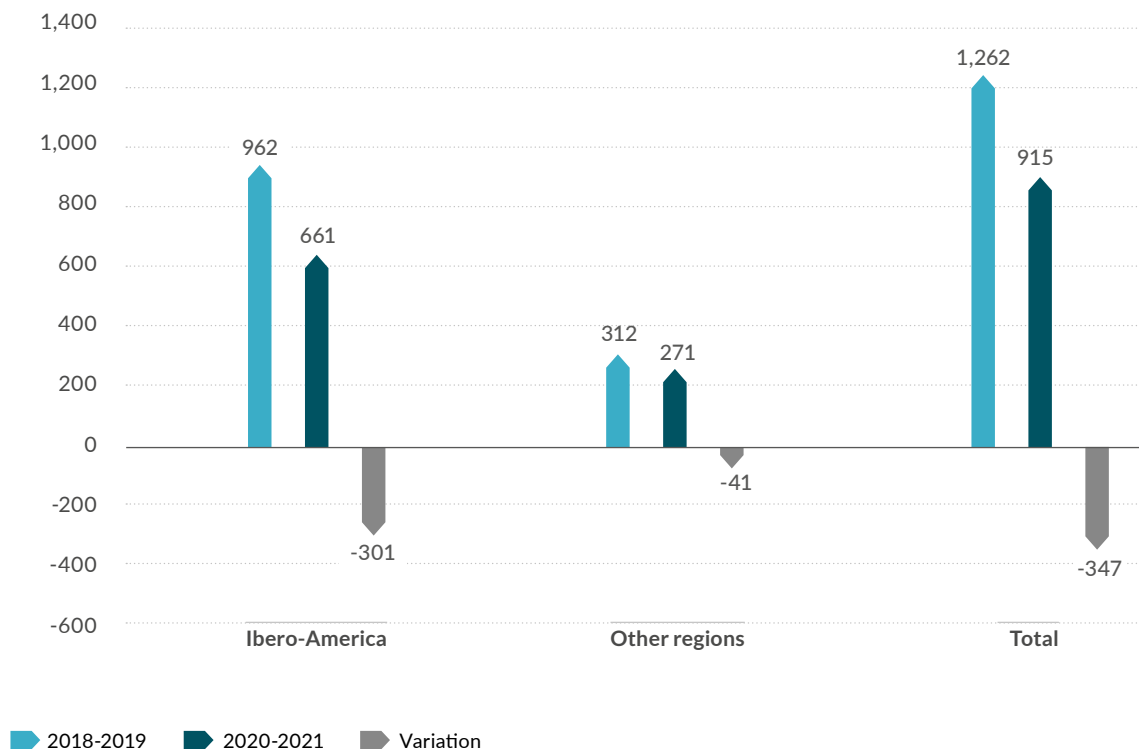
915 Bilateral SSC initiatives were implemented in 2020-2021, 27.5% less than in the previous two-year period

Graph 2.4, in turn, shows how figures for the 2020-2021 period are substantially lower than those of the two previous years (2018-2019), this reduction being especially significant for SSC exchanges in Ibero-America. Indeed, initiatives that were under execution in 2018-2019 (1,262) decreased 27.5%, pushing the final figure down to 915 in 2020-2021. This decline was significantly influenced by the situation of Bilateral SSC exchanges within the Ibero-American region, which dropped at an even faster rate (31.3%), bringing the 962 initiatives of the previous period to the aforementioned 661. Meanwhile, Bilateral SSC with other regions was less affected, dropping from 312 initiatives to 271 in the last two years, representing a reduction of -13.1%, significantly lower than the overall fall. As will be explained in another chapter, the relatively better performance of Bilateral SSC between the countries of Ibero-America and those of other developing regions is mainly explained by the active role played by Cuba in the emergency response to the COVID-19 crisis, an action of global scope that exceeded the region itself

→ GRAPH 2.4

Variation in Ibero-American Bilateral SSC initiatives, by the region with which they were exchanged. 2020-2021 and 2018-2019

In units



Note: A distinction is made between: 1) initiatives exchanged in Ibero-America, among the countries of the region where one or several Ibero-American countries act as provider or as recipient; and 2) initiatives exchanged between countries of Ibero-America and other developing regions, exercising different roles in each case.

Source: SEGIB based on Agencies and Directorates-General for Cooperation

2.3 Countries' participation in Bilateral SSC in Ibero-America during 2020-2021

This section analyzes Ibero-American countries' participation in SSC initiatives bilaterally exchanged during the particular context of the 2020-2021 period. To this end, the following aspects are examined in depth: the intensity with which countries participated in these exchanges, the roles under which they did, and their most common partnerships. All the above is limited, as already mentioned, to the 2020-2021 period and to exchanges in *Ibero-America*, while Ibero-American SSC with partners of other developing regions will be analyzed in another chapter.

2.3.1. Ibero-American countries' participation and roles in 2020-2021 Bilateral SSC

The adverse conditions that affected international cooperation throughout the 2020-2021 period also had an impact on Ibero-American countries' possibilities to participate in bilateral exchanges within the region. Graph 2.5 shows Ibero-American countries (specifically the 19 Latin-American countries that, given their nature, participate in Bilateral SSC) and the number of SSC actions, projects and initiatives in which they bilaterally participated in the 2020-2021 period, and arranges them according to the lowest and the highest number of exchanges. A first approach suggests a significant gap between the countries that were able to respond with greater dynamism and those which possibilities to exchange with other partners in the region were more limited.

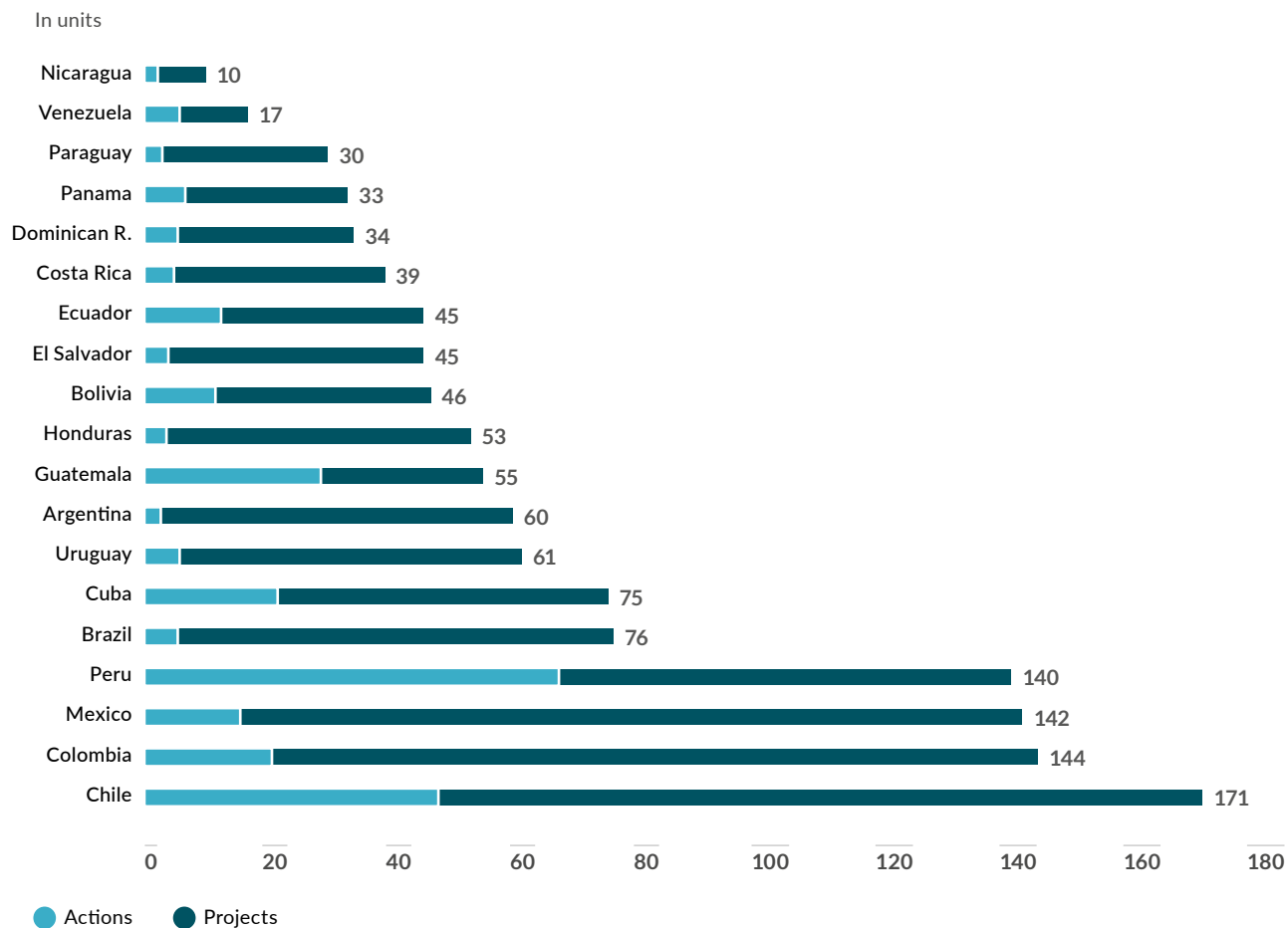
Indeed, the 171 initiatives in which Chile (the most active country) participated in the 2020-2021 period and the figures registered by Peru, Mexico and Colombia (between 140 and 144), practically double those of their immediate followers, Cuba and Brazil, two countries with a still significant volume of initiatives (75 and

76, respectively). Meanwhile, most countries' shares (up to 11) fluctuated between 30 and 60 initiatives. This was the case of Argentina and Uruguay (60 and 61); Ecuador and Bolivia in the Andean sub-region (45 and 46); Panama, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Honduras, Guatemala and the Dominican Republic in Central-America and the Caribbean (between 33 and 55 actions and projects, depending on the case) and Paraguay (30). Finally, Nicaragua and Venezuela implemented the lowest number of initiatives (10 and 17, respectively), figures that confirm the aforementioned gap.¹

Chile, Peru, Mexico and Colombia were the most dynamic countries in 2020-2021, with almost twice as many initiatives as their immediate followers

¹ However, it should be added that part of the referred gap is overestimated by the way in which the number of initiatives in which each country participated is considered. Indeed, and based on this criteria, the analysis takes into account initiatives in which countries participated as providers, as recipients or as "both", and initiatives are only considered if the country individually performs one of these roles. However, the analysis does not include those initiatives in which the country participates and shares a role (usually recipient) with other countries, this role becoming blurry in the generic label "more than one country". This aspect is very relevant during this period, as some countries acted as the (only) provider of actions that had "more than one country" as recipient. This means that provider countries' records (see Graph 2.6 below) may be overrated as their figures include initiatives that are not taken into account in the case of recipient countries. In fact, in 2020-2021, 50 initiatives were executed with "more than one country" simultaneous acting as recipient. These were not considered for recipient countries, but were taken into account for providers such as Chile (40), Brazil (4), Guatemala (4) and Mexico (2).

→ GRAPH 2.5

Bilateral SSC initiatives in Ibero-America, by type of instrument and country. 2020-2021

Source: SEGIB based on Agencies and Directorates-General for Cooperation

As Graph 2.5 shows, it is possible to identify some significant differences in the way countries used both instruments (actions and projects) during this period. On average, during these two years and overall, countries executed 207 actions and 646 projects, corresponding to a ratio of 24%-76% over the total number of initiatives. This graph also suggests that, for some countries, the implementation of actions was above average. Thus, at least 1 out of 4 of the initiatives in which Ecuador, Bolivia, Cuba and Chile participated, were actions. The ratio increased to 1 in 3 in the case of Venezuela and to 1 in 2 in the cases of Guatemala and Peru, for which actions were a clearly dynamizing resource.

Other remarkable differences can be noticed in the role countries mainly played in all the Bilateral SSC initiatives in which they participated during this period. Graph 2.6 arranges them in ascending order, according to the number of initiatives they exchanged, and it shows how they exercised the three roles recognized for Bilateral SSC: recipient, provider or “both”.² In this sense, the graph

— Actions were an incentive to dynamize some countries’ Bilateral SSC; such is the case of Guatemala and Peru

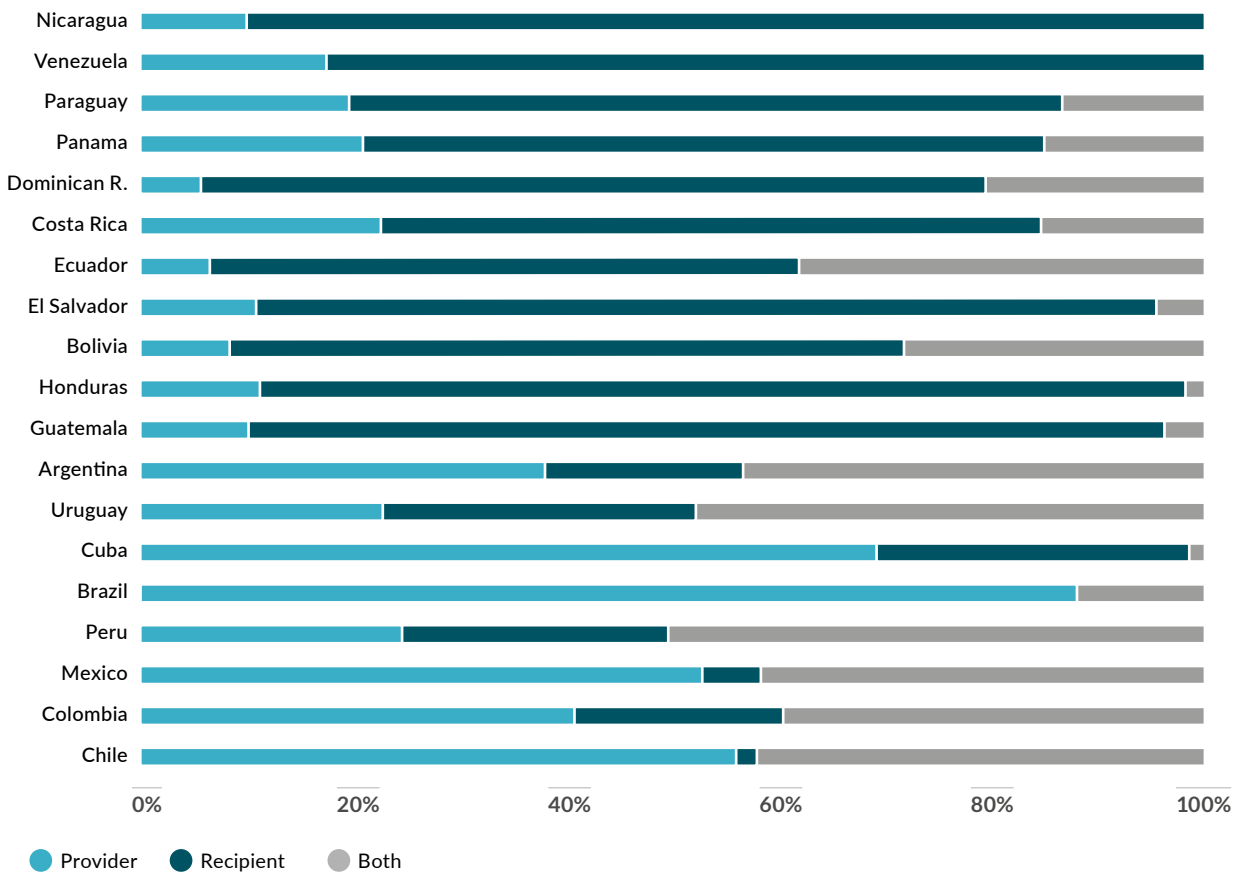
suggests three different behaviors that tend to confirm this type of cooperation’s usual pattern: the fewer the number of initiatives, the greater the recipient role; and the greater the number of initiatives, the greater the exercise of a combination of the provider and the role “both”.

² It should be noted that the role of “both” is used to refer to those situations in which the country, simultaneously and in the same initiative, performs both the roles of provider and recipient (for more details, see methodological note).

→ GRAPH 2.6

Countries' participation in Bilateral SSC initiatives in Ibero-America, by role. 2020-2021

In percentage



Note: Countries are arranged in ascending order, according to the total number of Bilateral SSC initiatives they exchanged with other Ibero-American partners during the 2020-2021 period.

Source: SEGIB based on Agencies and Directorates-General for Cooperation

Specifically:

- a) The first identified pattern is related to the countries with relatively less dynamism in SSC in the 2020-2021 period: from Nicaragua to Guatemala, a total of 11 countries acted as recipients in at least one half of the bilateral initiatives exchanged, with percentages ranging from 90% in Nicaragua's case to 55% in Ecuador's.
- b) On the other hand, another group of countries acted as providers in at least one half of the exchanges carried out. In this case, some of the countries with the greatest relative dynamism were Mexico (53% of the initiatives), Chile (56%), Cuba and Brazil (almost 70% and 90%, respectively).
- c) A third group of countries stood out for mainly participating under the role "both", having also registered a relatively higher number of exchanges. Colombia (40%), Argentina (43%), Uruguay (47%) and Peru (50%) should be mentioned as part of this pattern (from lowest to highest).
- d) Finally, and beyond these patterns, it is worth to mention some countries for which the role "both" was not only relevant - between 30% and 40% of their exchanges - but was highly complementary to the roles of provider (Mexico and Chile) and recipient (Ecuador and Bolivia). The most remarkable case was Peru, which played what is known as a "purely dual" role in its bilateral exchanges: provider in 25% of its 140 initiatives, recipient in another 25%, and "both" in the remaining 50%.

2.3.2. Exchanges and relations between Ibero-American countries

It is essential to analyze exchanges between the different partners in order to understand and characterize countries' participation in Bilateral SSC in Ibero-America during the 2020-2021 period. Graph 2.7 provides information on the way in which countries associated.

Indeed, Graph 2.7, which resembles a matrix, distributes the 661 initiatives that were bilaterally exchanged in 2020-2021 according to the pair of partners that implemented them. Thus, the 19 Latin-American countries which participate in this modality (arranged in ascending order considering the total number of initiatives in which each of them participated in 2020-2021) appear twice: recipients in the upper horizontal line and providers in the vertical line to the left.

Each of the resulting intersections shows a possible pair of partners with their corresponding distribution of roles. Countries' arrangement in the matrix reveals how the roles of provider and recipient were distributed.

In addition, the bubbles provide several pieces of information: 1) the bubble itself indicates whether or not projects were exchanged between these two countries; 2) the bubble's size and color (as referred in the legend) show how many initiatives were executed in the framework of this partnership; and 3) the size of the outer circle that (sometimes) surrounds the bubble indicates the proportion (over the total) of those initiatives in which the two countries performed the role "both".

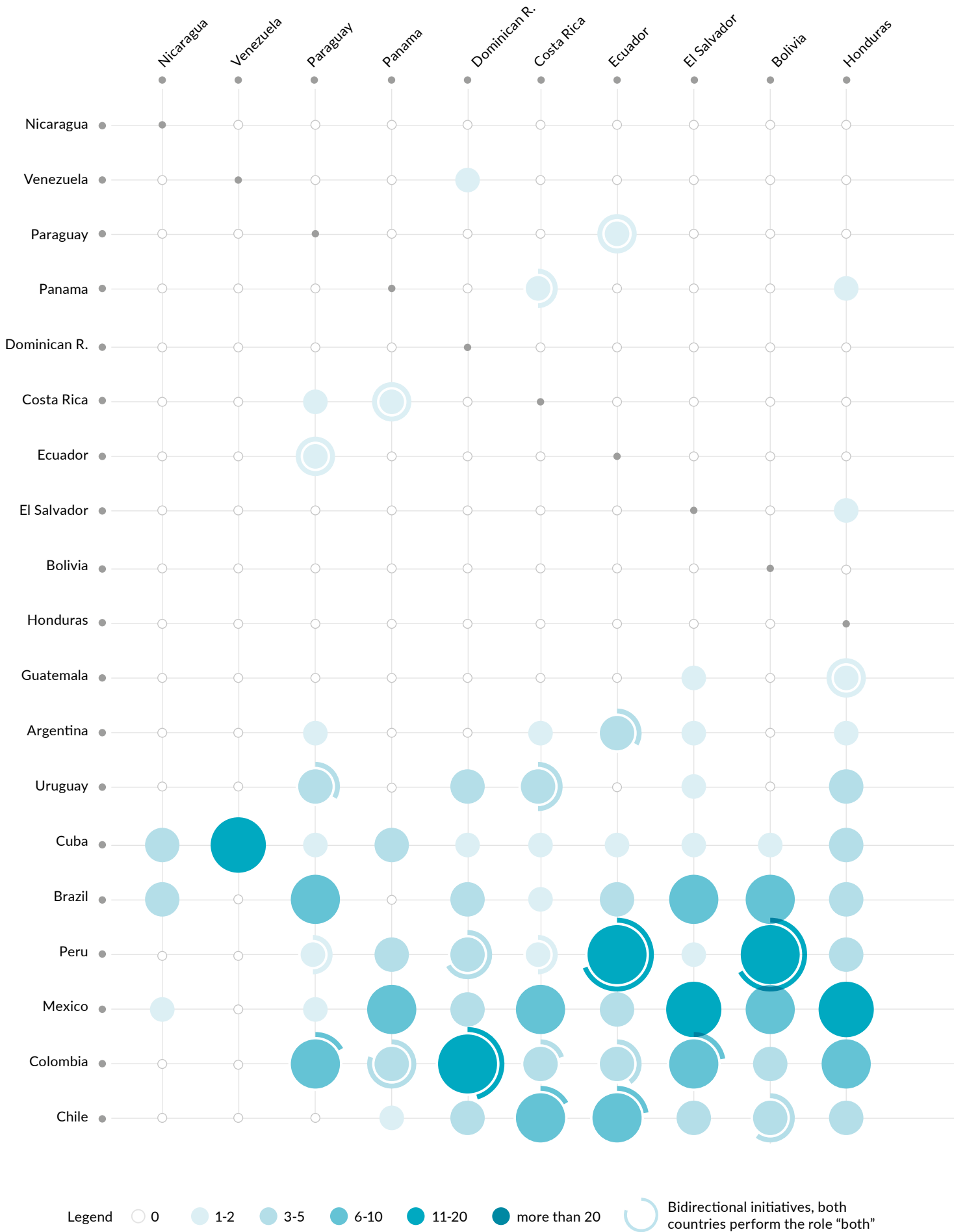
In this sense, Graph 2.7 provides an overview of SSC exchanges in the 2020-2021 period, focusing on three aspects: first, on the dynamics on which SSC was based (partnerships that actually took place); second, on the identification of its stakeholders (which countries participated and the distribution of their roles); and third, on the intensity of these exchanges (number of initiatives exchanged), thus differentiating the more specific associations from those that suggest consolidated partnerships.

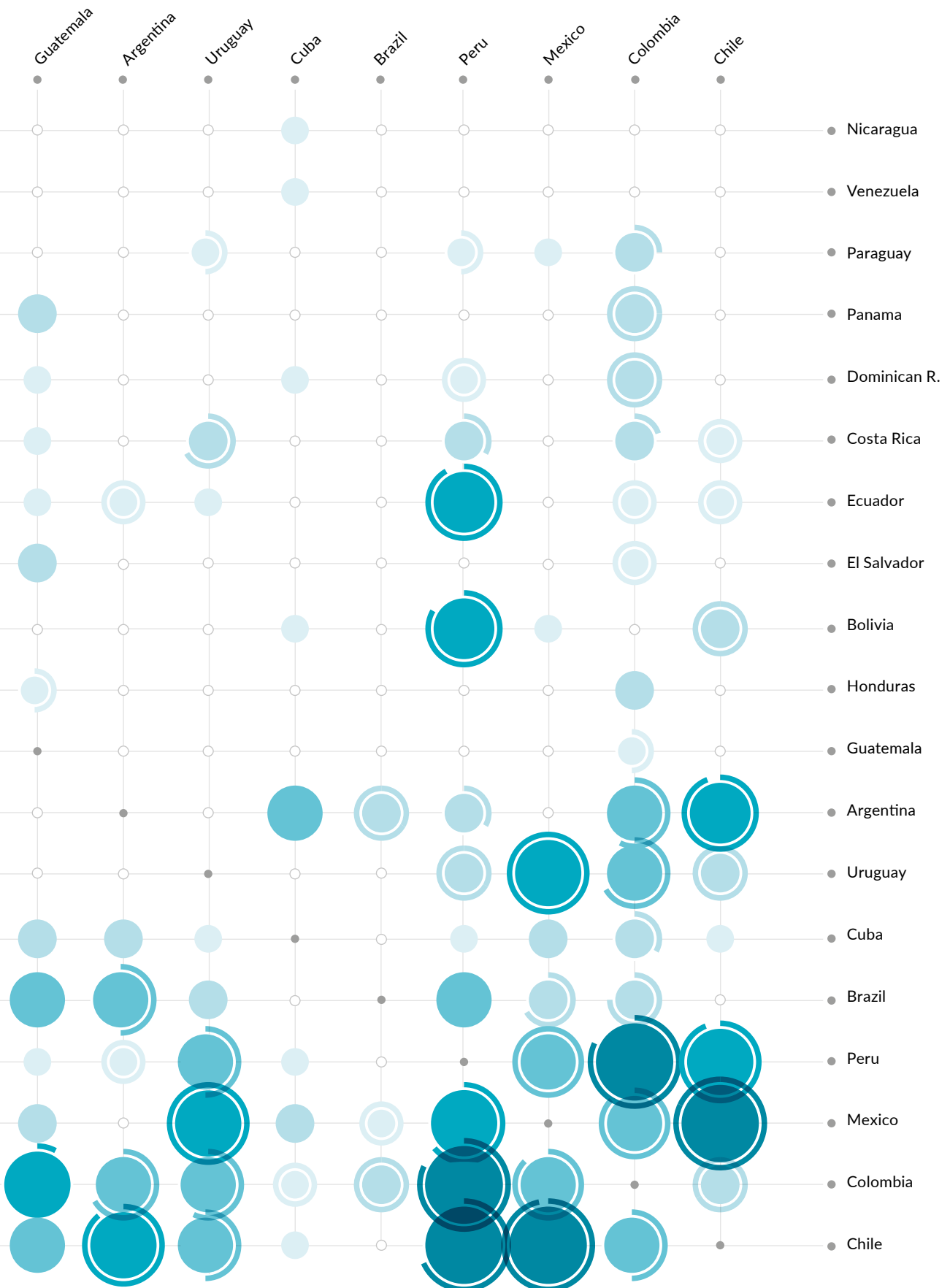


Photo: Traditional cooks from Santiago de Anaya in Hidalgo, Mexico, recreate their gastronomic legacy, inherited from their mothers and grandmothers, and prepare dishes with natural ingredients, without preservatives and with high nutritional value. Ibero-American Program *Ibercocinas*. Image bank on South-South and Triangular Cooperation in Ibero-America. SEGIB-PIFCSS. 2021.

→ GRAPH 2.7

Bilateral SSC initiatives in Ibero-America according to the different pairs of partners, by role (provider, recipient, both). 2020-2021





Note: Considering the total number of Bilateral SSC projects executed in the 2020-2021 period, countries are arranged as the total number of projects in which they participated increases.

Source: SEGIB based on Agencies and Directorates-General for Cooperation

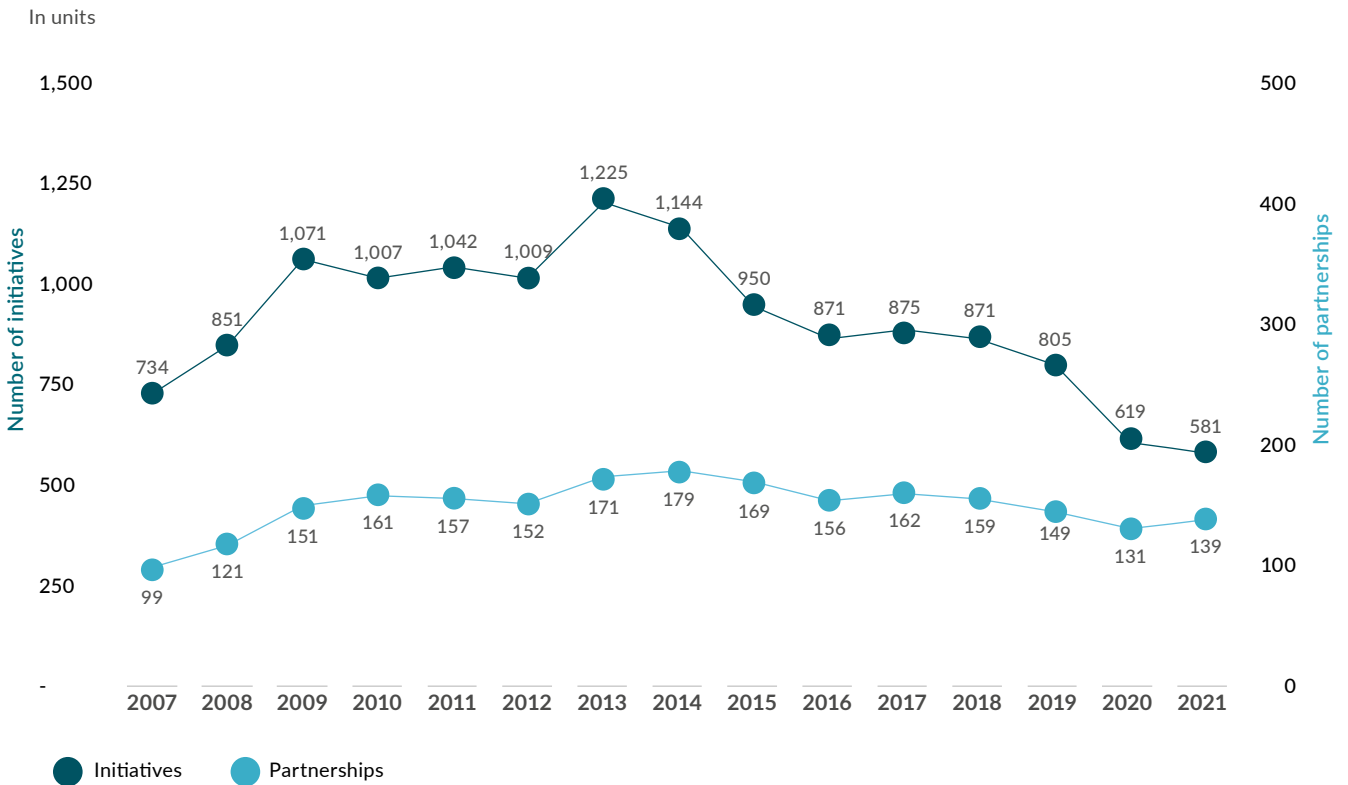
Thus, a first approach to Graph 2.7 suggests that, despite the adverse circumstances countries had to face during 2020 and 2021, exchanges were still remarkably dynamic. Indeed, it can be stated that 155 different partnerships have been registered in the 2020-2021 period considering the total number of partnerships among Ibero-American countries as an indicative figure based on a differentiated distribution of roles. This figure represents 45.3% of the total possible combinations (342).³ The interpretation of this data is twofold: on the one hand, it confirms the aforementioned dynamism and, on the other, it suggests there is still a considerable wide margin to increase these associations, since more than half of the partnerships that could take place have not occurred, at least in this period.

be interpreted as follows: although in recent years the number of initiatives has tended to decrease, the number of partnerships on which these exchanges are based is, in relative terms, increasing. This means countries are increasingly taking advantage of the potential to associate with other partners through the region's Bilateral SSC.

In the same sense, data suggests that, in recent years, exchanges between countries have tended to increase and diversify. Graph 2.8 compares the evolution of two variables for the 2007-2021 period: on the one hand, the number of initiatives exchanged in Ibero-America each year (top line); and, on the other, the number of partnerships based on the different combinations of countries and roles (bottom line). As can be noted, the two lines tend to come closer together over the years, progressively closing the initially existing gap and resulting in a convergence between the two values. The above can

→ GRAPH 2.8

Evolution of the number of initiatives annually exchanged in Ibero-America and the number of partnerships through which they were implemented. 2007-2021



Source: SEGIB based on Agencies and Directorates-General for Cooperation

³ The total of 342 is calculated by multiplying 19 by 19 (Bilateral SSC is limited to the 19 Latin-American and Caribbean countries), and then subtracting the 19 combinations in which the country would associate with itself.

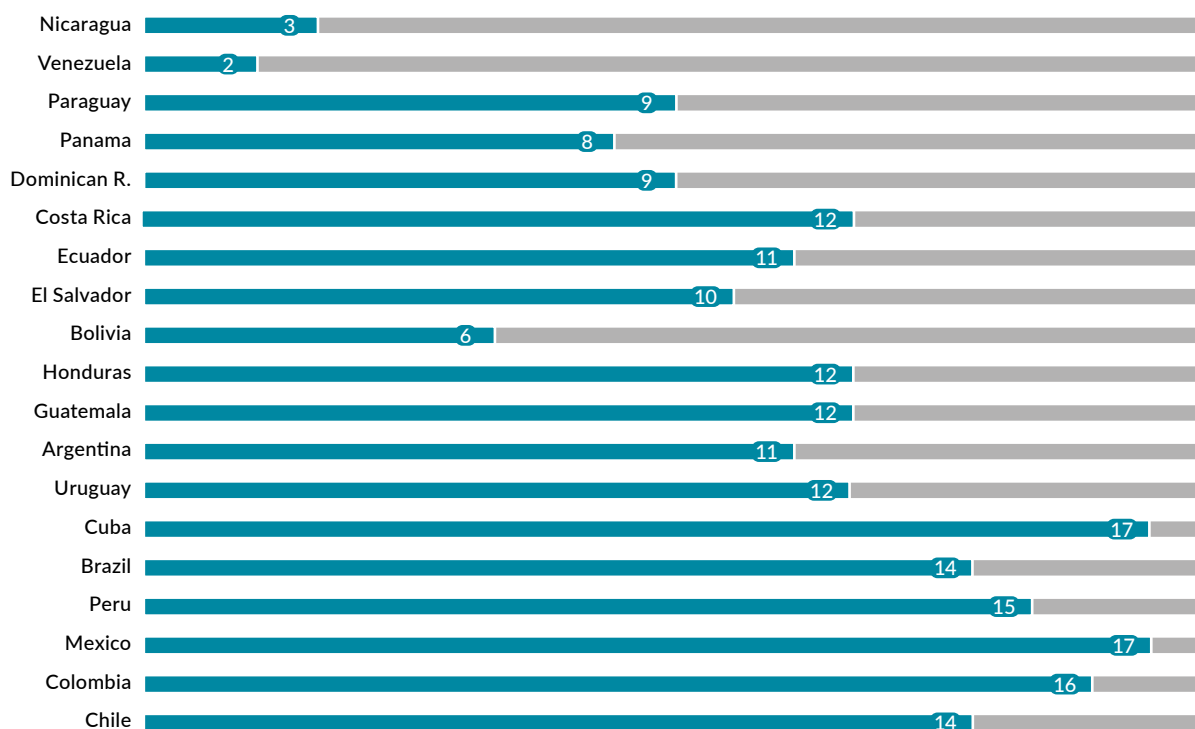
A second approach to Graph 2.7 also enables a deeper understanding of the nature of these exchanges, specifically through another relevant piece of information: the number of partners with which each country associated. Graph 2.9 was prepared in order to provide information in this regard. The figure sorts the countries in ascending order according to the number of initiatives

they implemented during the 2020-2021 period, showing the number of partners with which each of them exchanged their SSC. As portrayed, the maximum possible number of partnerships is 18, which offers additional information: specifically, it shows the margin each country still has to establish new exchanges with other partners.

→ GRAPH 2.9

Number of partners with which Ibero-American countries associated in their Bilateral SSC exchanges in Ibero-America. 2020-2021

In units



Note: the countries are listed in increasing order according to the number of initiatives in which they participated in 2020-2021.

Source: SEGIB based on Agencies and Directorates-General for Cooperation

Its interpretation also suggests four relationship patterns which, although different, are based on the same predictable trend: the more initiatives, the more partners. Indeed, Nicaragua and Venezuela (between 10 and 20 initiatives) exchanged with 2-3 partners. Meanwhile, Paraguay, Panama and the Dominican Republic (between 30-35 exchanges) associated with up to 8-9 other countries, almost one half of the potential partners. Additionally, a large group of 8 countries, from Costa Rica to Uruguay, implemented between 40 and 60 actions and projects, showing an even higher level of diversification and associating with 10-12 partners. Bolivia was the only exception to the above, as its 46 initiatives are based on a more concentrated relation with only 6 other partners. The last pattern involves the 6 most dynamic countries (between 75 and 171 initiatives), which tend to associate with 14-17 different partners, Cuba and Mexico standing out.

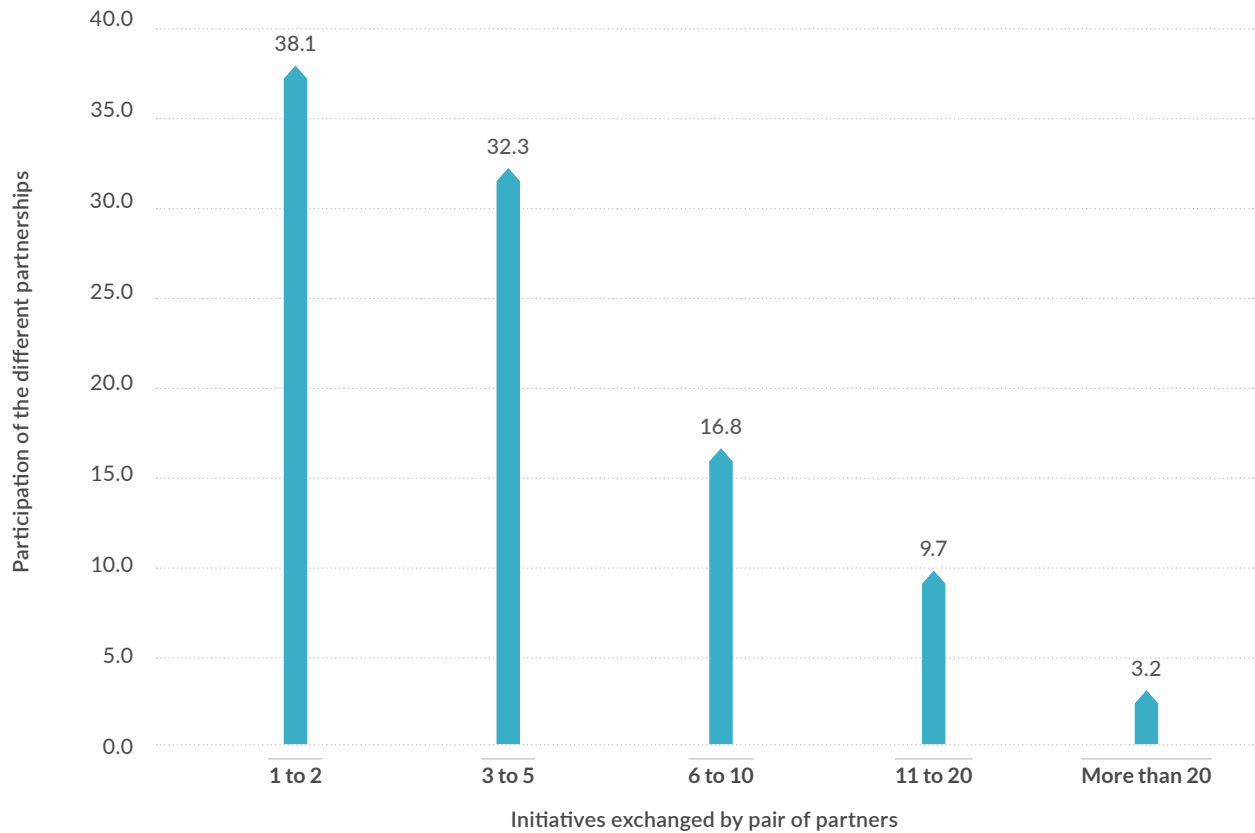
A third interpretation of Graph 2.7 also sheds light on another important feature of Ibero-American countries' association pattern: the number of initiatives each pair of partners exchanges. In fact, this figure can significantly vary and it reveals very different bilateral relations. In this sense, Graph 2.10 distributes the different partnerships in the 2020-2021 period (155)⁴ according to the number of initiatives implemented through each of these associations. Maximum and minimum figures illustrate and contrast the different situations: the exchange of 1 or 2 initiatives (in about 40% of the occasions) - or up to 5 (almost another 33%) - is the most common scenario, while the exchange of more than 20 initiatives is rather unusual, a record that occurs in 3.2% of the cases.

⁴ It should be noted that, according to the matrix, the different pairs of partners are determined not only by the countries (for example, country A and country B) but also by the roles. For example, this implies the distribution of roles A (provider) and B (recipient) is considered as one partnership, and that corresponding to A (recipient) and B (provider) is considered a different one.

→ GRAPH 2.10

Distribution of partnerships in Ibero-America, according to the number of Bilateral SSC initiatives exchanged. 2020-2021

In percentage



Source: SEGIB based on Agencies and Directorates-General for Cooperation

This suggests the coexistence of different patterns: some based on more specific and circumstantial exchanges and others that result from consolidated partnerships (for example that of Chile and Mexico, with a maximum of 29 initiatives) which strength lies in specific instruments (the Chile-Mexico Mixed Cooperation Fund) that support a long-standing cooperation based on a mainly dual role (28 of the 29 initiatives have a "bidirectional" nature, in which the two partners simultaneously act as providers and recipients).

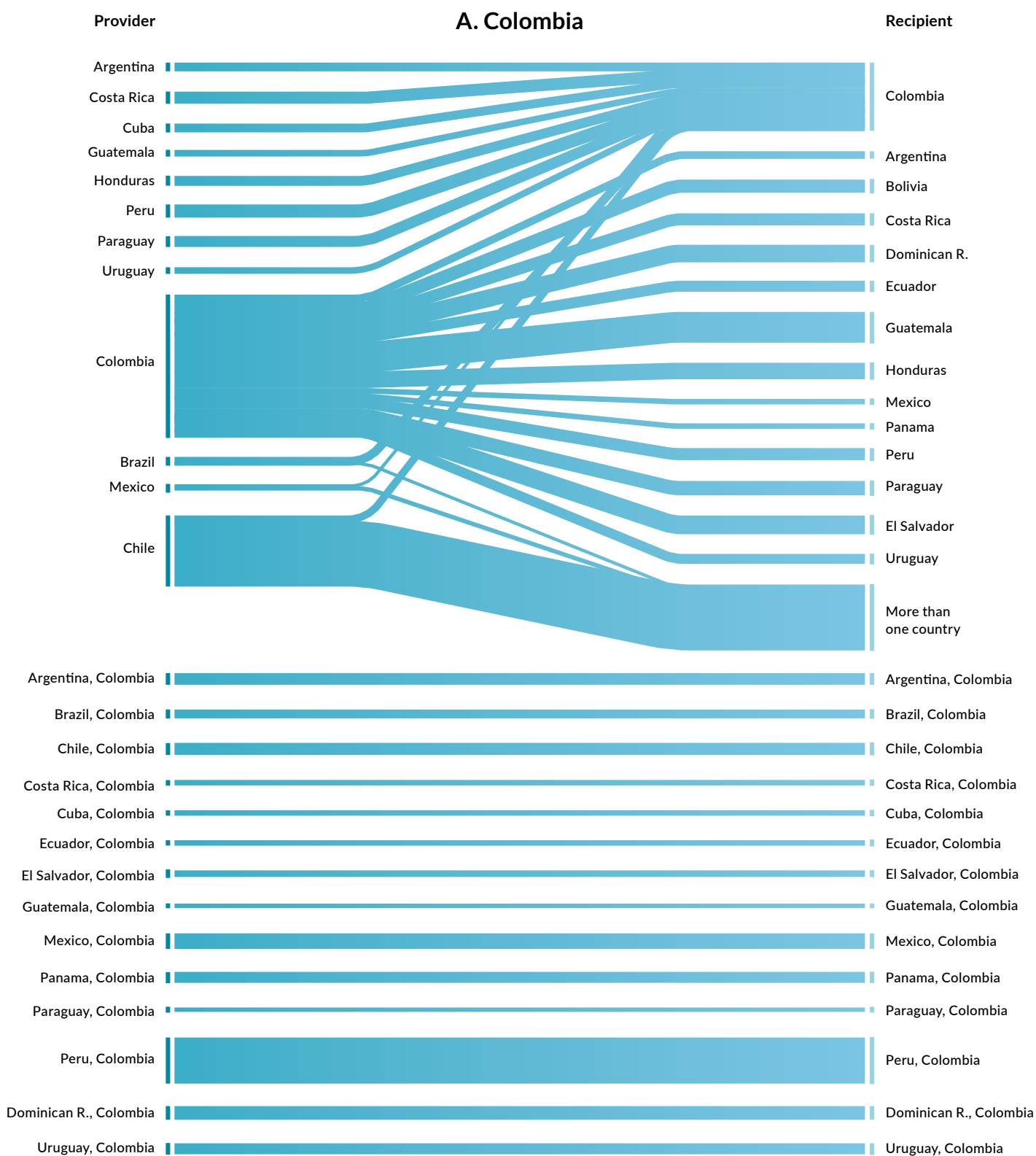
The combination of all of the above (partnerships, relations based on the different roles and the number of initiatives exchanged) ultimately defines the different relationship patterns. A number of countries were selected in order to illustrate the way in which these patterns materialize, through the following flow diagrams (Graph 2.11 A, B and C). These diagrams distribute the initiatives in which a country participates and differentiates them according to partners and roles (provider, left side; recipient, right side). In the case of bidirectional initiatives (when both partners act as both provider and recipient) the two names appear on both sides of the figure.

— 70% of bilateral partnerships implemented up to 5 initiatives in the 2020-2021 period

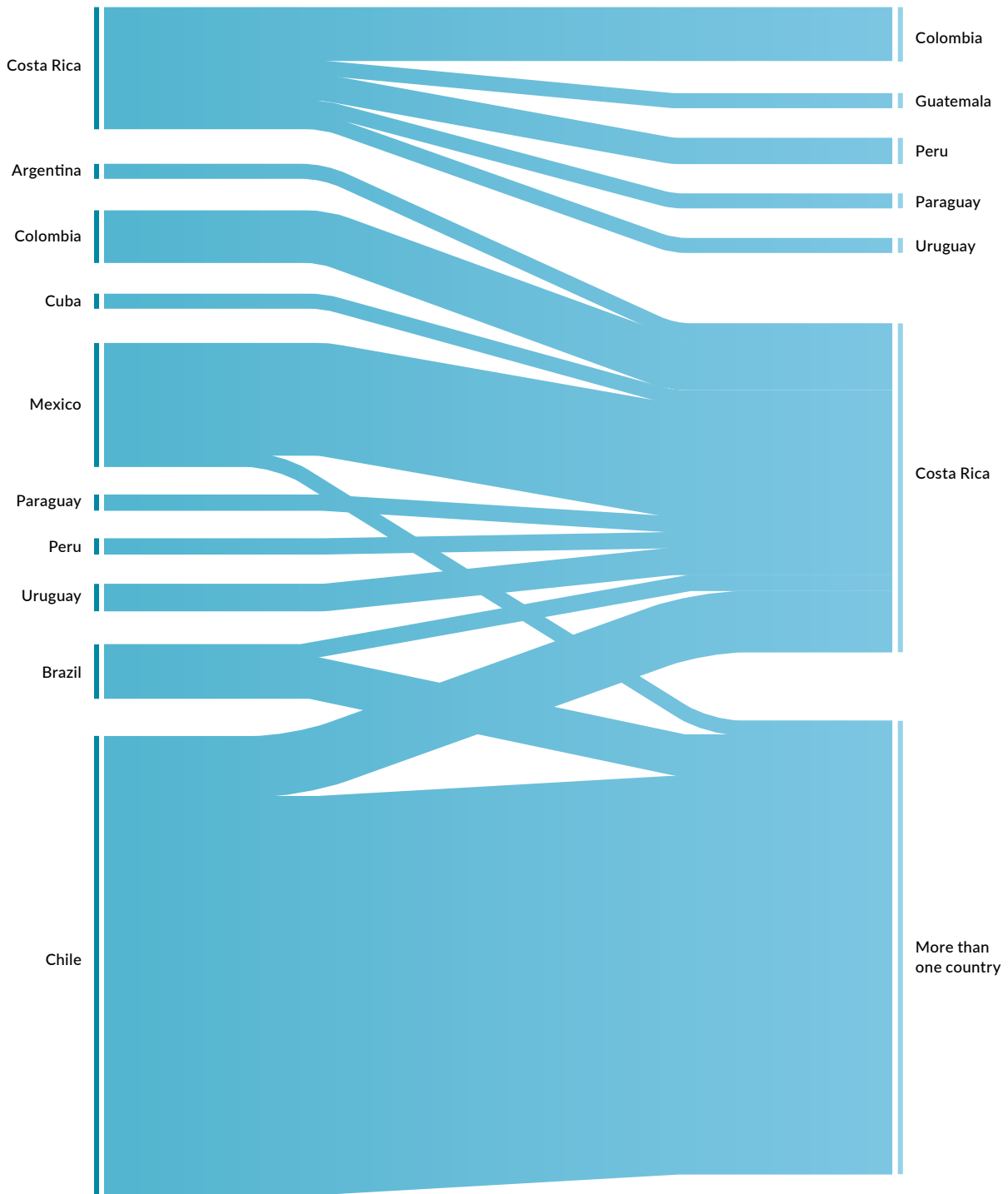
→ GRAPH 2.11

Distribution of Bilateral SSC initiatives in Ibero-America according to selected countries, by partner and role. 2020-2021

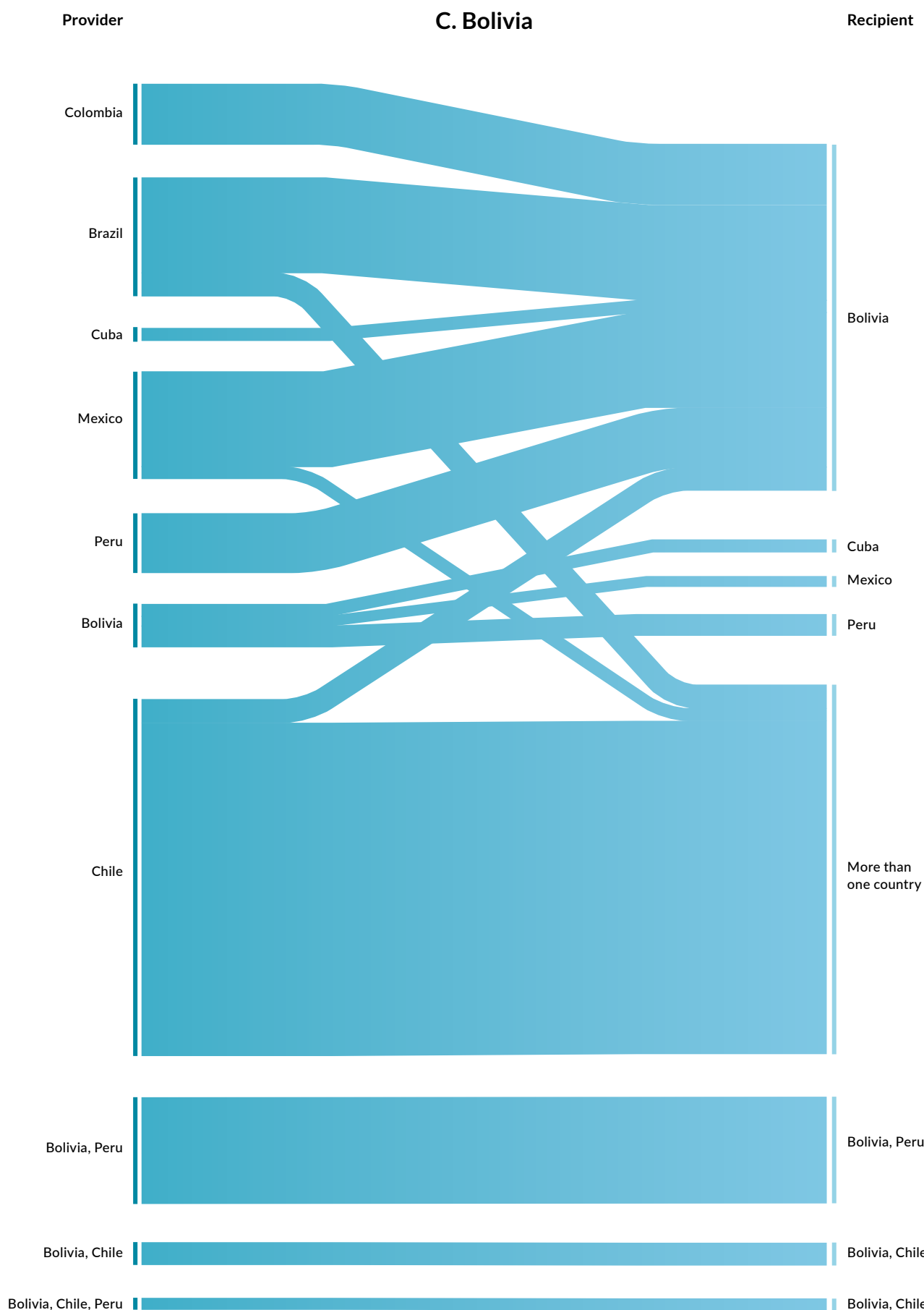
In units



Provider **B. Costa Rica** Recipient



Costa Rica, Panama	Costa Rica, Panama
Costa Rica, Peru	Costa Rica, Peru
Costa Rica, Uruguay	Costa Rica, Uruguay
Costa Rica, Chile	Costa Rica, Chile
Costa Rica, Colombia	Costa Rica, Colombia



Note: In order to identify bidirectional initiatives (those in which both partners perform the role “both”), the names of the two participating countries were included both in the left flow (when acting as provider) as well as in the right flow (when acting as recipient). The diagram also includes the category “more than one country” for those initiatives in which countries share a role (usually recipient) with other partners.

Source: SEGIB based on Agencies and Directorates-General for Cooperation

Colombia's analysis (Graph 2.11.A) suggests a remarkably diversified pattern of exchanges: a dynamic country (144 initiatives) with a high level of partnerships (16) and in which profile (mainly provider – in 40% of the exchanges), the "bidirectionality" of the role "both" is also significant (another 40% of exchanges). This combination results in a diagram of many relatively narrow flows with many two-way exchanges in which the country acts both as provider and as recipient.

— Colombia was very active in 2021, associating with a large number of partners and combining a mainly provider profile with a large number of bidirectional initiatives

Costa Rica (Graph 2.11.B) and Bolivia (Graph 2.11.C) were chosen as two other illustrative cases. These countries have both implemented a similar number of initiatives (39 and 45, respectively), but particularly differ in the number of partners (12 and 6, maximum and minimum values in that range of exchanges), as well as in the roles in which they participate: a more dual profile, combining the exercise of the three roles (recipient, provider and "both"), in the case of Costa Rica; and a more clearly recipient profile, in the case of Bolivia. As a result of these similarities and differences, both flow diagrams suggest different relationship patterns: Costa Rica's profile is more diversified (Graph 2.11.B) while Bolivia's is more concentrated (Graph 2.11.C).

2.4 Sectoral analysis of Bilateral South-South Cooperation during 2020-2021

The outbreak of the COVID-19 crisis in early 2020 has defined the course of the world, which had to face the most unprecedented challenge in recent history. This crisis, which began as a health emergency and gradually became a multidimensional one (mainly economic and social, but not exclusively), has exposed global vulnerabilities to face other crises (such as the climate crisis) under conditions of enormous inequality. Challenges are increasing while the pandemic has taught another lesson: the need for strong States willing to join efforts to find shared solutions to global challenges.

The response to the pandemic and the potential contributions made by Ibero-America through its SSC are, consequently, the essential topic of this section, which aims to understand how Ibero-American countries strengthened their respective capacities through the SSC they bilaterally promoted in the 2020-2021 period. First, the analysis takes a glance at the region as a whole, and then examines whether countries acted mainly as providers, by transferring their capacities, or as recipients, learning and closing gaps.

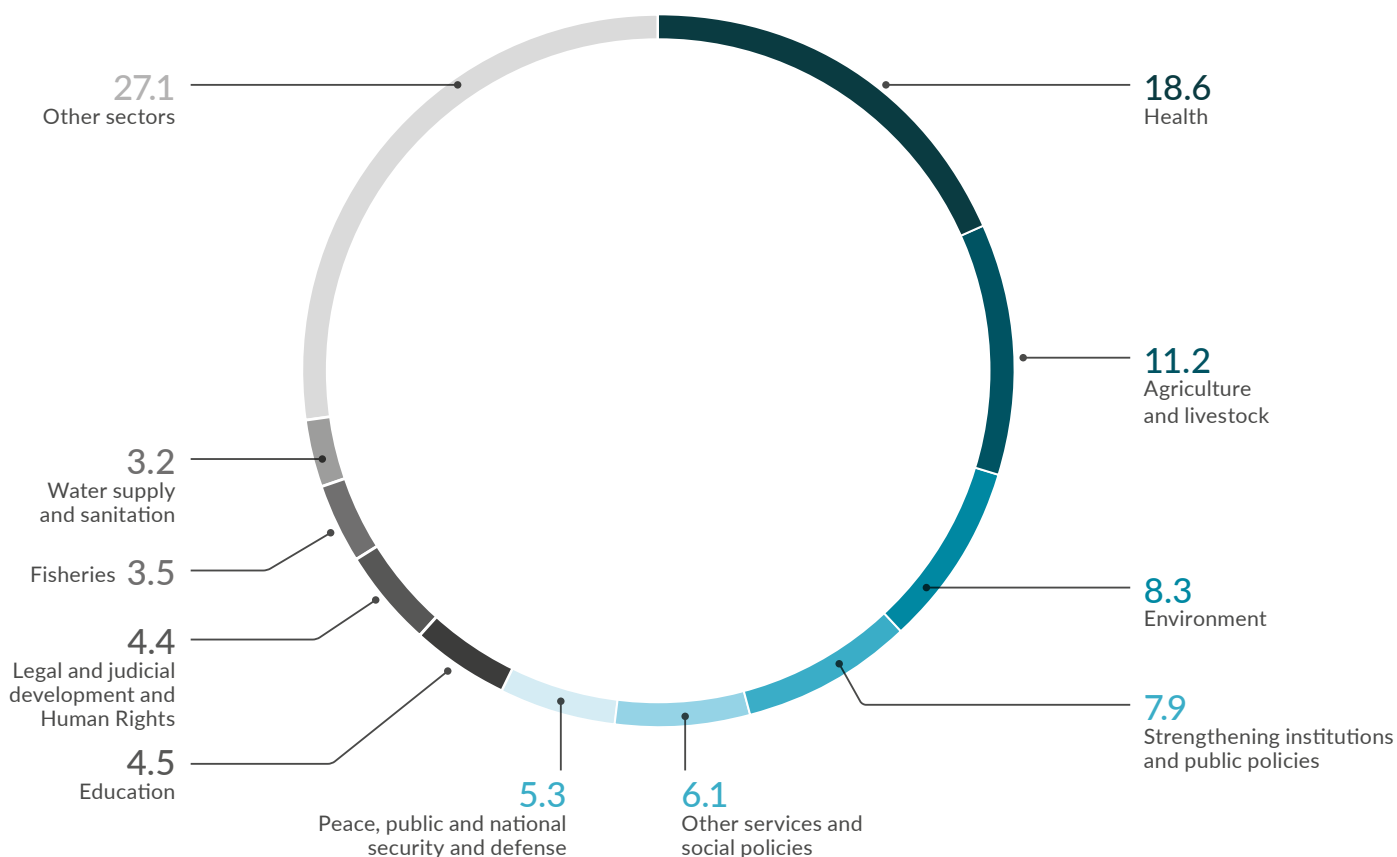
— Almost 1 out of 3 of the exchanges addressed priorities in the Social area, the *Health* sector standing out as the most dynamic

The sectoral analysis takes the 30 activity sectors recognized in the Ibero-American space as a reference, as well as their classification in 6 areas of action (see methodological note at the end of this Report), and the approach enables to combine a regional analysis with some specific experiences (Cases). In addition, this section tries to go one step further and explain how Ibero-America addresses the multiple crises and challenges the world currently is facing.

→ GRAPH 2.12

Distribution of Bilateral SSC initiatives in Ibero-America, by the main activity sectors. 2020-2021

In percentage



Source: SEGIB based on Agencies and Directorates-General for Cooperation

2.4.1. Strengthened capacities

The 661 SSC initiatives Ibero-American countries bilaterally exchanged during the 2020-2021 period enabled the strengthening of multiple types of capacities. Graphs 2.12 and 2.13 were plotted in order to identify them, showing the distribution of these initiatives according to the activity sector they addressed. In the former, activity sectors' share is estimated over the total of 661 initiatives; the latter estimates their relative importance within each area of action (areas are arranged from highest to lowest).

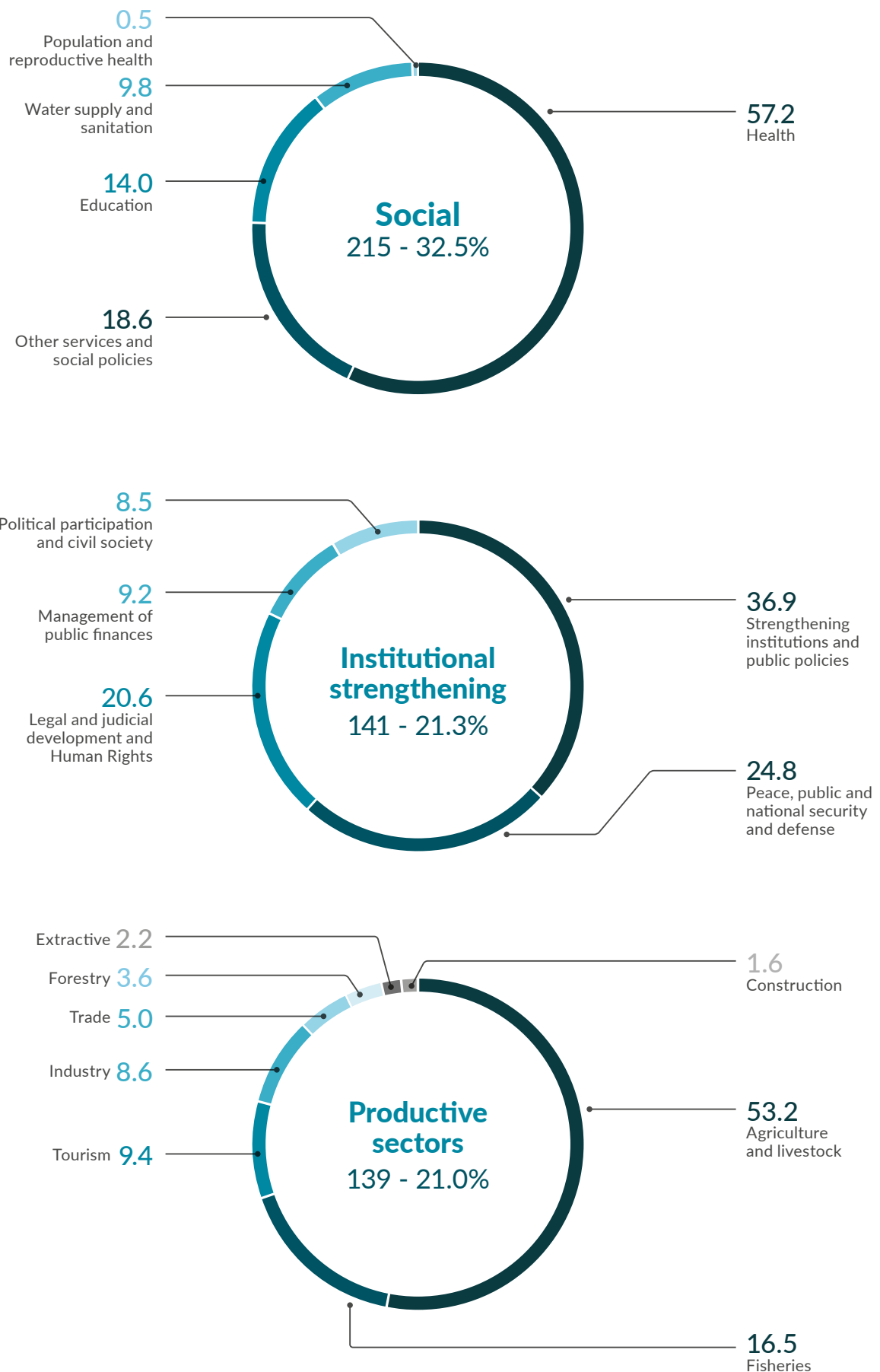
As shown, almost 1 out of 3 exchanges (215) aimed at addressing priorities in the Social area. In terms of relative importance, actions and projects which focused, on the one hand, on Institutional strengthening and, on the other, on Productive sectors (140 initiatives in both cases) followed, corresponding to 21% of the total, in each case. Meanwhile, 75 initiatives (a remarkable

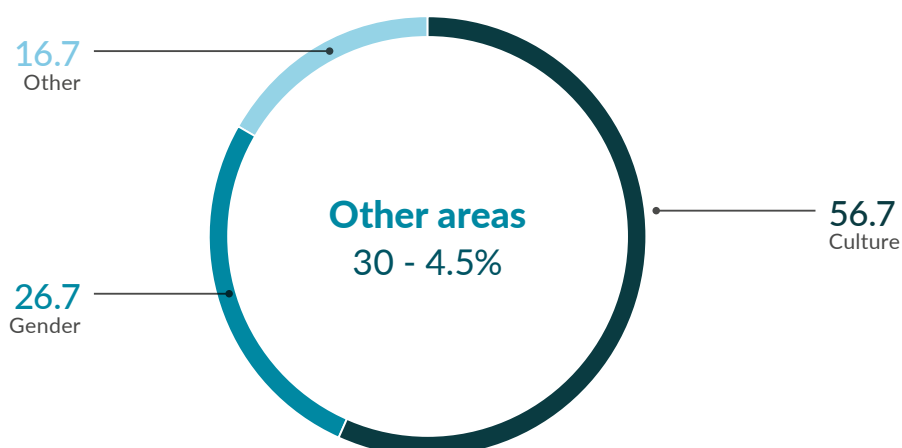
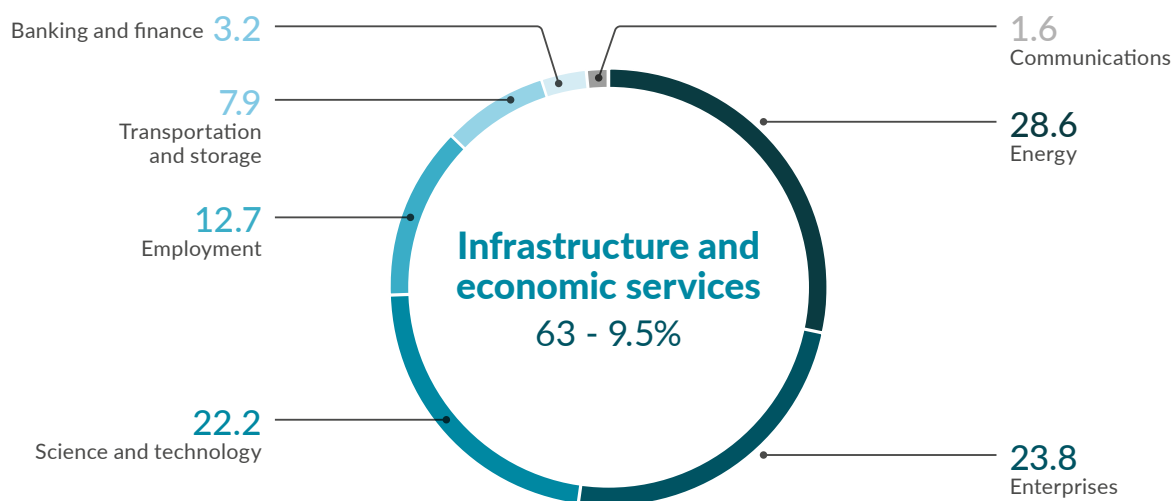
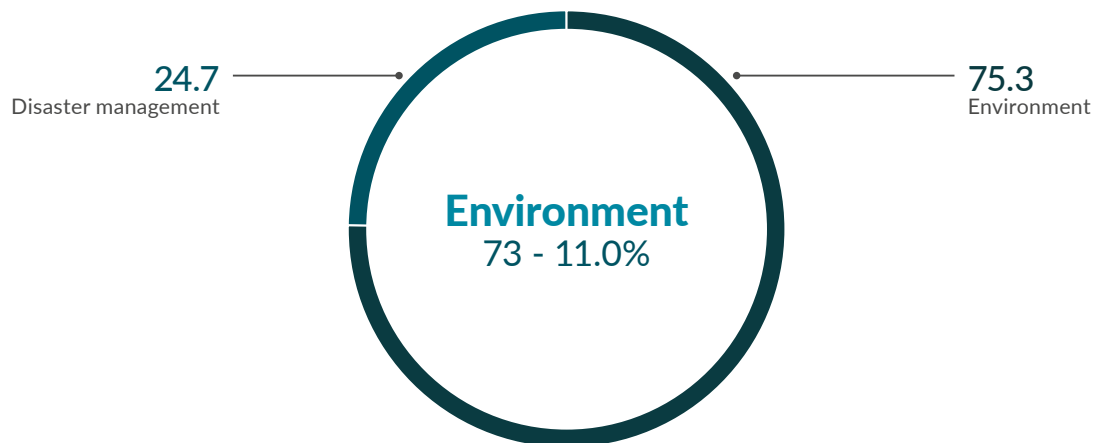
11%) were dedicated to improve the Environment, slightly more than the 63 initiatives (almost 10%) Ibero-American countries promoted to strengthen Infrastructure and economic services. Other areas accounted for the last 30 exchanges (4.5% of the total).

→ GRAPH 2.13

Distribution of Bilateral SSC initiatives in Ibero-America, by area of action and activity sector. 2020-2021

In percentage





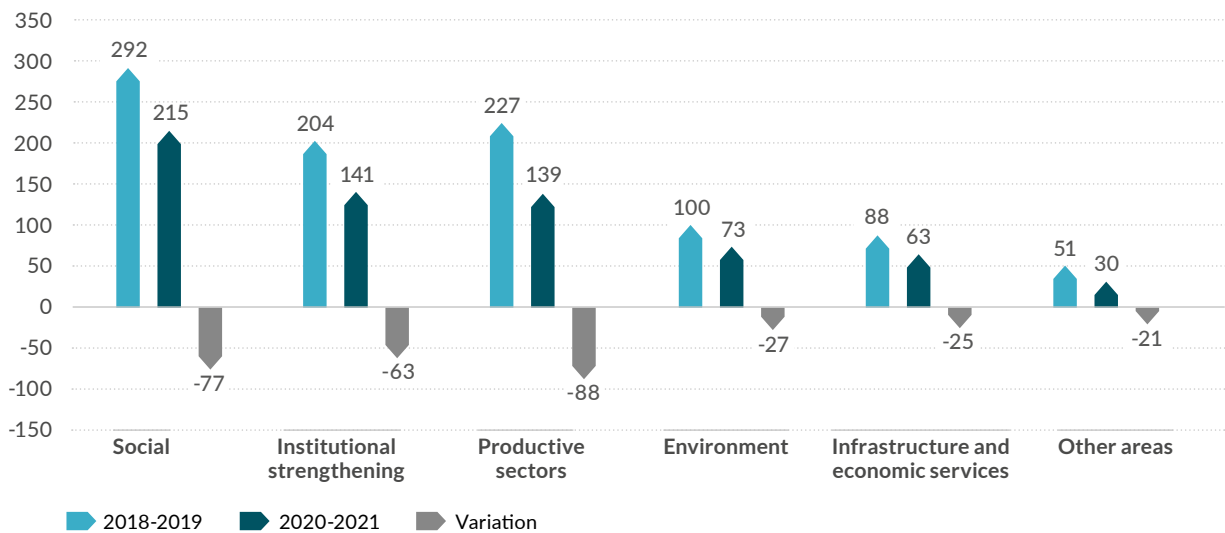
As expected, the response to the pandemic had an impact on the distribution by areas of action, increasing the relative importance of the Social area, in which the *Health* sector is classified. The interpretation of Graph 2.14 precisely suggests this and compares, in the 2018-2019 and 2020-2021 periods, how the distribution of Bilateral SSC initiatives changes according to the areas of action, both from an absolute (Graph 2.14.A) and a relative dimension (2.14.B). Indeed, between 2018-2019 and 2020-2021, SSC initiatives bilaterally exchanged in

Ibero-America suffered a significant fall from 962 to 661, registered during the pandemic crisis. This drop (of more than 300 initiatives) pushed the figures in all areas of action down (see Graph 2.14.A), but its impact in relative terms was uneven, mainly due to a twofold effect (Graph 2.14.B): an increase of 2.2 percentage points in the Social area; and a loss of relative importance (2.6 points) of SSC aimed at Productive Sectors.

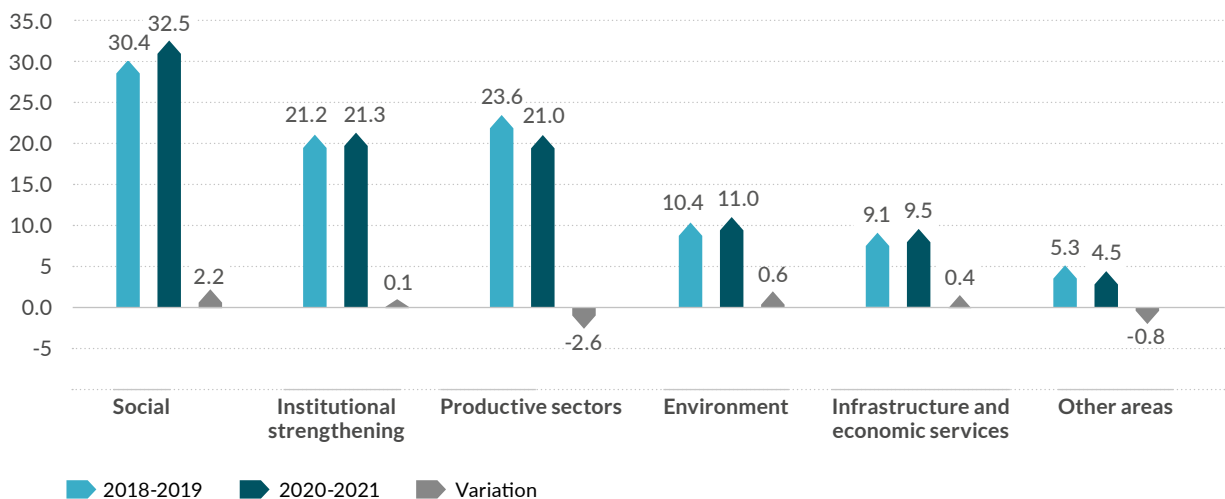
→ GRAPH 2.14

Variation in Bilateral SSC initiatives in Ibero-America, by area of action. 2018-2019 and 2020-2021

A. Initiatives (in units)



B. Shares (in percentage and percentage points)



When the analysis focuses on the sectoral level (Graphs 2.12 and 2.13), the priority given to the *Health* sector during the worst moments of the COVID-19 crisis and the way in which this had an impact on all SSC bilaterally exchanged during the pandemic years, is confirmed. Specifically, during 2020-2021, healthcare will account for nearly 60% of the initiatives promoted for social purposes and for almost 1 out of 5 (18.6%) of the 661 initiatives registered in the period, this being the activity that concentrated the greatest efforts.

An analysis of the topics that were actually addressed in the *Health* sector confirms the high priority given by Ibero-American countries to the fight against COVID-19.

In fact, as shown in Box 2.1, almost 1 out of 3 of the 123 SSC initiatives bilaterally exchanged in Ibero-America in 2020-2021 and classified in the *Health* sector, were promoted to address the COVID-19 crisis. This Box details the way in which the countries of the region responded to the pandemic: it describes how, given the adverse circumstances, SSC became - mainly through the promotion of specific actions - an important resource to face the health emergency, trying to stop the spread of the pandemic and mitigate its worst effects based on a multidimensional perspective that also considers the economic and social crises.

→ BOX 2.1

Bilateral SSC as an instrument to respond to the COVID-19 crisis

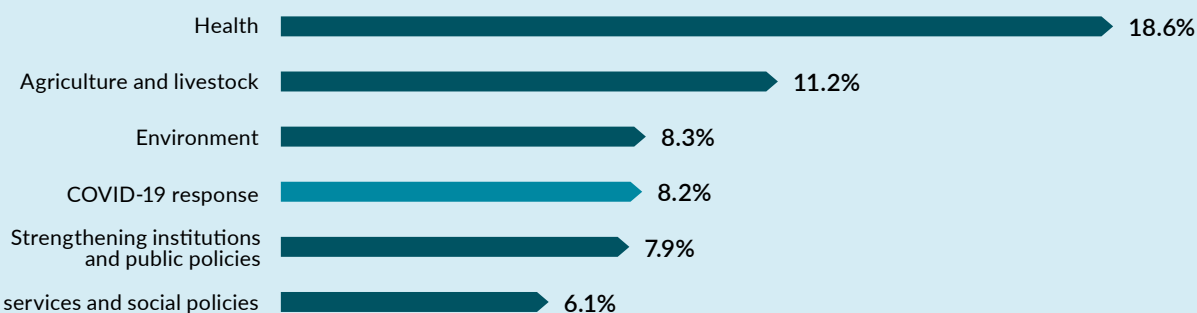
The COVID-19 pandemic, which began in 2020, has triggered a global crisis that is not only health-related, but multidimensional. Apart from the negative consequences it has had on the lives of many people worldwide, it has taught us a lesson: global challenges need global responses. In this sense, Bilateral South-South Cooperation has been one of the available instruments countries counted with to jointly and horizontally face the crisis.

In the 2020-2021 period, 54 bilateral initiatives were implemented in Ibero-America as a direct response to COVID-19: 38 actions and 16 projects, representing 8.2% of all Bilateral SSC in the region during the period. Given the multidimensional nature of this crisis, initiatives were classified in different sectors, *Health* (in 2 out of 3 cases) being the most important.¹ The final figure is remarkably significant: as the first graph shows, if the initiatives promoted in response to COVID-19 were considered as a sector, during the

2020-2021 period, the fight against the pandemic would have represented the fourth most important priority, only after SSC in *Health* (18.6%), *Agriculture and livestock* (11.2%) and *Environment* (8.3%). In these exchanges, the prevalence of actions over projects - as was generally the case in this period - is precisely associated with the adaptation of this instrument to provide a rapid response to the emergency.

Bilateral SSC initiatives, by the main sectors and its contribution to the response to COVID-19. 2020-2021

In percentage



Source: SEGIB based on Agencies and Directorates-General for Cooperation

¹ Of the 54 initiatives identified in response to COVID-19, 40 were classified in the *Health* sector; while the remaining 14 were distributed between *Strengthening institutions and public policies* (4), *Enterprises* (3), *Political participation and civil society* (3), *Management of public finances* (2) and *Trade* (1).

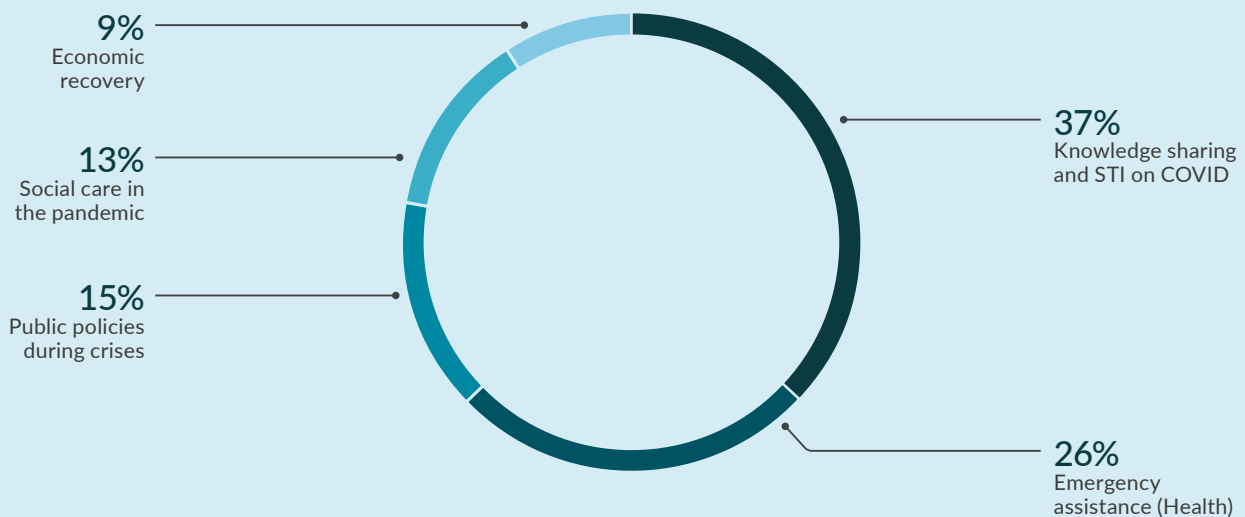
The second graph distributes these 54 initiatives according to the topics they actually addressed in the framework of COVID-19. Thus, most of the initiatives promoted (20, i.e. 37%) involved exchanges of knowledge, science, technology and innovation (STI) on the virus. Exchanges that focused on therapies and treatments to deal with the disease, epidemiological strategies (such as those related to prevention and control), and research on vaccines are especially worthy of mention. These were closely followed (14 initiatives) by emergency aid, which included donations of medicines, supplies and equipment to face the pandemic. Equally important

were the initiatives that focused on public policies in the context of crisis (another 15%), which made it possible to address, for example, best practices for elections, the generation of data and information to improve follow-up and monitoring, in addition to those related to the management of public budgets adapted to the crisis. Likewise, 7 actions and projects (13%) were dedicated to "Social care in the pandemic", among which those dealing with mental health, ergonomics for the new working conditions imposed by the so-called "new normality", care for the elderly and social protection, including others, should be highlighted.

Finally, initiatives of a different profile (the last 9%) were identified towards the end of 2020, as a result of, on the one hand, the gradual elimination of the restrictions on mobility and, on the other, the need to address problems derived from COVID-19 but of a different nature, such as economic and employment recovery, as well as the revitalization of trade and business, especially focused on small and medium-sized enterprises.

Thematic categorization of Bilateral SSC initiatives in Ibero-America that addressed the fight against COVID-19. 2020-2021

In percentage



Source: SEGIB based on Agencies and Directorates-General for Cooperation

On the other hand, it should be added that countries' participation in these exchanges responded to different dynamics, with a clear differentiation based on the roles they were able to perform. Thus, Chile (21 actions and 2 projects in the provider role) and Cuba (12 actions) were the two most important providers, accounting for

almost two thirds of the total number of initiatives registered in response to COVID-19. Chile's initiatives were mainly based on international courses aimed at multiple countries (usually online due to mobility restrictions); Cuba, in turn, implemented direct actions to fight against COVID-19.

Another large group of initiatives was promoted under a bidirectional dynamic, in which countries acted as providers and as recipients at the same time. This was possible, partially, because both partners shared a bilateral cooperation instrument that was "reshaped" to provide a more agile response to the challenges

the pandemic imposed. Specifically, Mexico and Chile, through their Mixed Fund, executed 7 projects - mainly joint studies and research. Mexico and Uruguay, also through their joint fund, implemented 3 projects that facilitated the donation of supplies and equipment, as well as the exchange of experiences in terms of epidemiological strategies. Argentina and Chile, in this specific case and without an instrument, promoted 3

projects to provide a collaborative response to the pandemic and promote economic recovery.

Thirdly, as for initiatives received (22 out of 54), in most cases several countries simultaneously shared the recipient role and this occurred in 60% of the non-bidirectional initiatives. This was a dynamic on which, for example, online courses and training were based.

All the above reveals bilateral initiatives to respond to the pandemic were diverse, as were countries' needs in this period. Bilateral SSC proved to be a useful instrument to deal with the crisis.

Methodological note: The Ibero-American Integrated Data System on South-South and Triangular Cooperation (SIDICSS by its Spanish acronym) was used to carry out this exercise. On this basis, a search was performed using keywords related to COVID-19. Initiatives that had not begun in 2020 or 2021 were removed as well as those that were not related to the pandemic. The resulting initiatives were then classified into thematic categories related to the multidimensional attention to the COVID-19 crisis.

Source: SEGIB based on Agencies and Directorates-General for Cooperation

In addition to addressing the emergency and the exceptional situation imposed by COVID-19, Ibero-American cooperation also focused on other health issues that have traditionally been important for the region. Indeed, a review of the specific purposes of the initiatives bilaterally promoted by Ibero-American countries in the *Health* sector reveals that the region has chosen to continue strengthening capacities in areas in which it has already accumulated important experience. Specifically, previously consolidated projects continued, such as those related to nutrition and food safety (Maternal Milk Banks); prevention, surveillance and treatment of endemic diseases (dengue, zika and chikungunya); and strengthening institutions and sectoral public policies (quality management, health surveillance systems, hospitals, blood and blood products). Efforts were also made in terms of research, especially to develop medical treatments for oncological diseases, tuberculosis and diabetes, through initiatives that, although different, suggest an increasingly specialized and comprehensive approach to these illnesses. Training for healthcare professionals, to which the region has always been committed and that the pandemic has revalued through online mechanisms, is also worthy of mention.

In spite of the health emergency, Ibero-American countries continued addressing other issues in the Social area which are relevant to the region. Hence, 4 out of

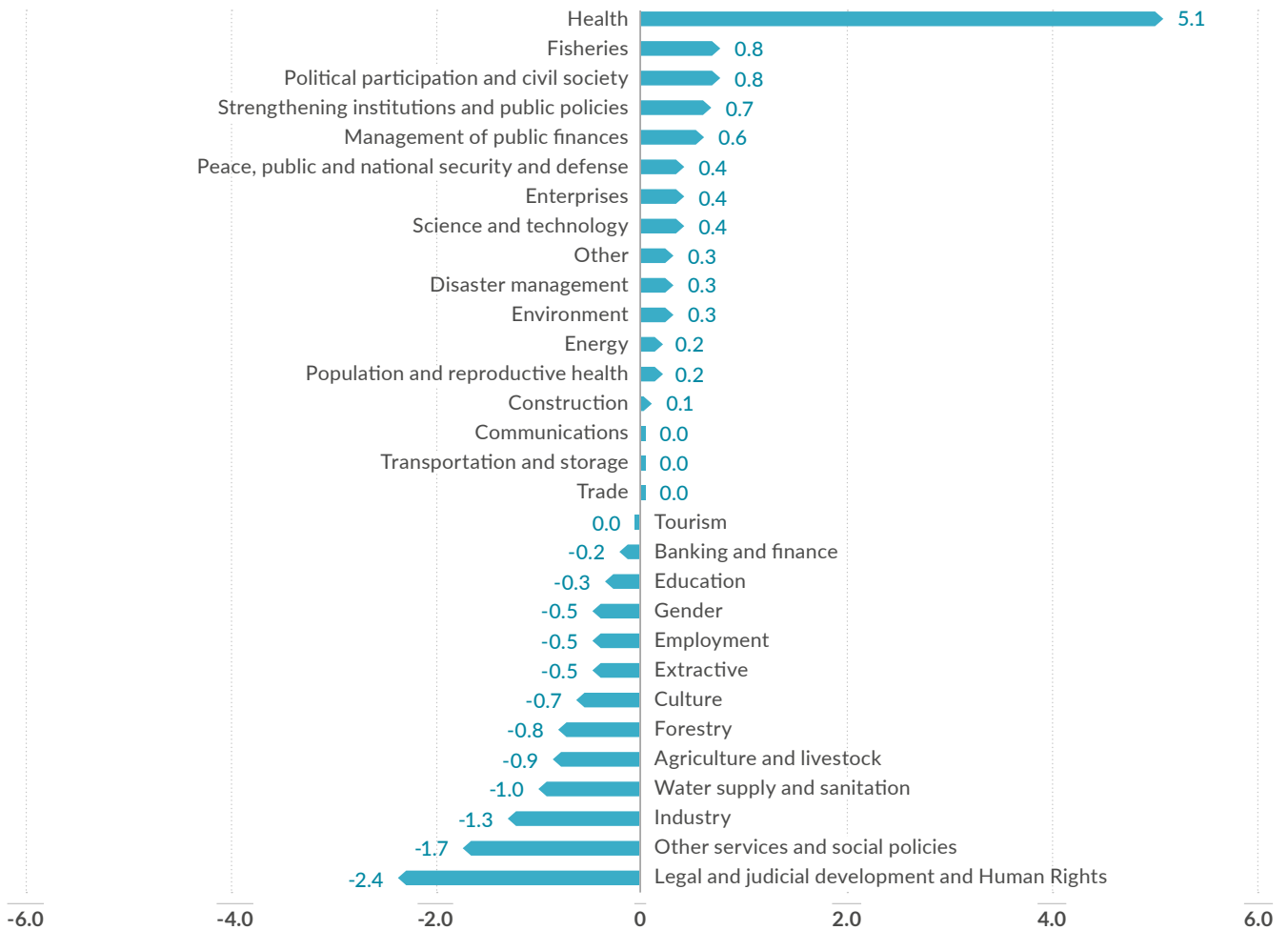
10 of the initiatives promoted in this area aimed at *Other services and social policies* (18.6%), *Education* (14.0%) and *Water supply and sanitation* (almost another 10%). However, despite being part of the area in which the region concentrated most of its cooperation, these sectors also suffered a loss of relative importance as a result of the pandemic.

In spite of the emergency imposed by COVID-19, Ibero-American countries continued addressing other health issues in the Social area that have traditionally been relevant to the region

→ GRAPH 2.15

Variation of activity sectors' share in the total number of Bilateral SSC initiatives in Ibero-America. 2018-2019 and 2020-2021

In percentage points



Source: SEGIB based on Agencies and Directorates-General for Cooperation

Graph 2.15, which compares the 2018-2019 and 2020-2021 periods, shows the variation of activity sectors' share in the total number of Bilateral SSC initiatives exchanged in Ibero-America. Thus, the *Health* sector increased its share in 5.1 percentage points, far ahead the other sectors, which at most, registered growths that never exceed 0.8 points. In contrast, some of the sectors which shares lost importance were those that are also classified in the Social area: *Other services and social policies* (1.7 percentage points less), *Water supply and sanitation* (-1 point) and *Education* (-0.3), which drops aggregately explain 3 of the 5 points the *Health* sector increased.

Although SSC in these sectors was less intense, Ibero-America continued promoting issues in which -COVID aside- the region has accumulated significant experience. In this sense, a significant number of the SSC initiatives that were under execution in the 2020-2021 period aimed at strengthening social policies (overcoming poverty, social inclusion and housing) and focused on reinforcing the attention to vulnerable groups as well as on ensuring the exercise of their rights (people with

disabilities, indigenous populations and those who, differentiated in age groups, may face more critical situations, such as children, youth and older adults). In this sense, it should be noted that, in certain cases, these issues were also tackled in the framework of the specific impact of the pandemic. For example, Case 2.1 describes an initiative between Colombia and Peru - developed online due to the restrictions imposed by the crisis - that addresses the promotion of sports as an instrument to improve older adults' well-being; a population group that was hit particularly hard by the pandemic.

→ CASE 2.1

Older adults' well-being during the pandemic

In March 2020, at the beginning of the pandemic, the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights of the United Nations already recognized that, in the face of this exceptional situation, older adults not only “face a disproportionate risk of death but they are further threatened by COVID-19 due to their care support needs or by living in high-risk environments such as institutions” (OHCHR, 2020).

Indeed, the pandemic had a very serious and visible impact on the elderly - high mortality rates and the effect on mental health standing out - but it also had other less known consequences, such as a certain deterioration of physical health, as a result of the disease itself and confinements. In this context, and being aware of the aforementioned challenges, countries prioritized the need to mitigate these impacts through the promotion of older adults' physical activity, adapted to the pandemic, in

order to improve their well-being. This problem was specifically addressed by the Sports Institute of Peru (IPD by its Spanish acronym) and the Ministry of Sports of Colombia, which joined efforts to share best practices for the promotion of healthy habits and lifestyles in times of COVID-19 with emphasis on the elderly (*Plataforma digital única del Estado Peruano*, 2020).

According to the countries, this Bilateral SSC action contributed to improve the skills of professionals who had graduated from the different programs carried out by the Peruvian National Directorate of Training and Sport Technique, officials from the Integral Centers for Older Adults and IPD staff. This action consisted of a series of conferences on “Older adults: physical activity in times of COVID-19”, which were available on institutional online platforms. Knowledge and experiences were exchanged on specific topics such as: older adults,

aging and old age; the benefits of recreation; National Recreation Strategy for and with older adults; *Programa Nuevo Comienzo* “Another reason to live”; home games and interactive evaluation games.

Through the implementation of this action, Colombia and Peru enabled Ibero-American cooperation and their own sports agendas to promote older adults' health and well-being. In addition, this is an example of how SSC could adapt to a new context and could continue its implementation despite a global pandemic that hindered face-to-face exchanges in Ibero-American countries.

Source: SEGIB based on Agencies and Directorates-General for Cooperation, Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (2020) and *Plataforma digital única del Estado Peruano* (2020).

Likewise, and concluding the review of the Social area, during the 2020-2021 period, SSC exchanges were also aimed at strengthening institutions and laws related to water management and at advancing water sanitation and purification, in addition to promoting its collection, preferably from rainfall and aquifers. It should be noted that some of these initiatives focused on actions in rural environments in order to close possible gaps in terms of ensuring the access to this right. Other significant social experiences were promoted to support literacy; strengthen higher education tools; develop professional training that - especially focused on young people - contributes to greater employment; and promote a greater use of audiovisuals and innovation, a commitment that had already been made but which has recently been revalued by COVID-19.

The second most relevant area of action in the 2020-2021 period was Institutional strengthening (141 initiatives, corresponding to 21.3% of those registered in 2020-2021). The importance of this area is explained by the nature of the region's SSC, which is defined as intergovernmental. In this framework, once again taking

Graphs 2.12 and 2.13 as a reference, it is possible to state that more than a third of the exchanges were destined to *Strengthening institutions and public policies* (52 SSC actions and projects), a figure that places this as the fourth most important activity sector in the period (almost 8% of the 661 final exchanges).

Meanwhile, important efforts were also made to promote SSC to support *Peace, public and national security and defense*, as well as others related to *Legal and judicial development and Human Rights* (almost 25% and 20% of initiatives in this areas, respectively). The rest of the 25 initiatives aimed at Institutional strengthening, distributed between *Management of public finances* and *Political participation and civil society*, were supported in more specific occasions.

It should be added that it is also possible to identify a redistribution of the priorities with respect to the previous two-year period. In this sense, Graph 2.15, which compares the variation of activity sectors' share between the two periods in the total number of Bilateral SSC initiatives exchanged in Ibero-America, shows how *Legal*

and judicial development and Human Rights suffered the greatest drop in terms of relative shares (-2.4 percentage points), contrasting with the slight growth registered by the other sectors in this area (between 0.4 and 0.8 points each).

In this case, experiences were promoted to provide civil servants with better management and evaluation tools; and to enable the exchange of best practices and develop regulatory frameworks that, as a whole, can improve the quality of government services at different levels, especially at the local level. Part of this support materialized through numerous trainings, many of them online, due to the conditions imposed by the new context. Initiatives related to document and archive management, as well as the applied use of information technologies to facilitate their systematization and management, in addition to those that focused on strengthening the institutions responsible for international cooperation, should also be mentioned.

— Almost all sectors in the productive area decreased their importance in terms of Bilateral SSC exchanged in 2020-2021, compared to 2018-2019

In this same institutional framework, Ibero-American countries also made considerable efforts to promote SSC initiatives to strengthen peace, collective memory, restorative justice and the social reintegration of conflict victims. Other experiences aimed to guarantee access to justice, through projects specifically destined to groups which right to defense may be undermined. In this regard, to protect and promote human rights, activities were implemented to prevent torture and ill-treatment, as well as to eradicate the worst forms of child labor. In many of cases, particularly vulnerable groups were taken into special consideration (children, youth, women and indigenous peoples, to name a few). Numerous training sessions were also held for the police and the military, and experiences in forensic techniques and policies to combat drugs and corruption, stood out among these. Finally, it is important to mention some initiatives that - even *ad hoc* - were adapted to introduce a COVID approach to their main purpose; for example, SSC promoted to share experiences in holding secure elections in the context of the pandemic.

Special reference should be made to the third area of action which is object of this analysis: Productive sectors. Indeed, the combined interpretation of Graphs 2.13 and 2.14 suggests two things: overall, SSC that focused on

this purpose remained remarkably active (almost 140 initiatives, corresponding to another 21.0% of those registered in the entire period) but this area lost the greatest share in relative terms (2.6 percentage points when comparing 2020-2021 with the two immediately previous years).

Part of the above is explained by the impact caused by the second most important sector of Bilateral SSC in the 2020-2021 period: *Agriculture and livestock*. Specifically, over the past two years, Ibero-American countries bilaterally promoted 74 initiatives to strengthen activities in this sector, a figure that accounts for more than half of those that were implemented within the Productive Sector area (Graph 2.13) and 11.2% of the 661 registered overall in the region (Graph 2.12). Although these numbers are remarkable, they are significantly lower than those of the 2018-2019 period, when *Agriculture and livestock* sector explained 116 Bilateral SSC initiatives (42 above those registered in 2020-2021). This represents, as shown in Graph 2.15, a fall of almost 1 percentage point over the total.

It should be added that the comparative analysis of the 2018-2019 and 2020-2021 periods (Graph 2.15) confirms almost all activities classified in the Productive Sectors area suffered drops in their share considering the total number of SSC initiatives bilaterally exchanged by Ibero-American countries. *Industry* (which relative importance fell by 1.3 percentage points), *Forestry* and *Extractive* (-0.8 and -0.5 points, in each case) stand out as examples of the above. These falls, in turn, explain the lower relative importance these activities had in all the initiatives that are classified in this area (Graph 2.13), all of them with shares below 10%. The only exception is *Fisheries*, the second most important sector after *Agriculture and livestock*, but still at a considerable distance from the latter (23 initiatives, corresponding to 16.5% of those carried out in the Productive Sectors area). In fact, *Fisheries* is one of the few sectors which share increased (0.8 points) when comparing the two periods.

A wide range of topics were addressed within the *Agriculture and livestock* sector, mainly related to agriculture. Relatively less important were those aimed at strengthening livestock and other activities that are connected with the food industry and rural areas, such as poultry farming and apiculture. Specifically, most SSC initiatives Ibero-American countries bilaterally exchanged in 2020-2021 addressed all stages of the agricultural production cycle in a comprehensive manner. For example, techniques were exchanged to make the best use of soils and irrigation, as well as to promote the selection, production and genetic improvement of seeds. Efforts were also dedicated to epidemiological surveillance, pest control and the development of biopesticides in order to protect harvests. As for initiatives related to safe consumption and marketing, countries shared biotechnological tools for animal health and complemented other activities that contribute to guaranteeing food safety.

An important characteristic of SSC initiatives promoted in Ibero-America in the *Agriculture and livestock* sector (and sometimes in other subsectors) was the increasingly common inclusion of other purposes that - although not as a priority - cut across their main objectives. In this sense, some of these features are frequently repeated: the concentration on local and on some of the region's typical products (corn, beans, cacao, quinoa, soybeans, potatoes, coconuts, avocado and nopal, to name a few); the importance given to family-sized agriculture, seeking, on the one hand, to ensure its development (access to financial instruments such as credit or insurance) and, on the other, its promotion as a source of income generation; the adoption of an environmental approach that mainly focuses on the sustainability of production and on resilience to climate change, through measures to adapt to and mitigate its worst effects. An example of the above is described in Case 2.2, a project between Argentina and Brazil which aim is to predict how some diseases

that proliferate as a consequence of global warming may impact future harvests of two products (sugarcane and peanut). The different scenarios that were analyzed and the information collected can be used to guide decision making to help protect crops.

→ CASE 2.2

How does climate change affect crop diseases?



Every year, up to 40% of food crops is lost to plant pests and diseases (FAO, 2022). Global warming facilitates the introduction of these unwanted organisms. A single, unusually warm winter may be sufficient to assist the establishment of invasive pests (FAO and IPPC, 2021). This not only poses a threat to climate-dependent agricultural production, but also to the environment in general, as pests can cause a major loss in biodiversity (FAO, 2022). The incidence, severity and geographical distribution of plant diseases are altered by climate change (EMBRAPA, 2022), and this may deepen even further in coming years.

According to the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and the International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC) “despite the wealth of studies on climate-change biology, there are still prominent gaps in research into the impact of climate change on pests” (FAO and IPPC, 2021). This challenge

is being addressed by the Bilateral SSC project between Argentina and Brazil “The impact of climate change on crop diseases”, which started in 2018. The initiative is carried out by the Brazilian Agricultural Research Corporation (EMBRAPA by its Portuguese acronym) and the National Institute of Agricultural Technology (INTA by its Spanish acronym) of Argentina, and is supported by the Brazilian Cooperation Agency (ABC by its Portuguese acronym) and the Argentine South-South and Triangular Cooperation Fund (FO.AR by its Spanish acronym).

The aim of this project is to assess the impacts of climate change on diseases of two crops of agro-Industry importance for Argentina and Brazil: sugarcane and peanut. In particular, it seeks to characterize climatic conditions that favor the development of diseases in these crops in the main producing regions of both countries (orange and brown rust, leaf scorch,

black spots) and to anticipate future scenarios in which these conditions may occur (EMBRAPA, 2022). All this is essential to be able to adopt adaptation measures (e.g., through the development of resistant varieties), avoiding severe crop losses in the coming decades (SIDICSS, 2022).

This project is based on another initiative (2011 and 2014) which produced information on epidemiological scenarios of pests and diseases in common Industry crops in both countries. This second initiative, still underway, seeks to deepen these findings and also prioritize the scientific and technological dissemination of its results (SIDICSS, 2022).

In addition, SSC bilaterally exchanged in Ibero-America during the 2020-2021 period to strengthen the *Fisheries* sector had a similar behavior to that associated with *Agriculture and livestock*. In this sense, initiatives aimed to cover the entire production cycle: optimize the aquaculture feeding system; support fish and shellfish farming; promote epidemiological surveillance; ensure safety (studies that detect nano and microplastics particles in shellfish); strengthen the value chain and improve the quality and sale of final products. Likewise, many initiatives focused on artisanal and local aspects,

promoting *Fisheries* as an economic resource, or were related to environmental issues. The experience Case 2.3 reviews, in which Chile supports Uruguay to identify adaptation and mitigation measures to address the damage caused by climate change to a local small-scale product, such as pink shrimp, is an example of the above.

→ CASE 2.3

Adapting artisanal fishery to climate change



According to the Marine Stewardship Council (MSC, 2022), climate change is having a profound impact on our oceans and on marine life. One of the greatest impacts is on fisheries, a productive sector on which many families depend in terms of labor and food security. Marine ecosystems in Latin-America show a reduction in the abundance, density and coverage of coral and of fish stocks and marine fauna, changes in plankton and loss of wetland ecosystems (CAF, 2022).

One of the most important shrimp species for Uruguayan artisanal fishery (the pink shrimp) can be found in the South of the Latin-American continent and its annual recruitment is strongly dependent on climatic and oceanographic variability. Due to its importance and taking advantage of Chile's accumulated experience, both countries carried out the Bilateral SSC

project *Capacity strengthening to assess the vulnerability of pink shrimp fisheries to climate change in Uruguay's coastal areas* between the Regional University Center (CURE by its Spanish acronym) in Uruguay, and Chile's Interdisciplinary Center for Aquaculture Research (INCAR by its Spanish acronym).

Its main aim was to promote the strengthening of institutional capacities for inclusive and sustainable development, through a pilot experience that involved artisanal pink shrimp fishery on the Uruguayan Atlantic coast. The approach was based on: food security, social development, environmental protection and natural resources; improved governance and the development of local communities; and the mitigation of the effects of climate change on marine resources and communities that depend on them (SIDICSS, 2022).

Both the scientific and research approach that characterized this initiative stand out. In September 2020, experts from both institutions participated in an online workshop in order to exchange on different instruments and mechanisms to improve scientific communication and its appropriation by society. Following this activity, a new training session was held in October to analyze possible applications of the model to assess the vulnerability of pink shrimp to climate change (INCAR, 2020).

Source: SEGIB based on Agencies and Directorates-General for Cooperation, CAF (2022), INCAR (2020) and MSC (2022).

Still within the Productive Sectors area, it is interesting to examine some of the topics on which initiatives on *Tourism* and *Industry* focused. In particular, a clear priority was set to promote tourism models based on historical, cultural and natural heritage, with a strong emphasis on the exchange of experiences at the local government level. Meanwhile, the industries that concentrated a greater number of SSC initiatives were those related to the processing of products derived from agriculture and livestock, such as honey (bee and sugar cane), rum, dairy products and textiles, among others.

The fourth area in terms of relative importance was Environment (73 Bilateral SSC initiatives in Ibero-America in the 2020-2021 period, corresponding to 11.0% of 661). Its relevance increases if the analysis considers that - unlike other areas - it is only composed of two sectors: *Disaster management* (1 out of 4 initiatives) and *Environment*, which, in addition to accounting for the other 75% of the actions and projects carried out in this area, is the third most important activity sector in the period

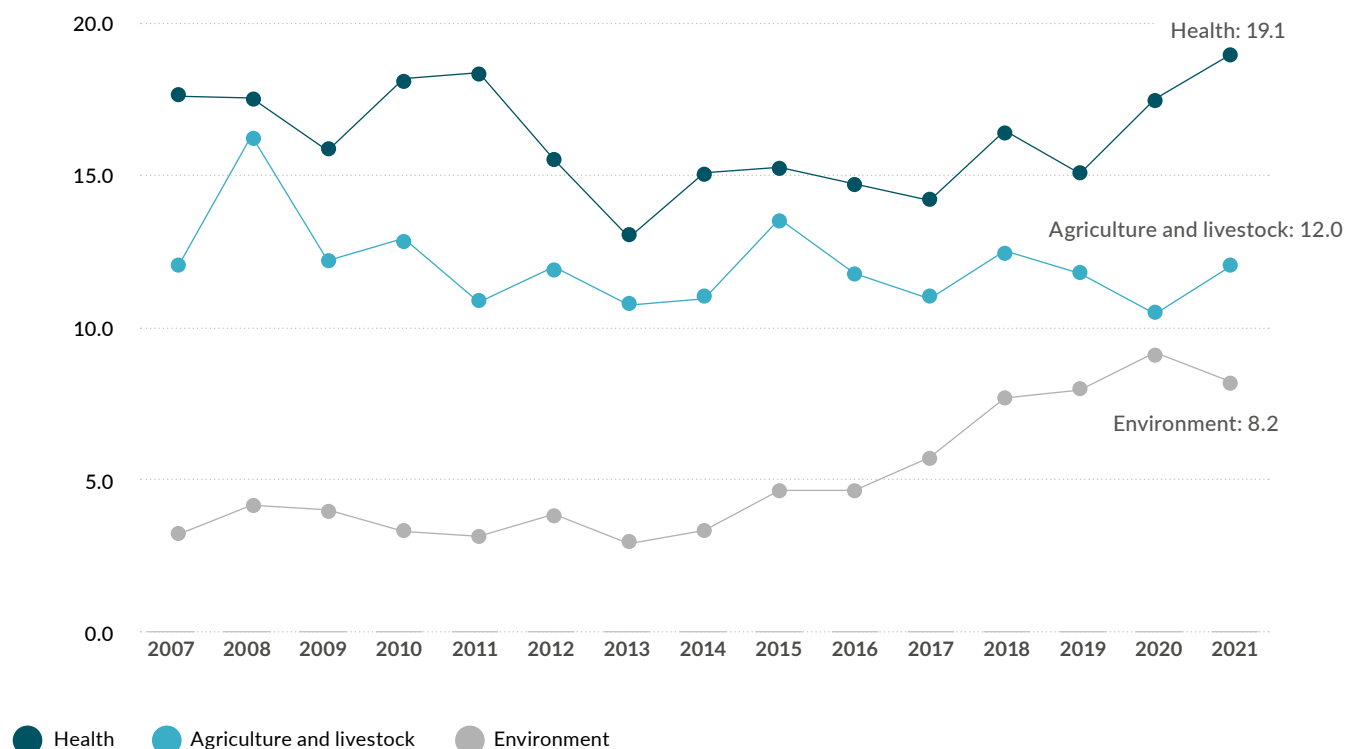
(55 exchanges, corresponding to 8.3% of the total - Graph 2.12). Graph 2.16, which shows the evolution - between 2007 and 2021 and in terms of relative annual shares - of

the three most important sectors in the last two-year period (*Health, Agriculture and livestock and Environment*), confirms this trend has been consolidating for years.

→ GRAPH 2.16

Evolution of the three main activity sectors of the 2020-2021 period, according to Bilateral SSC initiatives exchanged each year in Ibero-America. 2007-2021

In percentage



Source: SEGIB based on Agencies and Directorates-General for Cooperation

The variety of topics addressed by the more than 50 initiatives that in 2020-2021 were classified in the *Environment* sector ensured that the actions promoted by Ibero-American countries were completely comprehensive. There were numerous initiatives dedicated to the management and conservation of endangered species and ecosystems (marine, mountain and polar); the recovery of degraded soils in environments of special value; the integrated management of resources (especially hydrographic) and waste (solid, organic and inorganic, chemical products, hazardous waste, among others); and the development of capacities, techniques and skills in environmental assessment systems.

However, two of the most definitely recurring subjects - with a high degree of interrelation - aimed to contribute to the protection of biodiversity and to the region's fight against climate change. In fact, and as experiences described in Cases 2.2 and 2.3 revealed, the cross-cutting nature of the Ibero-American countries' response to the challenges posed by global warming had an impact on numerous actions of all kinds and significantly exceeded

those strictly classified in the *Environment* sector. This is certainly a result of the enormous importance countries attach to tackling a problem that can only be controlled with collective and coordinated actions that bring together more and different stakeholders. Ibero-America is committed to this global effort and its SSC is one of the most significant demonstrations. Box 2.2 was prepared to provide evidence for this statement, based on an analysis of the 170 initiatives that, between 2015 and 2021 and classified in 14 activity sectors, enabled Ibero-American countries to exchange their experience in mitigation and adaptation to climate change.

This context of constant threat, generated by the climate crisis and its worst effects, defines the growing importance of SSC initiatives promoted by Ibero-American countries in the 2020-2021 period to address *Disaster Management*. Within this sector, priority was given to address two types of phenomena: those related to global warming (mainly droughts and fires) and those inherent to the region's geological characteristics (volcanic and seismic). In either case, countries focused

on strengthening national institutions and on improving instruments (early warning systems), as well as procedures that, above all, and in the face of different adverse phenomena, increase the resilience of the most vulnerable populations.

→ BOX 2.2

Ibero-America and Bilateral South-South Cooperation in the face of the global climate crisis

The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) firmly states that “warming of the climate system is unequivocal” (IPCC, 2014).¹ Since the 1950s, unprecedented changes are happening: “the atmosphere and ocean have warmed, the amounts of snow and ice have diminished and sea level has risen” (IPCC, 2014). Extreme cold temperatures have also decreased, extreme warm temperatures have increased and more intense precipitation has been experienced in several regions (IPCC, 2014).

Scientists have demonstrated that this warming is, with high probability, a result of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions as a consequence of human activities, which have increased since the pre-Industrial era mainly due to economic and population growth (IPCC, 2014). As a result, current concentrations of these gases in the atmosphere are the highest in the last 800,000 years.

The risks that climate change brings to people and ecosystems are unevenly distributed and are usually higher for vulnerable people and communities (IPCC, 2014). Poor people have contributed least to greenhouse gas emissions and yet they are shouldering the bulk of the most negative impacts of climate change.

Controlling climate change requires a simultaneous strategy of mitigation and adaptation. Mitigation involves reducing GHG emissions into the atmosphere to slow warming. This can be achieved in two ways (EEA, 2022): by reducing the sources of these gases (avoiding, for example, burning fossil

fuels) or increasing the “sinks” that store them (such as oceans, forests and soil).

Without further mitigation efforts [...] by the end of the 21st century, warming will result in a high to very high risk of severe, widespread and irreversible global impacts (high confidence) (IPCC, 2014).

These efforts pose challenges at all levels, including the availability of appropriate technology.

On the other hand, adaptation “refers to changes in processes, practices and structures to moderate potential damages or to benefit from opportunities associated with climate change” (UNFCCC, 2022), such as the green economy. It is necessary both to adapt to the changes that are already occurring and to prepare for future impacts. Adaptation measures include, for example, the construction of defences against rising sea levels, integrated disaster management for extreme weather events, etc.

Besides the clear importance of adaptation, the IPCC (2014) already warned that its effectiveness is limited “especially with greater magnitudes and rates of climate change”. In turn, it is imperative that proposed adaptation measures do not increase GHG emissions (such as the use of fossil fuel-based cooling devices in the face of rising temperatures).

For all these reasons, and since this is a global problem with global consequences, countries at the international level have made

progress in different agreements to tackle it. Thus, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development adopted in 2015 includes a goal dedicated to “take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts”. However, the Paris Agreement (UN, 2015), adopted the same year under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), aims to strengthen the global response to the threat of climate change by holding the increase in the global average temperature to well below 2°C above pre-Industrial levels (UN, 2022). The agreement also aims to reinforce countries' capacity to deal with the effects of climate change.

Bilateral SSC in Ibero-America has not been a stranger to these international commitments. In fact, 170 initiatives were identified in the 2015-2021 period (141 projects and 29 actions) which objective is to tackle problems related to climate change, accounting for 7% of all bilateral initiatives in that period. Sixty-one percent correspond to adaptation measures and the remaining percentage is associated with mitigation or both, simultaneously.

Adaptation includes water resource management and integrated disaster management, followed by the adaptation of agriculture to climate change, a key sector for the region's economy. This involves, for example, the study of the effects of this phenomenon on agriculture and livestock, the development of varieties resistant to heat stress and drought, and water use efficiency, among others.

¹ The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) was created in 1988 to provide comprehensive assessments of the state of scientific, technical and socioeconomic knowledge on climate change, its causes, potential impacts and response strategies <https://www.ipcc.ch/>

On the other hand, the great majority of mitigation initiatives are related to energy efficiency and the promotion of renewable energies, followed by the sustainable management of forests, important "sinks" of greenhouse gases. Other initiatives for carbon footprint measurement and the development of GHG inventories were also identified, and experiences for the promotion of sustainable transport should be highlighted as well.

Since this is a cross-cutting issue, initiatives are aligned with 14 different activity sectors (of the 30 defined in the Ibero-American space). SDG 13 (Climate action) naturally stands out as the main SDG, but SDG 7 (Affordable and clean energy) and SDG 6 (Clean water and sanitation), which includes integrated water resources management, are also worthy of mention. If a second SDG is also considered in the analysis, SDG 15 (Life on land) and SDG 11 (Sustainable cities and communities) should also be highlighted.

Mexico, Brazil and Chile were the main providers of Bilateral SSC initiatives in the 2015-2021 period. These three countries account for 45% of the initiatives related to climate change. Argentina and Colombia follow, with 8% and 7%, respectively. Particularly, in Brazil's case, mitigation or adaptation is included in at least 13% of the bilateral initiatives in which it acts as provider in the period.

A greater diversity can be identified among recipients. Honduras, El Salvador, Ecuador, Bolivia and Uruguay stand out in this case; however, they only account for one third of the initiatives related to climate change. In Uruguay's case, these represent 13% of the bilateral initiatives in which it participates as a recipient in the analyzed period.

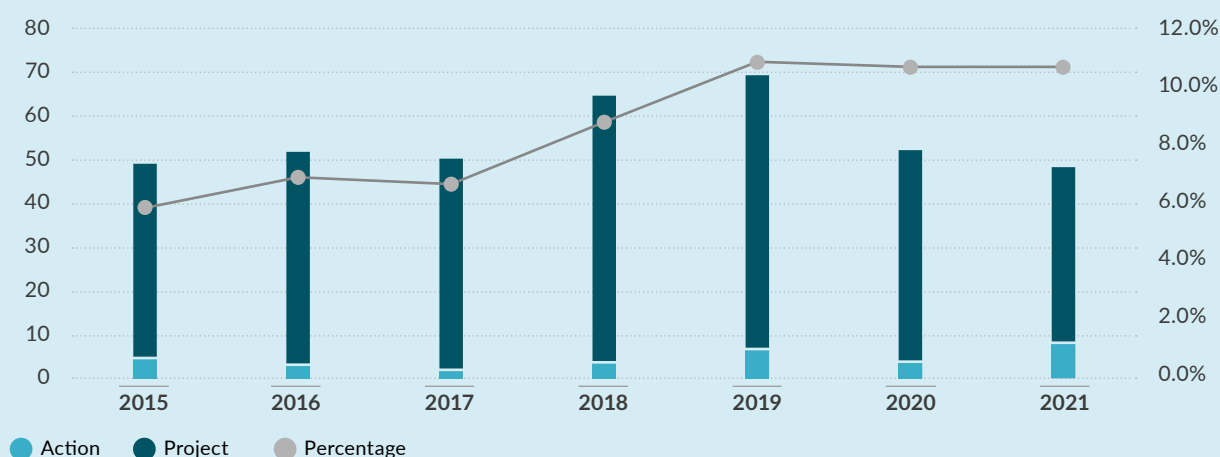
Finally, 28% of the identified initiatives are bidirectional, i.e., both partners act as both provider and recipient. Among these, the partnership between Mexico and

Chile is particularly noteworthy, through 13 joint mitigation and adaptation projects.

As for the evolution of these figures over time, and as shown in the graph prepared for this purpose, Bilateral SSC initiatives related to climate change increased from 2015 to 2019 but this trend was interrupted in 2020 and 2021 as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. However, the percentage of climate change in the total number of bilateral initiatives continued to be over 10% in the last two years.

Evolution of Bilateral SSC initiatives for climate change mitigation and adaptation, by type of instrument and percentage over the total number of bilateral initiatives in Ibero-America. 2015-2021

In units and percentage



Source: SEGIB based on Agencies and Directorates-General for Cooperation

Methodological note: The Ibero-American Integrated Data System on South-South and Triangular Cooperation (SIDICSS) was used to carry out this exercise. On this basis, a first broad filter was applied in order to search for cooperation initiatives that could be related to this topic (approximately 500) and then a manual review was performed to double check this aspect, based on initiatives' title and objectives. The first broad filter included initiatives in the *Disaster Management* and *Energy* sectors, aligned with SDG 13 (main or second) and those which title and/or objective included one of the key words related to the issue (both in Spanish and Portuguese, the two official languages of the Ibero-American Space). This classification implied initiatives aim to mitigate or adapt to climate change, although not necessarily explicitly. For example, mitigation included aspects related to renewable energies and energy efficiency, and adaptation included integrated disaster management (unless specifically related to earthquakes, volcanoes or tsunamis) and water resource management (as specified in IPCC, 2014, p. 28). Due to limited descriptive information, figures may probably be underestimated.

Source: SEGIB based on Agencies and Directorates-General for Cooperation, EEA (2022); IPCC (2014); UN (2015 and 2022) and UNFCC (2022).

Finally, the last group of SSC initiatives bilaterally exchanged in Ibero-America during the 2020-2021 period focused on two different types of purposes: on the one hand, 63 initiatives, corresponding to almost 10% of the total, addressed the need to strengthen operational aspects of national economies and were classified in the Infrastructure and Economic Services area; on the other hand, 30 actions and projects, accounting for the remaining 4.5%, were dedicated to the attention of important and cross-cutting sectors, such as *Culture* and *Gender*, which explain 75% of SSC initiatives associated with Other areas.

Specifically, through Bilateral SSC, Ibero-American countries made efforts to strengthen their economies, especially in the *Energy*, *Enterprises* and *Science and Technology* sectors (18, 15 and 14 initiatives respectively, which together account for almost 75% of all those classified in Infrastructure and economic services). Experiences were exchanged to promote greater energy efficiency and the use of renewable energies; strengthen institutions and regulations related to energy system; promote entrepreneurship, MSMEs and female inclusion in business; provide extraordinary support to these same companies to address the COVID-19 crisis and contribute to the development of digital business models in line with the new context; develop metrology as well as promote and share scientific and technological progress and explore their potential economic applications (experiences in information and satellite technologies, nanotechnology and advanced microscopy, among others).

More than 15 SSC initiatives were bilaterally exchanged by Ibero-American countries to strengthen various topics associated with the *Culture* sector. Among these, efforts made for the conservation, protection, restoration and enhancement of cultural heritage; the development of statistical and legislative instruments for its better management; the promotion of creative and cultural industries; as well as experiences that turn culture into an instrument to promote peace, coexistence and social inclusion, such as art programs, choirs and orchestras for young people, stand out. The analysis of this heterogeneous area is completed with almost 10 initiatives that were designed to empower women; thus, they tackled violence against women and promoted legislative progress to protect their rights and advance a more effective equality, not only for women but also for the LGTBI+ collective.

2.4.2. Countries' profile

An aggregated analysis of the region's cooperation illustrates the way in which Ibero-American countries participated in capacity building. Two graphs were prepared (2.17 and 2.19) in order to shed light on this. Both graphs show the areas of action on which countries' cooperation tended to focus; the former focuses on the main recipients while the latter depicts the main providers.

Indeed, Graph 2.17 lists the 12 countries in which exchanges the recipient role prevailed. It sorts them in descending order, Guatemala being at the top (47 initiatives as recipient) and Nicaragua at the bottom (9). The graph shows the total number of Bilateral SSC initiatives in which these countries participated as recipients, distributed according to the area of action with which they were aligned. As revealed, in a period dominated by the pandemic, the main result is fully consistent with what was stated above: the region set a clear priority to address every aspect related to the Social area.

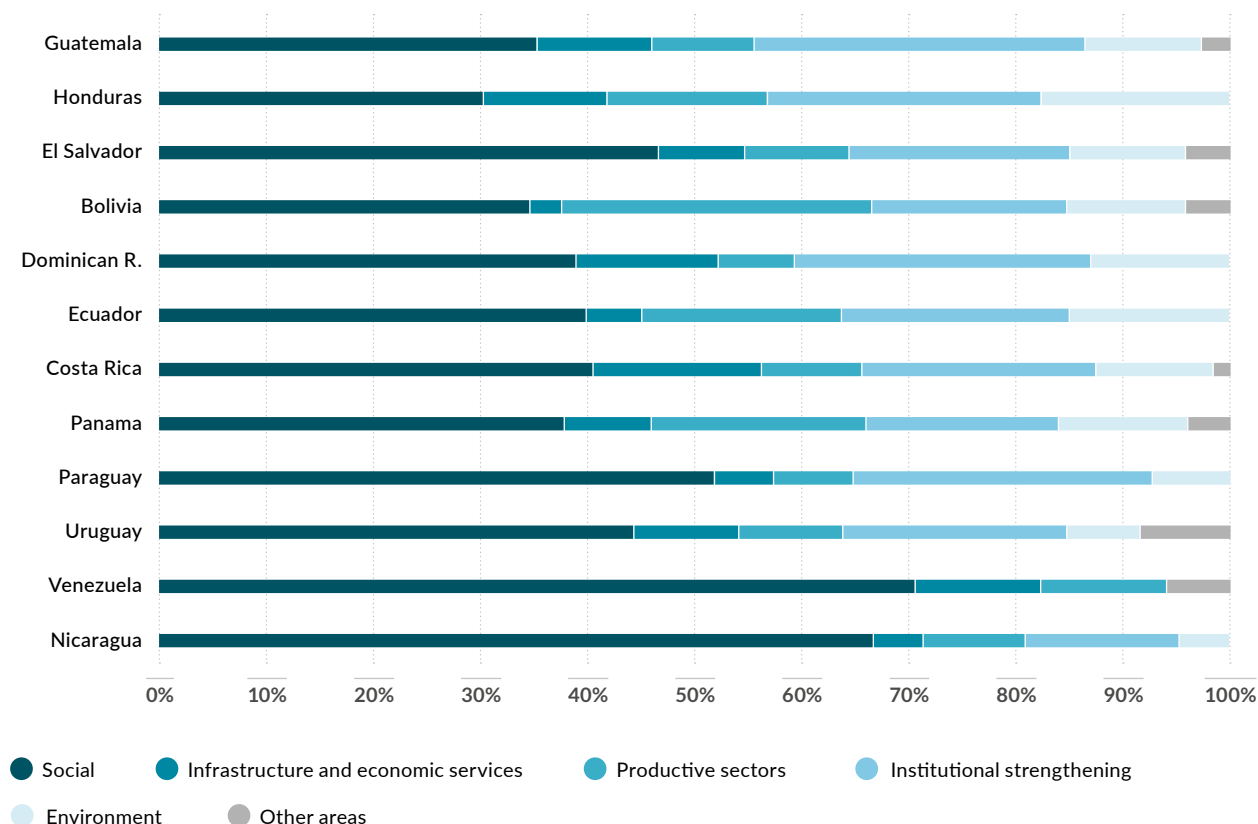
— Countries that mainly acted as recipients in Bilateral SSC concentrated the highest number of initiatives in the Social area

In fact, it concentrated the largest percentage of the initiatives in which these 12 countries participated as recipients. However, this range of values substantially varied from one country to another: thus, in the case of Honduras, Bolivia, Guatemala, Panama and the Dominican Republic, the Social area accounted for between 30% and 40% of the initiatives exchanged under this role; as for Ecuador, Costa Rica, Uruguay, El Salvador and Paraguay, this percentage rose to levels that could even slightly exceed 50%; while the cases of Nicaragua and Venezuela (with a lower volume of exchanges) were the most extreme, as the relative importance of this area of action in SSC these countries received reached maximum values of 66% and 71%, respectively.

→ GRAPH 2.17

Distribution of Bilateral SSC initiatives in Ibero-America in which countries that mainly act as recipients participated, by area of action. 2020-2021

In percentage



Note: The graph includes countries which ratio of received/provided initiatives is equal to one or higher; countries are arranged in descending order (the last country that appears in the list received the lowest number of initiatives).

Source: SEGIB based on Agencies and Directorates-General for Cooperation

Graph 2.17 also shows that, most of these countries prioritized the Institutional strengthening area when they received SSC from other regional partners. In this sense, this area was particularly relevant for 4 countries (Paraguay, Dominican Republic, Honduras and Guatemala), as it accounted for between a quarter and almost a third of the SSC initiatives in which they participated as recipients during the 2020-2021 period. Panama and Bolivia (in addition to Venezuela, which did not receive any initiative for this purpose) were exceptions to this profile. These two countries clearly prioritized the Productive sectors area, in which 20.0% and almost 30% of the initiatives received by each of them were executed.

Environment issues were also a priority for the countries that mainly acted as recipients. This is suggested by the fact that at least 8 of these countries strengthened their capacities in this area, accounting for at least 10% of the initiatives received in the years 2020-2021. The cases of Ecuador and Honduras are particularly noteworthy, which shares of SSC dedicated to Environment issues exceed 15%. Finally, cooperation to strengthen Infrastructure and economic services had a more circumstantial importance,

with exceptional records for the Dominican Republic and Costa Rica, for which this area represented 15% of their SSC as recipient countries.

Graph 2.18 was precisely plotted to better illustrate these countries' behavior as it distributes the initiatives in which the three most active recipients participated, by areas of action and activity sectors: Guatemala, Honduras and El Salvador (47, 46 and 38 bilateral SSC actions and projects as recipients during 2020-2021).

Thus, as Graph 2.18 shows and given the context of the pandemic, these three Central-American countries received Bilateral SSC that prioritized the strengthening of the *Health* sector. However, the relative importance of this sector in the total number of initiatives received by each country differed considerably, ranging from 16.5% in Honduras' case to 20.3% in Guatemala's and a maximum of 27.4% in El Salvador's. It is also possible to identify significant differences in terms other strengthened capacities. As for Guatemala's cooperation, the *Health* sector was followed by initiatives that contributed to strengthen *Peace, public and national security and*

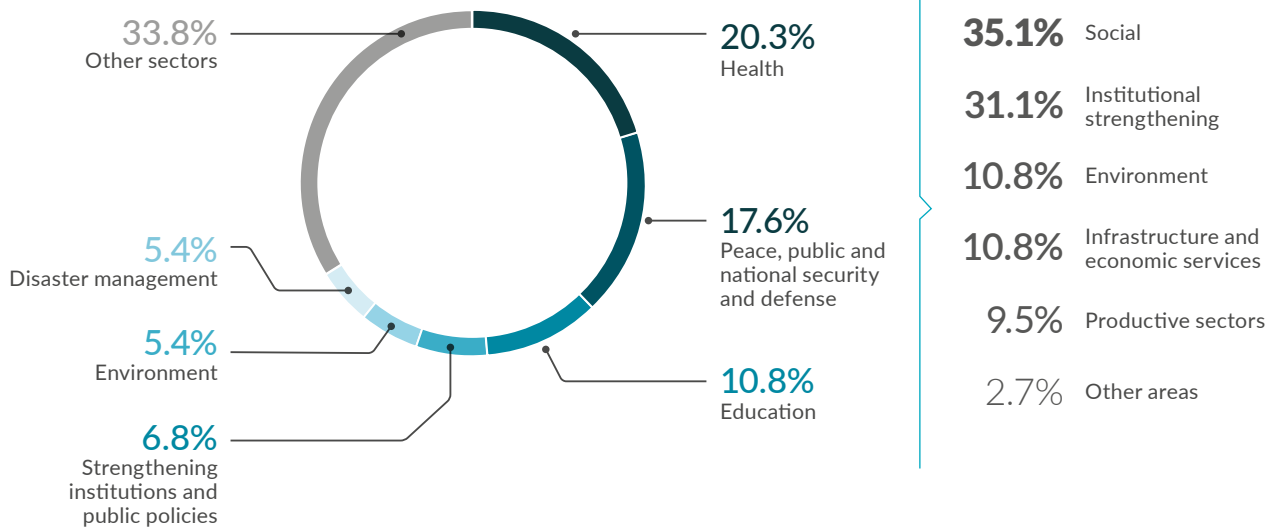
defense (17.5%) and, to a less extent, by those dedicated to Education (the only other sector with a share above 10%). On the other hand, Honduras' second priority as SSC recipient was associated with Agriculture and livestock (13.9%), also addressing the Environment and Disaster management sectors (shares of 9%). Meanwhile, El Salvador had a very diversified profile as recipient and strengthened a wide variety of capacities, among which Education and Strengthening institutions and public policies stood out, each with shares of 8.2%.

→ GRAPH 2.18

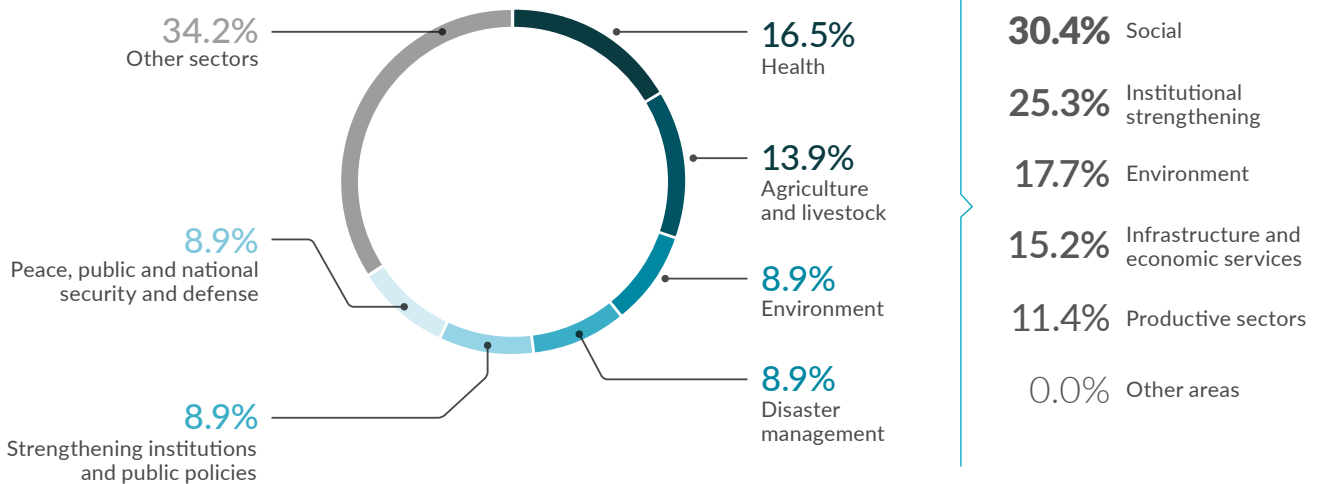
Distribution of Bilateral SSC initiatives in Ibero-America in which the main recipients participated, by activity sector and area of action. 2020-2021

In percentage

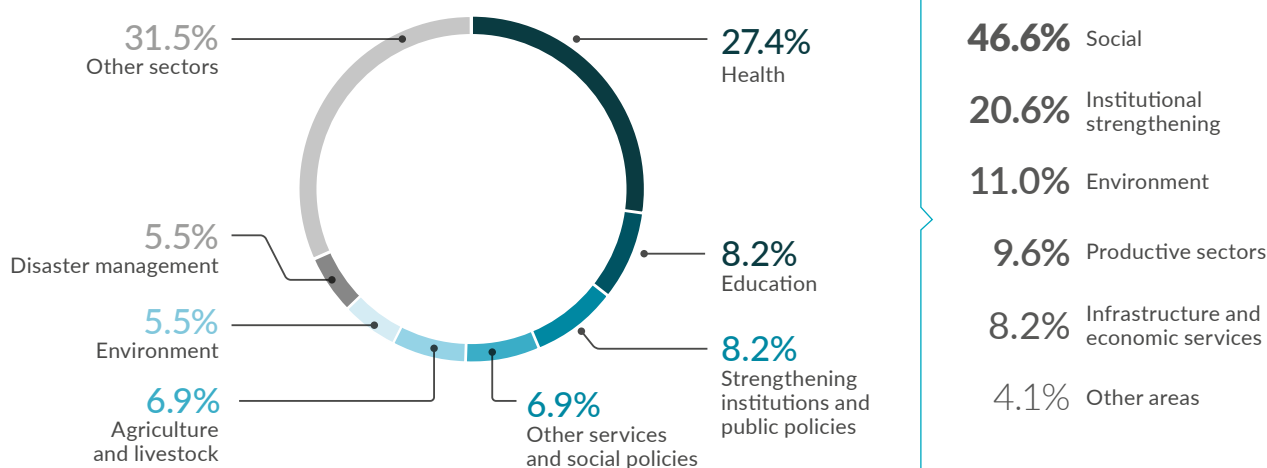
A. Guatemala



B. Honduras



C. El Salvador



Source: SEGIB based on Agencies and Directorates-General for Cooperation

In addition, Graph 2.19 distributes the Bilateral SSC initiatives in which the 7 countries that mainly acted as providers participated, by areas of action. Once again, countries were arranged in descending order from Chile (at the top of the list, registering a maximum of 96 initiatives in this role) to Argentina (at the bottom, with a minimum of 23). This graph suggests the main providers had remarkably different cooperation profiles.

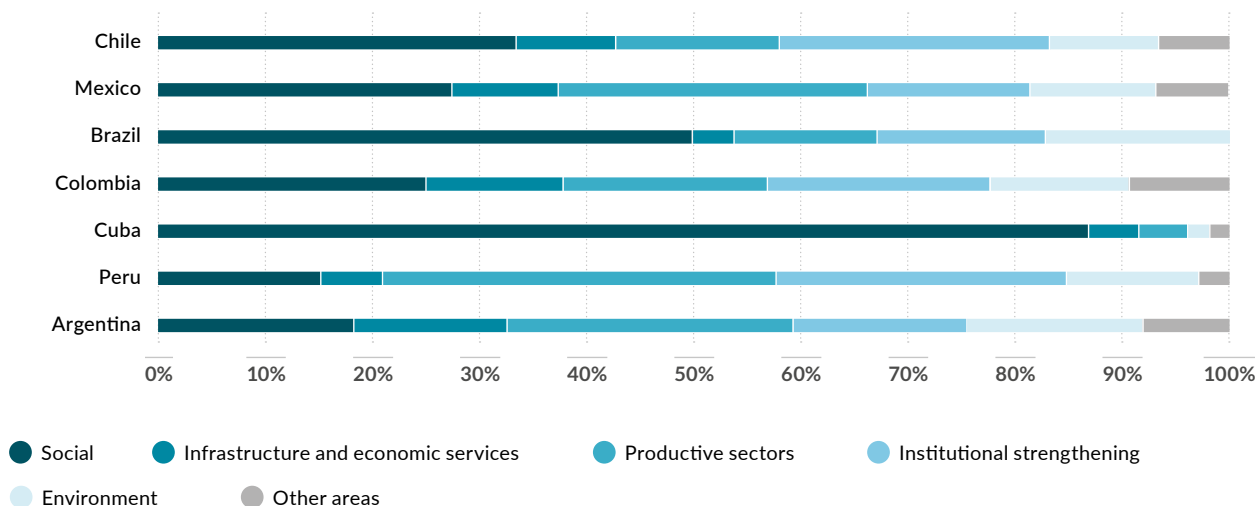
Indeed, it is important to highlight those countries that mainly transferred capacities to strengthen the Social area. However, and although they share this feature, the cases of Cuba and Brazil differ considerably from those of Colombia and Chile. On the one hand, the Social area would account for 9 out of 10 of the SSC initiatives exchanged by Cuba, as provider, with other

Ibero-American partners, being the remaining areas almost circumstantial. Meanwhile, in Brazil's case, the Social area accounted for half of the SSC it bilaterally provided, the other 50% of its initiatives being distributed fairly evenly among three other areas, the most prominent being Environment (17.1% of 67). In contrast, the importance the Social area has in SSC provided by Colombia and Chile fluctuates in remarkably lower ranges, equivalent to a quarter and a third of the initiatives provided by each of these countries. In fact, addressing Social issues would be highly complementary to efforts made in the Institutional strengthening area, which accounts for more than 20% and 25% of the actions and projects offered by Colombia and Chile, respectively.

→ GRAPH 2.19

Distribution of Bilateral SSC initiatives in Ibero-America in which countries that mainly act as providers participated, by area of action. 2020-2021

In percentage



Note: The graph includes countries which ratio of provided/received initiatives is equal to one or higher; countries are arranged in descending order (the last country that appears in the list provided the lowest number of initiatives).

Source: SEGIB based on Agencies and Directorates-General for Cooperation

Argentina, Peru and Mexico, in turn, should be grouped together, as their Bilateral SSC as providers is mainly focused on transferring their knowledge and experience in the Productive sectors area. In fact, this would account for 26.5% of the initiatives in which Argentina participated as provider, 29.1% of those exchanged by Mexico and 36.5% of those in Peru's case. Meanwhile, capacity building in the Social area, although complementary, would materialize in very different ways.

Mexico shows the strongest commitment to Social issues, this area ranking second in terms of relative importance (27.6%, a figure just 1.5 percentage points below that of the Productive sectors area). The Social area is also in second place in Argentina's case (18.3%), but at a remarkable distance from productive issues and with figures that are very close to the rest of the areas. Finally, Peru's profile is different, since Institutional strengthening accounts for almost 27% of the SSC initiatives bilaterally provided to other partners in the region. This figure, together with that registered in terms of the productive area, would explain almost 2 out of 3 initiatives.

Finally, Graph 2.20 details the capacities that were transferred by the three countries that most frequently acted as providers. To this end, the graph distributes SSC initiatives Chile, Mexico and Brazil bilaterally provided to their Ibero-American partners in the 2020-2021 period, according to the area of action and the activity sector in which they were classified. Its interpretation suggests diverse profiles.

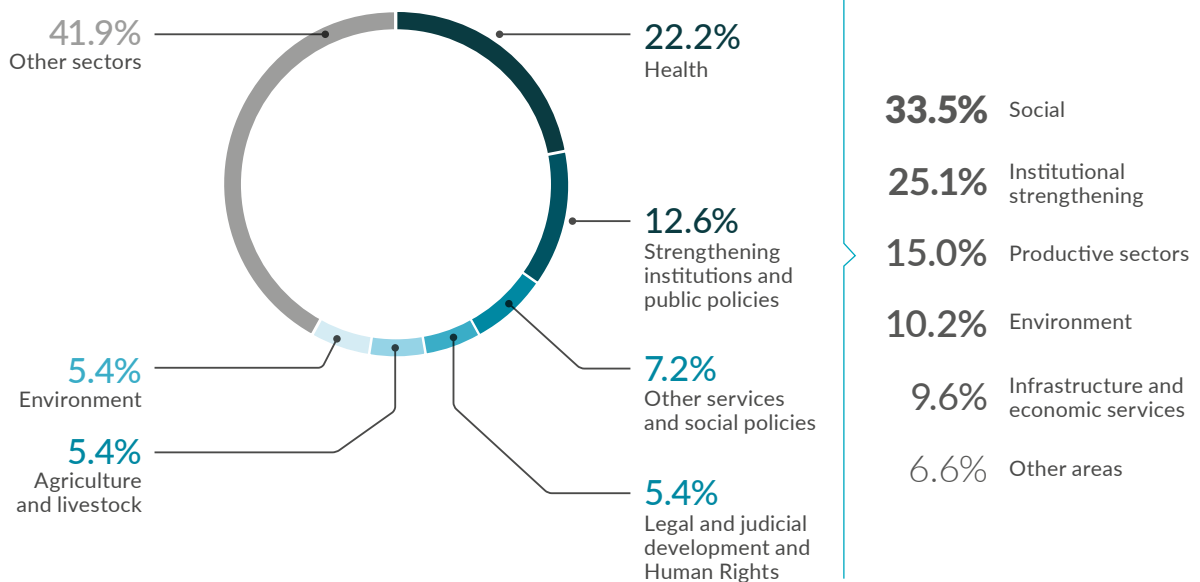
Bilateral SSC provided by Argentina, Peru and Mexico together with other Ibero-American partners focused on the Productive sectors area

→ GRAPH 2.20

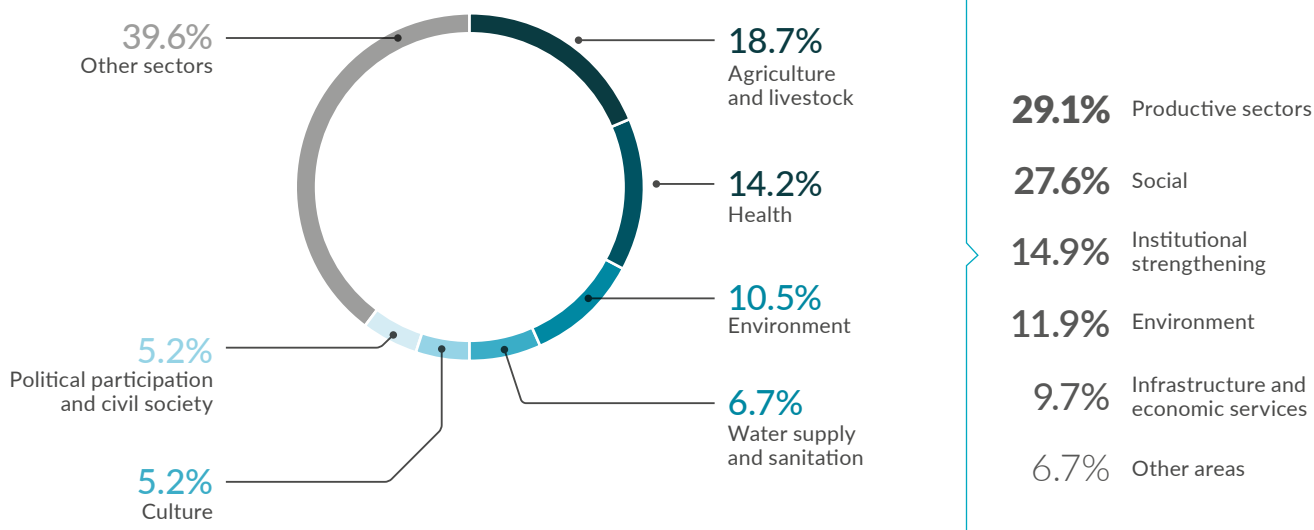
Distribution of Bilateral SSC initiatives in Ibero-America in which the main providers participated, by activity sector and area of action. 2020-2021

In percentage

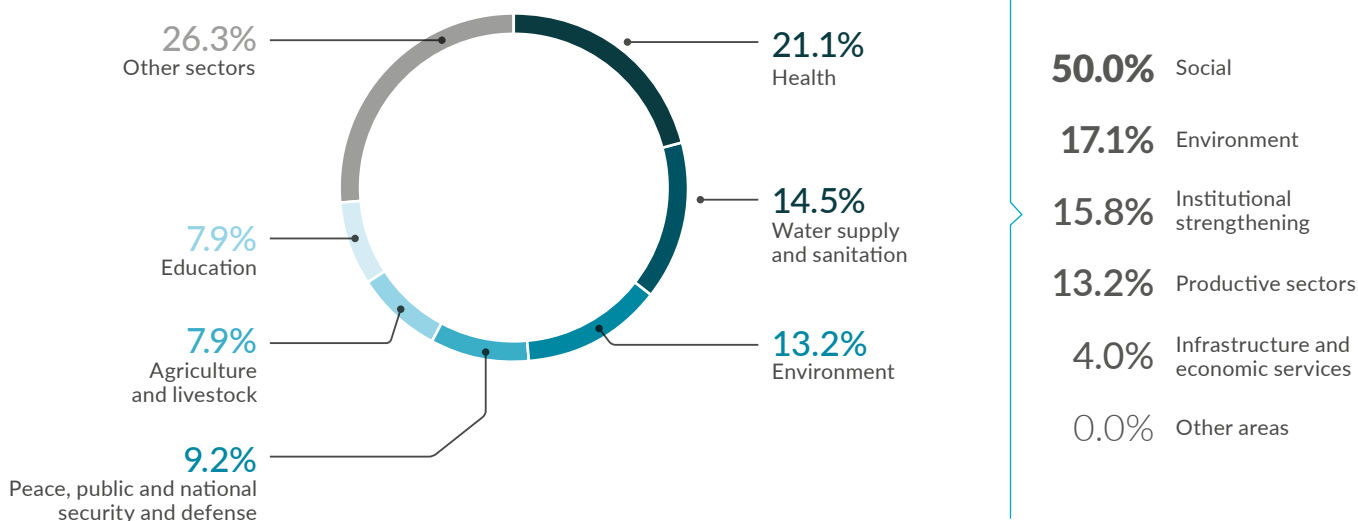
A. Chile



B. Mexico



C. Brazil



Source: SEGIB based on Agencies and Directorates-General for Cooperation

For both Chile and Brazil, *Health* is the sector that concentrates the largest number of initiatives (in both cases, above 20%). However, two differences should be noted. First, capacities specifically transferred in *Health* are quite different: Chile's cooperation was strongly defined by the response to the COVID-19 crisis, and it focused on the promotion of online courses and training; meanwhile, Brazil's cooperation continued supporting its most representative programs, especially Maternal Milk Banks. The second difference is related to the type of capacities they strengthened. Indeed, Chile's initiatives addressed very different topics. As a result, *Strengthening institutions and public policies* is the only other sector

which share is higher than 10% and, together with *Health*, both account for only one third of the initiatives Chile bilaterally provided to the rest of the Ibero-American partners. Brazil, in turn, strongly promoted SSC initiatives which aimed at strengthening the *Water supply and sanitation* and *Environment* sectors, both with a relative importance above 10%. Thus, these three sectors account for almost one half of the actions and projects this country provided to the region in 2020-2021.

2.5 Bilateral South-South Cooperation in 2020-2021 and the Sustainable Development Goals

One third of the time that was set for the achievement of the 2030 Agenda had passed when the COVID-19 pandemic began. However, although during these years the international community had made progress towards this goal, this crisis' serious impacts triggered the threat of a major setback, in addition to casting a shadow - 10 years still ahead - on the real possibilities of achieving Sustainable Development according to the targets that were defined. ECLAC warned about these risks, specifically for Latin-America and the Caribbean, and pointed out that the pandemic broke out in an already complicated context, after "seven years of slow growth" combined with "increasing poverty, extreme poverty and inequality rates" that had a particularly critical impact on the most vulnerable and threatened to leave the most underprivileged population behind. In addition to the above, "structural problems of the economic and (...) social model" of the region strongly re-emerged, not only aggravating the crisis, but also jeopardizing the effectiveness of the many measures Latin-American countries adopted to respond to it (ECLAC, 2020a).

— Bilateral SSC in 2020-2021 was mainly aligned with SDG 3 (Good health and well-being), SDG 16 (Peace, justice and strong institutions) and SDG 8 (Decent work and economic growth)

However, in the face of this difficult and challenging scenario, ECLAC also stressed the opportunity countries had to commit to "accelerate" the achievement of the 2030 Agenda, advancing a development model that, in addition to overcoming this crisis, would ensure the resilient, inclusive and sustainable recovery that must be the foundation of a post-pandemic world. ECLAC also recalled this commitment should be part of countries' international agenda and that it should be guided by five milestones, one of which is particularly relevant for this Report: supporting SSC, which recognition in 2015 as a means for the effective implementation of the 2030 Agenda was reaffirmed

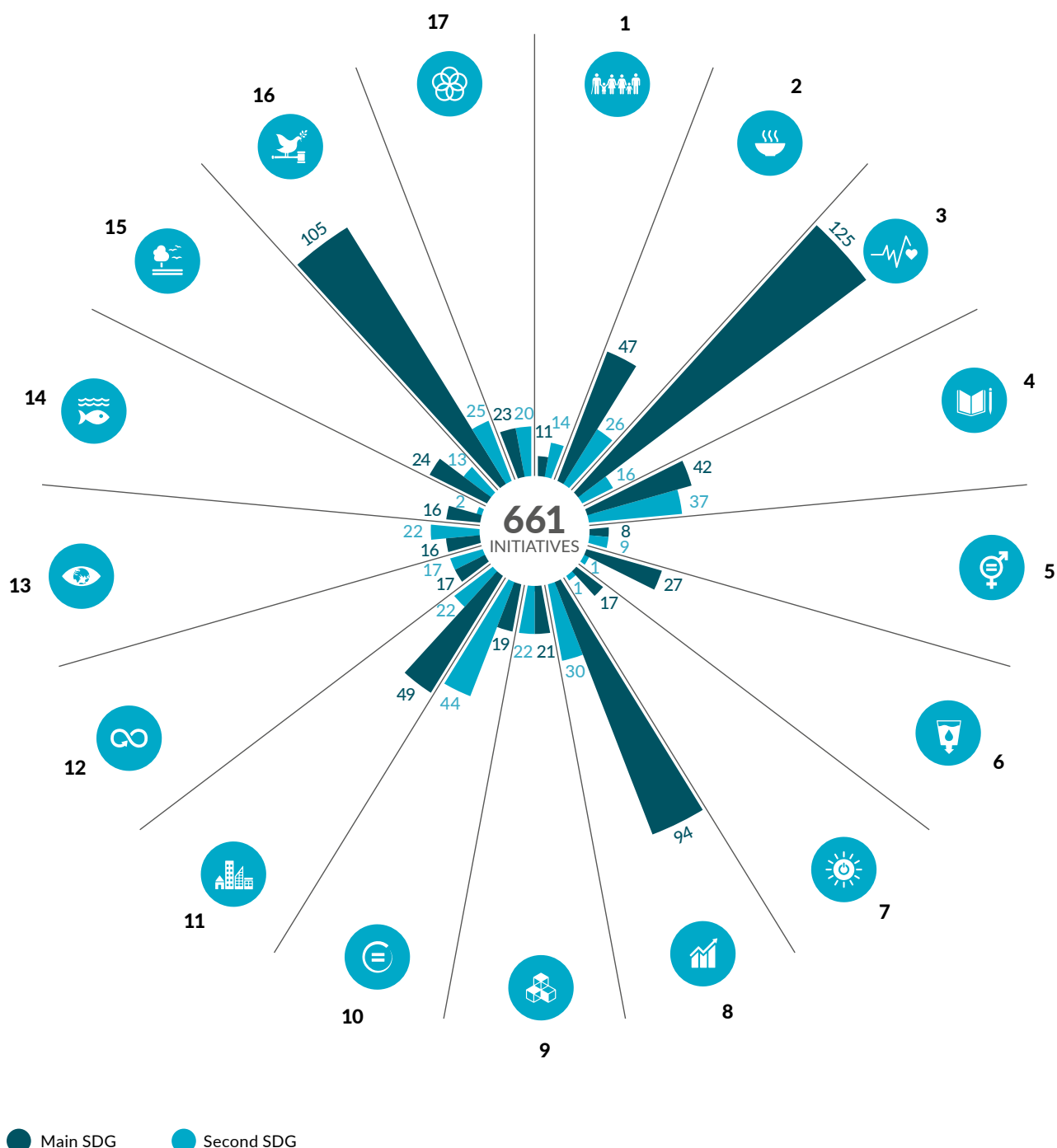
in 2019, prior to this crisis, during the UN Conference that commemorated the 40th anniversary of the Buenos Aires Plan of Action (BAPA) (ECLAC, 2020b).

In line with this, the need to continue promoting SSC to contribute to advance the achievement of Sustainable Development becomes imperative. In this regard, SSC bilaterally exchanged by Ibero-American countries confirms the region's commitment to the 2030 Agenda during the hardest years of the pandemic (2020-2021). Thus, in this period, Ibero-American SSC reveals an alignment with the SDGs that responds to a dual purpose: to continue addressing structural problems - consolidating long-standing programs - while implementing SSC initiatives to respond to the COVID-19 crisis.

→ GRAPH 2.21

Distribution of Bilateral SSC initiatives in Ibero-America, by their potential alignment with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). 2020-2021

In units



SEGIB based on Agencies and Directorates-General for Cooperation

Graph 2.21, which distributes the 661 SSC initiatives Ibero-American countries bilaterally exchanged during the 2020-2021 period according to the main SDG with which they were potentially aligned, sheds light on these two combined purposes. However, given the multidimensional and comprehensive approach of the Agenda, the same

graph also illustrates the “second” SDG to which initiatives could also be contributing. Indeed, Ibero-American countries stated 75% of the initiatives implemented in those years also addressed one (or even two) of these second SDGs.

In this context, it was certainly predictable that the 2020-2021 period would confirm the usual trend: the concentration of the largest number of initiatives on SDG 3 (Good health and well-being), 125, corresponding to almost 1 in 5 of those promoted these years. In terms of relative importance, 105 actions and projects potentially aligned with SDG 16 (Peace, justice and strong institutions) followed, as well as 94 exchanges that addressed SDG 8 (Decent work and economic growth). As the graph shows, Ibero-American countries concentrated their greatest efforts on these three Sustainable Development Goals, which account for one half of the 661 SSC initiatives implemented in 2020-2021.

Case 2.4. precisely illustrates how these priorities have been combined. This initiative, launched in 2019, prior to the pandemic crisis, addressed one of the most significant challenges society is currently facing: labor market inclusion of young people, who are affected by high unemployment rates. Through this initiative, Mexico

shares its experience (which in the 2019-2020 period benefited more than 1.5 million young people) with El Salvador. The initiative addresses a structural challenge, prioritized in the 2030 Agenda through SDG 8 (Decent Work and economic growth). Its importance is even more significant during the COVID-19 crisis, which has hit employment hard, especially that of the most vulnerable groups, such as youth.

→ CASE 2.4

Training and labor market inclusion of young people: a major challenge in the COVID-19 context



Youth unemployment is one of the most pressing problems worldwide and it has increased as a consequence of the socio-economic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. The lack of job opportunities for young people not only affects the economy as a whole, but also increases inequality and is detrimental to citizens' human development. In Mexico, for example, the population between 18 and 29 years that has the possibility to study or work but is not currently doing so is above 2 million (Secretary of Labor and Social Welfare of Mexico, 2022).

In the face of this huge challenge, the program Youth Building the Future (*Jóvenes construyendo el futuro*) focuses on training for work and effective inclusion in the labor market. In 2019, the Program benefitted 1,120,543 young adults and, by 2020, it supported 444,585 new applicants, adding up to 1,565,128 at the end of that year (Secretary of Labor and Social Welfare of Mexico, 2021).

Due to its success, this initiative was replicated in other countries of the region, such as El Salvador, which faces similar challenges. Indeed, Mexico shared the Program with this Central-American partner through the Mexican Agency for International Cooperation for Development (AMEXCID by its Spanish acronym) and it had an impact on young people in communities of prioritized municipalities with high rates of migration flows, poverty, reduced employment opportunities and risk of violence. Efforts were made to strengthen their participation in community development, on-the-job training and in the reconstruction of the social fabric, through the promotion of endogenous leaderships and the generation of instruments for a better quality of life and to strengthen their connection with their territorial environment and their inclusion in productive activities (Agency for International Cooperation of El Salvador, ESCO by its Spanish acronym, 2019).

This initiative, which started in 2019 and is still under execution, was supported and coordinated by several national institutions in both countries such as the Ministries of Foreign Affairs, Government and Territorial Development, Labor and Social Welfare, International Cooperation Agencies and the Integrated Public Health System, among others.

The program was recently launched in San Salvador, in February 2022, in close coordination with the Mayor's Office, providing scholarships to 200 at-risk young adults from six different districts. The investment was of 280,000 USD and will last 8 months, after which participants will receive a certification for their skills, which will enable them to enhance their labor competencies and productive processes (*La Huella Newspaper*, 2022).

As Graph 2.21 shows, the purposes addressed by the rest of the Bilateral SSC exchanges that were implemented in Ibero-America in 2020-2021 are much more diversified. The ranges of values in which they fluctuate are consequently much lower, never exceeding the figure of 50 initiatives, at a considerable distance from values associated with SDGs 3, 16 and 8.

As for the rest of the SDGs, it is worth to highlight the efforts made by Ibero-American countries to address SDG 4 (Quality education), SDG 2 (Zero hunger) and SDG 11 (Sustainable cities and communities), each of them being the main purpose of between 40 and 50 initiatives that aggregately account for 20% of the total. Ibero-American countries also focused on topics aligned with SDG 9 (Industry, innovation and infrastructure), SDG 17 (Partnerships for the goals), SDG 15 (Life on land) and SDG 6 (Clean water and sanitation), figures ranging, in each case, between 20 and 30 initiatives. All the above suggests the multidimensional scope of the

region's SSC, which will be even more evident when the analysis considers the types of second SDGs that were simultaneously addressed. Case 2.5 is an example of the aforementioned, as it reviews a bilateral exchange between Ecuador and Peru that focuses on water conservation (SDG 6 as the main SDG), with the additional aim to contribute to the recovery of mountain ecosystems (SDG 15 as a second SDG).

— SDG 4 (Quality education), SDG 2 (Zero hunger) and SDG 11 (Sustainable cities and communities) were identified as the main purpose of between 40 and 50 initiatives

→ CASE 2.5

Protecting water: key to recover mountain ecosystems

Mountain ecosystems are of global importance. They are the source of the world's major rivers and, as rates of precipitation are higher in mountains, storing both ice and snow, they are also origins of groundwater. Thus, mountain ecosystems provide freshwater to more than half of the world's population, for domestic consumption, irrigation, industry and energy generation, among other activities (UNESCO, 2014). This is the case of the Metropolitan District of Quito, Ecuador, which is supplied with water from the moorlands that surround the city. The Environmental Fund for Water Protection (FONAG by its Spanish acronym) preserves and recovers these areas to ensure water supply, "with a technical, social equity and sustainability approach" (FONAG, 2022).

Based on this experience, FONAG provides technical assistance to the National Institute for Research on Glaciers and Mountain Ecosystems of Peru (INAIGEM by its Spanish acronym), through a SSC project on

water services research, through which the two institutions share their experiences in the impact conservation and recovery of mountain ecosystems has on these services (FONAG, 2021). INAIGEM, in turn, is a Peruvian government institution that works to increase scientific and technological research on glaciers and mountain ecosystems, promoting their sustainable management in favor of the populations that depend on or benefit from them (Ministry of Environment of Peru, MINAM by its Spanish acronym, 2020).

The project began in 2020 and has executed several activities, initially online due to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. At the end of 2021, FONAG's technical team visited INAIGEM's headquarters in Huaraz, and was able to visit some of the Institute's research sites, such as pine tree slopes and grasslands in Cátac, a bofedal (type of high Andean wetland) on the Pastouri glacier route (over 3,600 meters above sea level)



and pine tree plantations in Tayacoto (over 4,500 meters above sea level). Acid drainage produced by glacier retreat was also witnessed in these sites. Ecuadorian technical experts found differences between high mountain ecosystems of both countries - for example, in the conditions that determine their formation - but similarities between plant species (FONAG, 2021).

The project continues to monitor INAIGEM's research aimed at assessing impacts on the provision of water services (SIDICSS, 2022) and plans to continue inter-institutional joint work in the future (FONAG, 2021).

Meanwhile, around 100 SSC initiatives (another 15% of 661), focused on topics aligned with up to seven different SDGs: specifically, SDG 1 (No poverty), SDG 5 (Gender equality), SDG 7 (Affordable and clean energy), SDG 10 (Reduced inequalities), SDG 12 (Responsible consumption and production), SDG 13 (Climate action) and SDG 14 (Life below water). Although their relative importance as main SDGs is lower, these SDGs should not be considered less relevant, since another analysis clearly contradicts this: in most of these cases (SDG1, SDG5, SDG10 and SDG13) these Goals significantly increase their importance if considered “second” SDGs. Indeed, one of the great strengths of the 2030 Agenda is its multidimensional approach and its comprehensive treatment of such a complex process as development. The way in which SSC initiatives are adapted to be able to simultaneously address different goals ratifies Ibero-American countries’ commitment to the 2030 Agenda and to progress towards sustainable, resilient and inclusive development “leaving no one behind”.

Once again, as Graph 2.21 shows, one of the most illustrative cases of this effort is the fight against inequality: SDG 10 (Reduced inequalities) appears as the main SDG in 19 initiatives, but is considered the second SDG in 44 exchanges (more than twice as many), which means this purpose is explicitly present in at least 1 out of every 10 initiatives. In fact, the possibility to be aligned with more than one goal enables to also focus, for example, on economy and employment (SDG 8 and SDG 9); sustainability (SDG 11, SDG 13 and SDG 15) or on supporting populations in especially vulnerable conditions (SDG 1, SDG 2, SDG 5 and, as mentioned, SDG 10).

→ CASE 2.6

Haku Wiñay/Noa Jayatai “Let’s grow” (*Vamos a crecer*): agricultural entrepreneurship and social inclusion



One of the main conclusions of UNDP’s Regional Human Development Report 2021 is that the Latin-America and Caribbean region is caught in a trap of high inequality and low growth as a result of the complex interaction of three main factors: the concentration of power, violence and inefficient social protection systems (UNDP, 2021, p.3). As inequality, the different gaps that affect the region’s development have been deepened by the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. In the face of this complex scenario, SSC has much to contribute with effective mechanisms for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development as well as with frameworks for the exchange of knowledge which, ultimately improves people’s quality of life.

The bilateral project between Peru and Panama, *Exchange of experiences for the implementation of a social intervention project based on the Haku Wiñay/Noa Jayatai FONCODES-MIDIS*, is an

example of this cooperation, which is focused on reducing horizontal and vertical inequalities (income gaps, and cultural and geographic gaps, respectively). Through this initiative, Panama strengthened its capacities in the *Other services and social policies* sector, based on the Peruvian public policy Haku Wiñay/Noa Jayatai “Let’s grow” (*Vamos a crecer*).

This initiative consisted of a series of exchanges to transfer knowledge, skills and competencies between officials of the Ministries of Social Development of the two countries and among their communities and other stakeholders. The project had a component of productive inclusion for families, among others. The Peruvian policy Haku Wiñay/Noa Jayatai “Let’s grow” (*Vamos a crecer*), the model on which this knowledge transfer was based, has been implemented for almost 10 years in the framework of the National Strategy for Social Development and Inclusion “Include to Grow” (*Incluir*

para Crecer), promoted to generate sustainable economic inclusion through the development of productive capacities and rural entrepreneurship in beneficiary families, in order to overcome their lack of access to local markets (Social Development Cooperation Fund, FONCODES by its Spanish acronym, 2021).

In the framework of the implementation of this bilateral project, both countries addressed their adaptation to a new socio-economic context within the global health emergency posed by the COVID-19 pandemic. It is also important to highlight the strong territorial, community-based and participatory spirit of the project, which takes advantage of Yachachiqs’ traditional knowledge (in Quechua language: peasant leaders who know and teach) and uses the farmer-to-farmer training model, mainly based on horizontal and mutually beneficial formulas, in line with SSC.

An example of the importance of this combination of purposes is described in Case 2.6, based on an experience between Peru and Panama. This project, aimed at indigenous populations, promotes agricultural entrepreneurship as a means to generate income to contribute to overcoming poverty and inequalities (income, cultural and geographic). In any case, and although it is still not enough, this experience accounts for SSC promoted in Ibero-America for and/or with these populations. Box 2.3 examines this, as it analyzes all the actions and projects that, between 2015 and 2021, have had indigenous peoples among their main objectives.

This sheds light on the efforts that have been made - and on those actions that still remain undone - through SSC, to "accelerate" the achievement of the Agenda and effectively "leave no one behind".

→ BOX 2.3

Ibero-America, the 2030 Agenda and South-South Cooperation for and/or with indigenous peoples

In 2007, the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples recognized "Indigenous peoples have suffered from historic injustices as a result of, inter alia, their colonization and dispossession of their lands, territories and resources, thus preventing them from exercising, in particular, their right to development in accordance with their own needs and interests" (UN, 2007). Latin-America is the continent that has the largest indigenous population and heterogeneity on the planet (58.2 million in 2018, around 10% of the total), with more than 800 peoples (ECLAC and FILAC, 2020).

Although the countries of the region have been making progress to recognize and protect their rights, "indigenous peoples are still one of the most socially, politically and economically excluded and neglected sectors of the population in Latin-America" (ECLAC and FILAC, 2020, p. 15). Among other things, indigenous populations have a higher incidence of income poverty than non-indigenous people, even more than twice in some countries (ECLAC and FILAC, 2020). At the same time, "major barriers persist in the access of indigenous peoples to secondary education" (ECLAC and FILAC, 2020, p. 233). In addition to this, it is possible to identify challenges in terms of access to housing, basic services, etc.

On the other hand, indigenous peoples play a key role in climate change mitigation and biodiversity conservation -particularly agro-diversity - through their knowledge, practices and uses of nature. In fact, the aforementioned United Nations Declaration recognizes that "respect for indigenous knowledge, cultures and traditional practices contributes to sustainable and equitable development and proper management of the environment" (UN, 2007).

As a consequence of the above, protecting their territories is no longer only essential for them, but for all humanity. "However, this collective continues to be among the groups that lag the furthest behind in terms of its rights in all countries of the region" (ECLAC and FILAC, 2020, p. 16). The irruption of the mining industry in the Amazon area and the expansion of the agricultural frontier into their territories are some of the threats to which they are exposed.

At the same time, climate change has deepened inequity towards indigenous peoples since, even though they contribute the least to greenhouse gas emissions and protect forests, they are among the groups that are most vulnerable to its effects. In addition, their situation has been aggravated by the health and socioeconomic crisis caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.

The above suggests the diversity and richness of Latin-America's indigenous peoples can provide answers to some of the major challenges of our times, such as the climate crisis. However, this "requires comprehensive policies to tackle the structural causes of the exclusion of indigenous peoples in terms of development and well-being, which design and implementation must necessarily involve indigenous peoples themselves as essential stakeholders" (ECLAC and FILAC, 2020, p. 234), in line with the principle of leaving no one behind of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

How has SSC responded to these challenges? In the document *South-South and Triangular Cooperation and Indigenous Peoples*, Zúñiga states that "South-South and Triangular Cooperation for or with indigenous peoples has been essentially absent from the definitions of public policies on cooperation in most of the countries of the Ibero-American community" (Zúñiga, 2022, p. 30). Although not specifically aimed at indigenous people, several South-South and Triangular Cooperation instruments can support this type of initiatives. However, in Zúñiga's perspective (2022), the subject is not being addressed on the basis of a specific strategic guideline.

Forty-eight Bilateral SSC initiatives were implemented in Ibero-America between 2015 and 2021 (see methodological note) for and/or with indigenous peoples (39 projects and 9 actions), accounting for 2% of the total. This percentage is only slightly higher than that identified by Zúñiga (2022) for all South-South and Triangular Cooperation between 2006 and 2019 (1.2%). Of these, two thirds correspond to what the author calls "initiatives for indigenous peoples",

i.e., those that have indigenous peoples as the only beneficiaries. The rest are initiatives "with indigenous peoples", which explicitly include them among their target population, but together with other groups.

As the first graph shows, Bilateral SSC initiatives for and/or with indigenous peoples in Ibero-America have fallen in the analyzed period: from 17 in 2015 to 10 in 2021, although this drop is smaller if only projects are

considered. Its proportion over the total annual Bilateral SSC initiatives reached its minimum in 2018 (1.4%), but steadily increased thereafter, including in the pandemic years, with a maximum of 2.2% in 2021.

Evolution of Bilateral SSC initiatives in Ibero-America for and/or with indigenous peoples, by type and percentage over the total. 2015-2021

In units and percentage



Source: SEGIB based on Agencies and Directorates-General for Cooperation

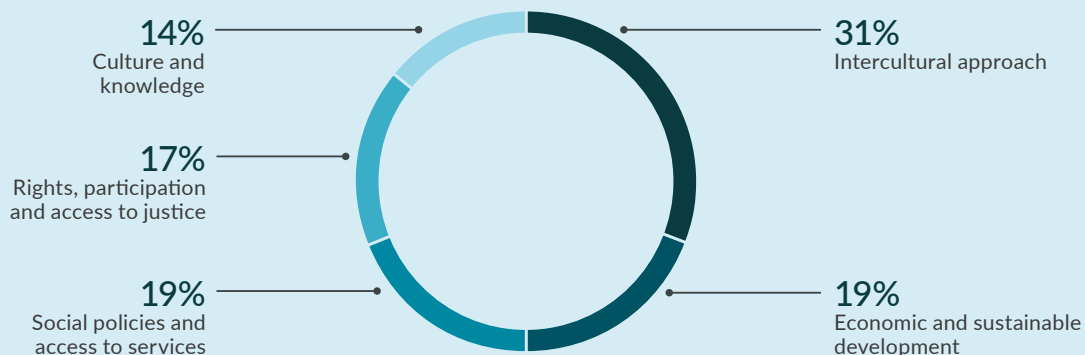
As for the topics that were addressed (see the second graph), 31% of the initiatives can be grouped considering an intercultural approach to public policies (mainly health and intercultural education), but also based on their cross-cutting impact on public management and planning. Economic and sustainable development issues followed - in sectors such as agriculture, handicrafts and ecotourism - as well as Social policies and access to services, each with almost one-fifth of the total.

The latter includes a wide variety of initiatives, from work with specific population groups (children and adolescents; women), to conditional cash transfers, access to healthcare, electricity, among others. In terms of Rights, participation and access to justice, some initiatives focus on electoral participation, but also on participation in the design and execution of public policies, the right to autonomy and governance, and the right to defense. Finally, and classified in Culture and knowledge,

it is possible to identify projects and actions related to safeguarding the intangible cultural heritage of indigenous peoples, indigenous languages and ancestral knowledge.

Main topics addressed by Bilateral SSC initiatives in Ibero-America for and/or with indigenous peoples. 2015-2021

In percentage



Source: SEGIB based on Agencies and Directorates-General for Cooperation

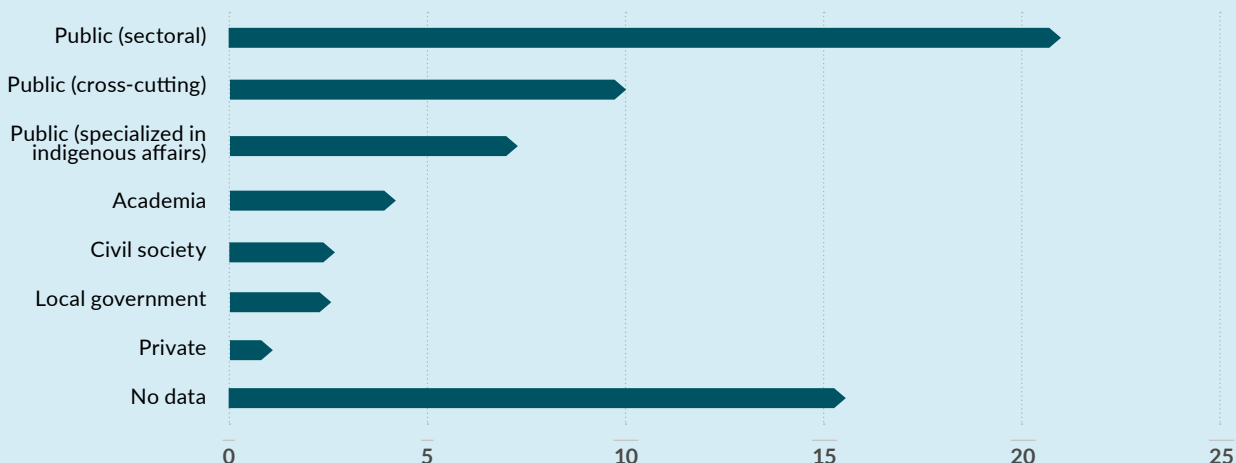
The third graph focuses on the type of stakeholders that participated in the initiatives. In this sense, as the graph shows, indigenous organizations only participate in 1 initiative out

of 48, while most of them are implemented by public institutions, whether sectoral, cross-cutting or specialized in indigenous affairs. Academia, civil society, local

governments and the private sector also participate in this cooperation although to a much less extent.

Type of stakeholders that participated in Bilateral SSC initiatives in Ibero-America for and/or with indigenous peoples. 2015-2021

In units



Note: This is a multiple variable, since different types of institutions may be collaborating in the same initiative. Sometimes information is only available for one of the partners, so data is incomplete.

Source: SEGIB based on Agencies and Directorates-General for Cooperation

In turn (see fourth graph), 14 countries in the region have engaged in Bilateral SSC initiatives for and/or with indigenous peoples between 2015 and 2021. Colombia stands out with a completely bidirectional profile, since it equally participates as provider and as recipient. These 20

initiatives represent 3.7% of the total Bilateral SSC this country promoted with Ibero-America. This feature is especially worthy of mention since, according to data from ECLAC and FILAC (2020), Colombia's indigenous population corresponds to 4.4% of the total, i.e., it is not among the countries

with the largest concentration of this population although, in absolute terms, it stands above two million.

Peru and Mexico follow, the former with a dual profile that tends to receive technical assistance, and the latter with a predominantly

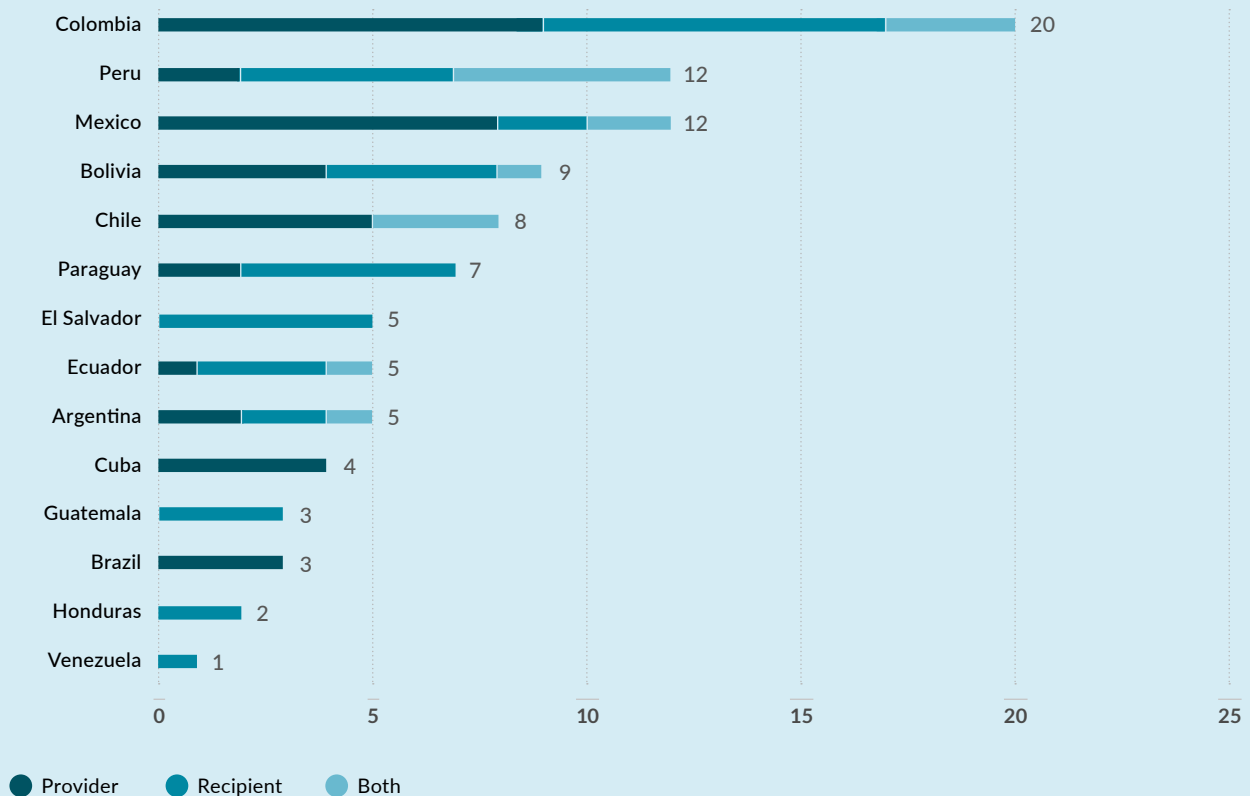
provider profile. These two countries participate in almost one quarter of the initiatives. Mexico has the largest indigenous population in the region, with more than 27 million people, while in Peru this group represents 26% of the total (ECLAC and FILAC, 2020).

Bolivia, Chile and Paraguay have also been active in this type of cooperation. Chile has mainly participated as provider or in bidirectional initiatives, while the other two have had a more varied profile. In Bolivia's and Paraguay's cases, these exchanges represent

3.8% and 3.9% of the Bilateral SSC initiatives in which they participate during the period in Ibero-America, a proportion that almost doubles the regional average.

Countries' participation in Bilateral SSC initiatives in Ibero-America for and/or with indigenous peoples, by role. 2015-2021

In units



Source: SEGIB based on Agencies and Directorates-General for Cooperation

Although the region has certain experience in Bilateral SSC for and/or with indigenous peoples, there is still much to be done in this sense. According to Zúñiga (2022), this type of SSC can become an essential instrument to bridge the gap between

the recognition of indigenous peoples' rights and their systematic violation in practice, and also to respond to one of the great challenges of our times, such as the environmental and climate crisis.

Methodological note: The Ibero-American Integrated Data System on South-South and Triangular Cooperation (SIDICSS) was used to carry out this exercise. On this basis, a search was performed using keywords related to indigenous peoples in initiatives' title and/or objective (both in Spanish and Portuguese, the two official languages of the Ibero-American Space). A manual review was then made to double check this aspect and proceed to classify them. Due to limited descriptive information, figures may probably be underestimated. Although the classification was based on Zúñiga (2022), it suffered some variations.

Source: SEGIB based on Agencies and Directorates-General for Cooperation, ECLAC and FILAC (2020), UN (2007) and Zúñiga (2022).

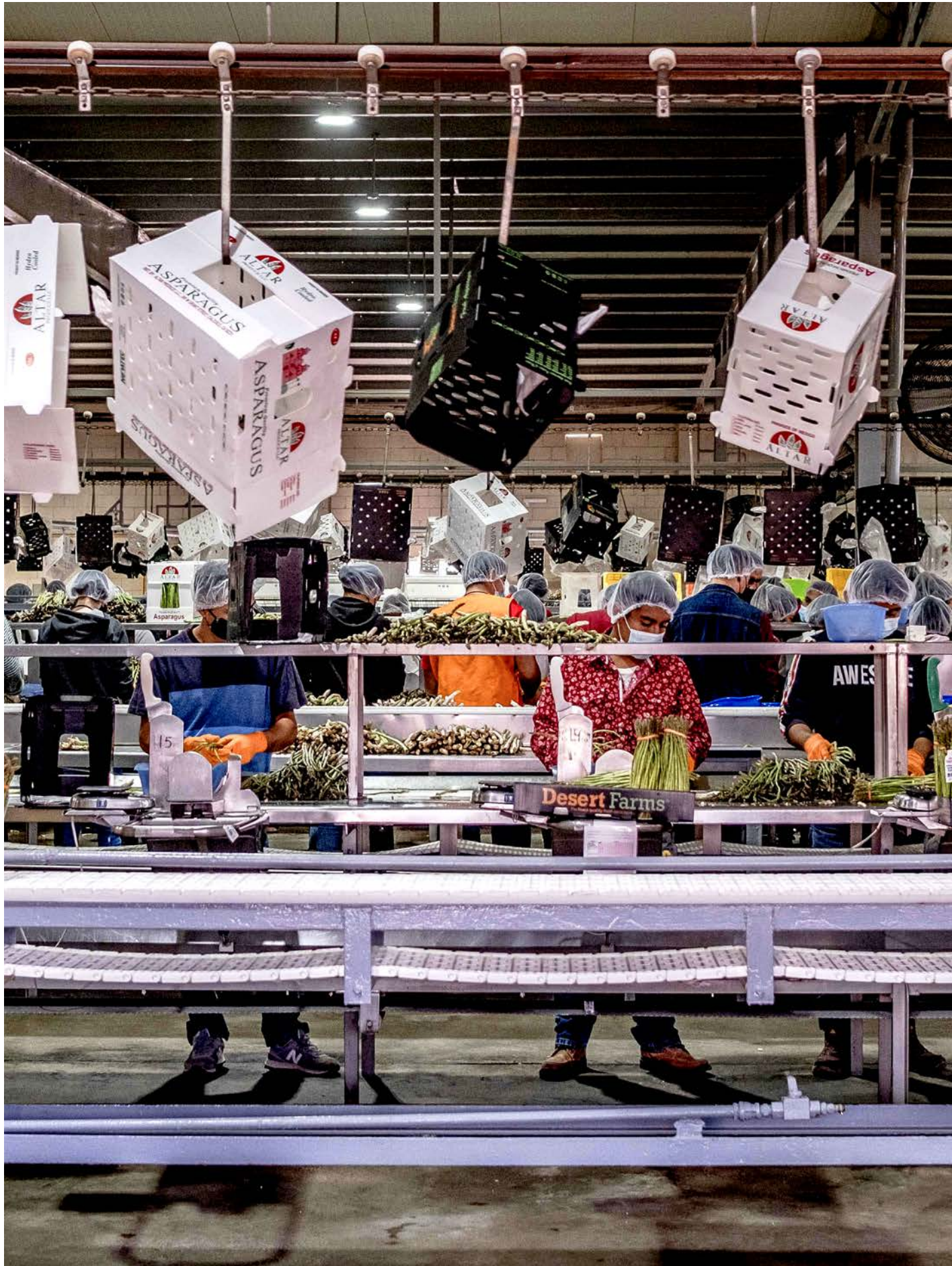


Photo: Scientists, students and agricultural producers work together to promote agriculture and food security through good practices for the care and efficient use of water. Bilateral SSC project between Mexico and Chile. Image bank on South-South and Triangular Cooperation in Ibero-America. SEGIB-PIFSS. 2021.



Photo: White-tailed deers at the Cali Zoo (Colombia). Bilateral SSC Project between Colombia and Brazil *Exchange of experiences in the management and conservation of threatened species and ecosystems* between the zoos of Cali and Brazilia (Brazil). Image bank on South-South and Triangular Cooperation in Ibero-America. SEGIB-PIFCSS. 2022.

CHAPTER 3

Triangular Cooperation in Ibero-America

The COVID-19 crisis does not seem to have reversed some of the trends of this modality

Over the last few years, and especially since 2015, coinciding with the adoption of the 2030 Agenda, Triangular Cooperation (TC) has been increasing its importance, becoming the modality that is most strongly addressed in international fora where development is debated. Accordingly, this chapter analyzes its evolution and characterizes its main features in Ibero-America and in the 2020-2021 period, defined by the outbreak of a pandemic that added new challenges to achieve development.

3.1 Evolution of Triangular Cooperation in Ibero-America: a first approach

Between 2007 and 2021, Triangular Cooperation in which Ibero-America has participated has experienced two different stages: remarkably increasing, making the total number of initiatives raise from 88 to a maximum of 220, registered in 2014; and progressively dropping - especially in times of the pandemic - leading to figures only slightly above the starting level (91 initiatives).

Graph 3.1 shows this evolution, which is also reflected in sharply contrasting average annual growth rates: from 15.8% between 2007 and 2014, to a significant reduction of -6.3% until 2019, intensified in the 2020-2021 period, coinciding with the most difficult moments of the COVID-19 crisis, when this rate accelerates to -22.4%.

Despite these figures, if the three modalities recognized in this space (bilateral, triangular and regional) are aggregately analyzed, Triangular Cooperation's performance is relatively better than that of South-South Cooperation. Indeed, Graph 3.1 provides information regarding the evolution of the importance Triangular Cooperation has overall Ibero-American cooperation. The growth stage (2007-2014) also represented an increase of its share in the total, placing the average for the period at 9.3%. During the following years, from 2015 to 2021, the drop in the number of initiatives does not translate into a reduction of TC's importance. In fact, and as the same graph reveals, this decrease only occurs since 2019 and during the COVID-19 crisis. However, and in spite of this period's fall, the average share of Ibero-American TC (considering the three modalities) still rises from 9.3% to 12.6%.

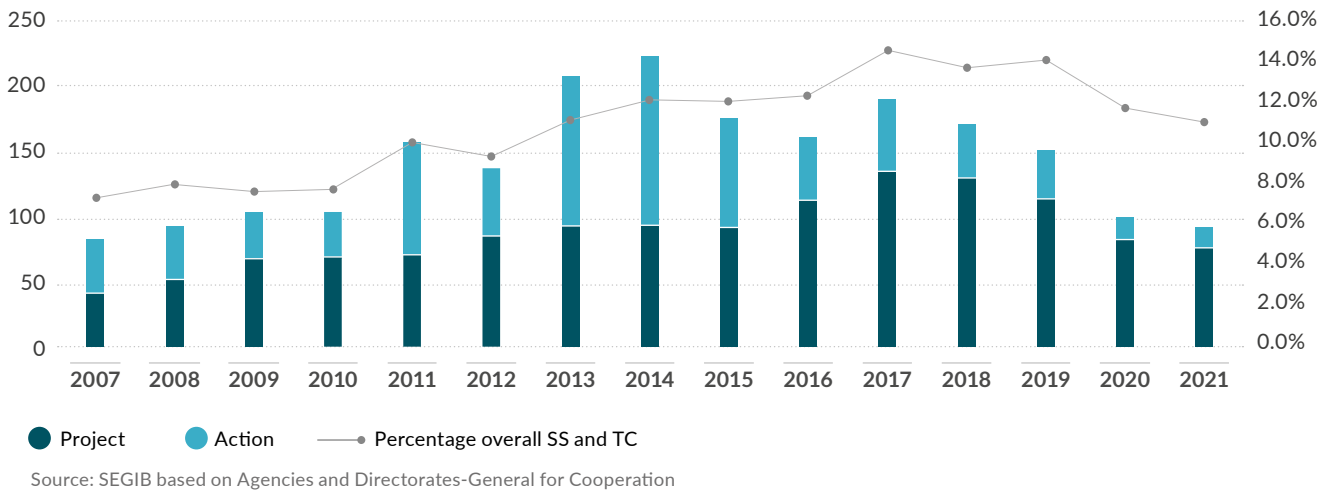
Graph 3.1 also sheds light on the different behaviors of the instruments through which Triangular Cooperation is implemented. Specifically, part of the dynamics shown by the total number of TC initiatives is explained by a "drag effect" caused by actions' strong variations. During the years of intense growth (2007-2014) the average annual rate of their increase more than doubles that of projects (28.2% and 12.0%). However, the gap between the two figures becomes even more evident during the following period (2015-2021), when actions fall -27.3% on average per year compared to a much smaller decrease in terms of projects (-1.7%).

The different relative dimension of the two instruments explains part of these differences. Indeed, and complementing the above, it should be noted that, only in the 2020-2021 period, triangular actions' average execution time was 57 days while that of projects was much longer: 925 days, a figure that corresponds to more than 2.5 years. It is therefore understandable that, under

→ GRAPH 3.1

Evolution of Ibero-American Triangular Cooperation initiatives with all partners, by actions and projects and their share overall Ibero-American South-South and Triangular Cooperation. 2007-2021

In units and percentage



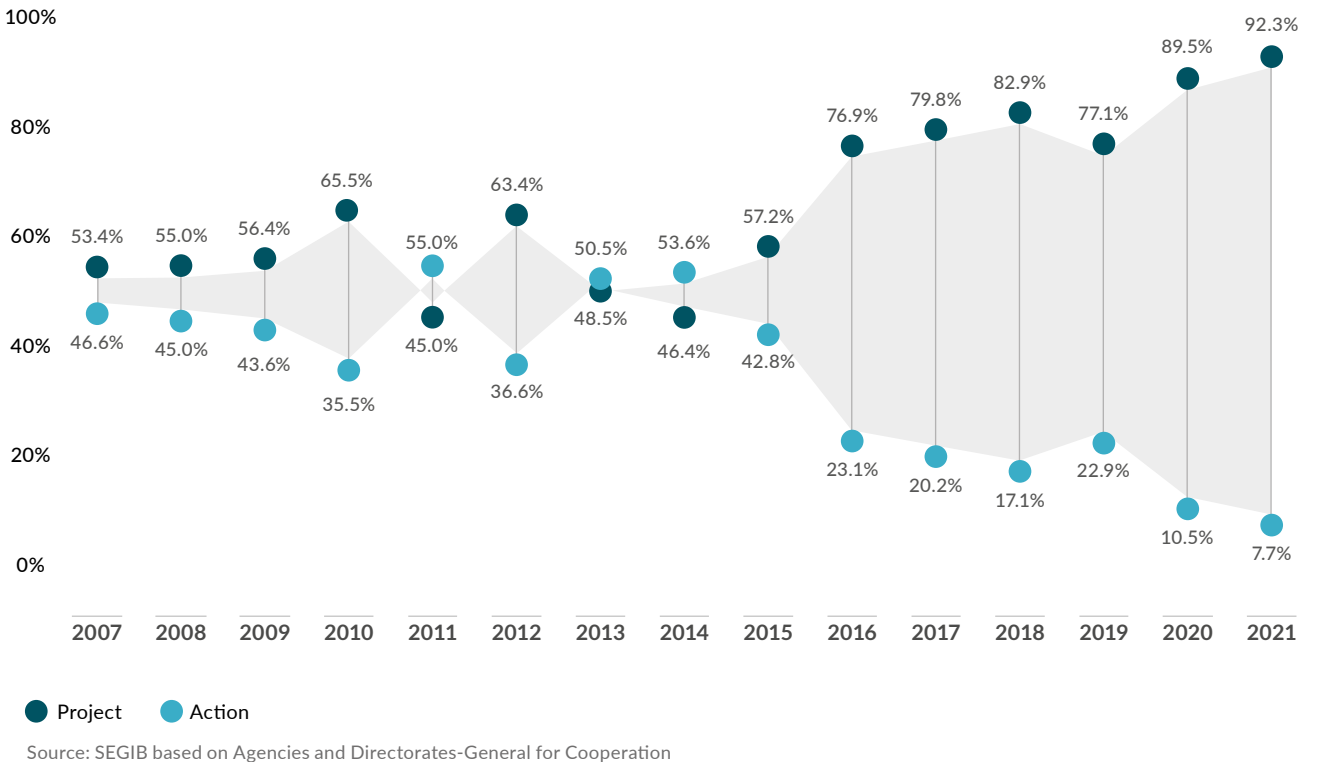
similar conditions, actions may have a very different behavior than projects: the former are more volatile while the latter are more resilient.

In this context, data shown in Graph 3.2 can only be interpreted in a positive manner: although between 2015 and 2021 Triangular Cooperation initiatives experienced a drastic reduction, the ratio between actions and projects

→ GRAPH 3.2

Evolution of actions' and projects' share in Ibero-American Triangular Cooperation initiatives with all partners. 2007-2021

In percentage



has evolved towards figures that are very favorable to projects, suggesting the region is promoting a stronger TC. Specifically, and as this graph illustrates, until 2014, the ratio between projects and actions oscillated around 50%-50%. However, since 2015, the gap between both figures keeps growing until 2021, when 9 Triangular Cooperation projects were implemented compared to barely 1 action.

Triangular Cooperation's greater strength also determined its behavior in the context of the strong impact caused by the COVID-19 crisis. In this sense, when the 2020-2021 period is compared with the immediately previous one (2018-2019), the total number of initiatives decreases 40%, from 228 to 137. This means many activities had to be cancelled, were rescheduled or could not even begin. In spite of this, Triangular Cooperation has displayed an important capacity to adapt to adverse circumstances and to even become more resilient. At least this is suggested by the fact that, in 2020 and/or 2021, coinciding with the most severe moments of the pandemic, Ibero-America managed to promote 16 new actions and 50 new projects, corresponding, in each case, to more than 90% and 40% of the initiatives that were finally implemented during this difficult period.

3.2 Narrowing the analysis: the 2020-2021 period and Triangular Cooperation in Ibero-America

In order to move on to the following sections of this chapter and to better understand Triangular Cooperation in Ibero-America, it is important to define the methodological framework on which the analysis will focus. In this regard, the time frame of the 2020-2021 period is the first aspect that should be taken into consideration. Thus, and as it has been anticipated, the choice of this unit of analysis is determined, on the one hand, by the biennial nature of the *Report of South-South and Triangular Cooperation in Ibero-America* (adopted since this 2022 edition) and, on the other, by the particular conditions to which the COVID-19 crisis has led.

A second aspect refers to the criteria applied to limit the analysis to what took place in Ibero-America. Thus, only 121 of the 137 initiatives in which the region has participated in the 2020-2021 period are considered in this chapter. In these, only Ibero-American countries have acted as first providers and recipients, roles which, by definition, can only be exercised by developing countries. The remaining 16 initiatives in which these roles are distributed between developing countries of Ibero-America and of other regions, will be addressed in another chapter.

The COVID-19 crisis has led to a significant drop in the number of TC initiatives in 2020-2021, compared to 2018-2019

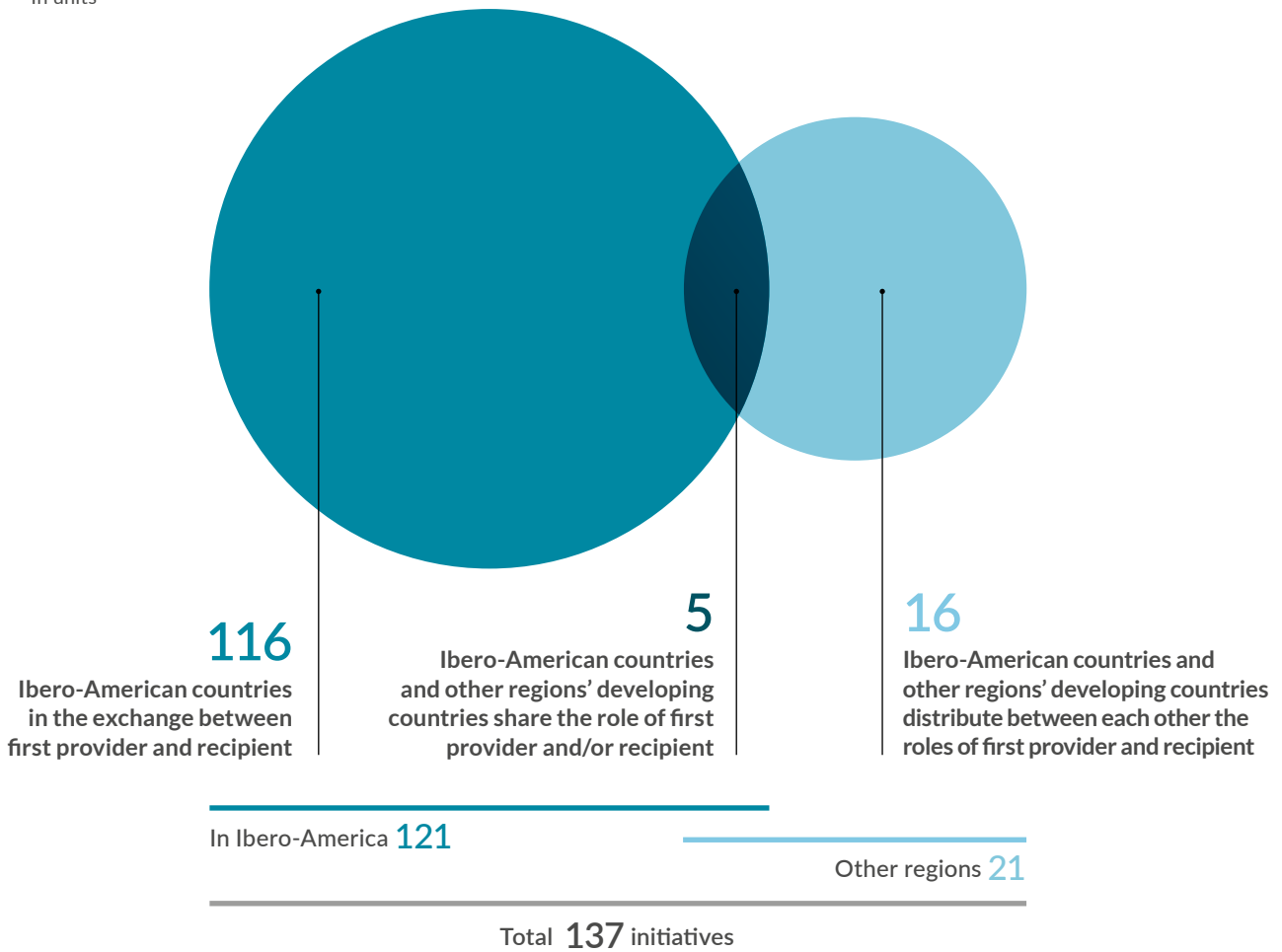
The above distribution is shown in Graph 3.3 which also differentiates (see methodological note) those initiatives in which Ibero-American countries and countries of other region(s) coincide in the exercise of one of these two roles (usually recipient) and consequently meet the two conditions. Therefore, these 5 initiatives will be considered in two separate analyses: first, when focusing on TC in Ibero-America (121); and second, when reviewing other regions (21).

Finally, it should be added that, as shown in Graph 3.4, during the 2020-2021 period, the COVID-19 crisis led to significant drops compared with 2018-2019: the aforementioned 40%, another 40% and 52%, respectively, both for the total number of TC initiatives and for those exchanged in Ibero-America and between Ibero-America and other developing regions.

→ GRAPH 3.3

Distribution of Ibero-American Triangular Cooperation initiatives, by the region with which they were exchanged. 2020-2021

In units

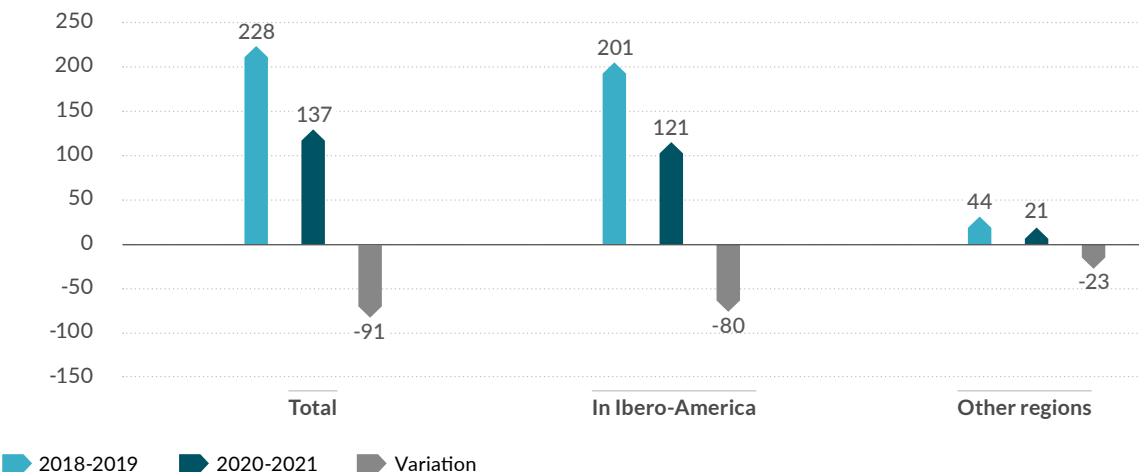


Source: SEGIB based on Agencies and Directorates-General for Cooperation

→ GRAPH 3.4

Variation in Ibero-American Triangular Cooperation initiatives, by the region with which they were exchanged. 2018-2019 and 2020-2021

In units



Note: A distinction is made between: 1) initiatives exchanged in Ibero-America, when countries of the region participate both in the role of first provider and recipient; 2) initiatives exchanged with other regions, in which developing countries of Ibero-America and of other regions act, in each case, as first providers and recipients.

Source: SEGIB based on Agencies and Directorates-General for Cooperation

3.3 Stakeholders and partnerships for Triangular Cooperation

One of the reasons Triangular Cooperation was recognized as a means for the effective implementation of the 2030 Agenda is its high and valuable capacity to establish partnerships among a growing and increasingly diverse number of stakeholders. Literature makes constant reference to this added value, which Malacalza (2022) summarizes by referring to TC's great capacity to promote partnerships between countries and stakeholders by fostering the combination of different cooperation instruments and, based on these, to succeed in building trustworthy relationships that tend to last beyond the time frame of the specific intervention for which they were established.

In order to explore this aspect in greater depth and to analyze how Ibero-America can take advantage of the above in order to face development challenges in a context still determined by COVID-19, this section identifies the main stakeholders that participated in TC that took place in the region in 2020-2021 and characterizes the partnerships that were established and the distribution of roles. In addition, the analysis will focus on the different cooperation instruments on which TC is based, and their role in these partnerships.

3.3.1. Countries, organizations and roles

Graph 3.5 was prepared to illustrate Ibero-American countries' participation in Triangular Cooperation exchanged in the region during the 2020-2021 period. This graph arranges countries in ascending order, according to the number of actions, projects and initiatives in which they participated.¹

As shown, the cases of Mexico and Chile, two countries that are strongly committed to this modality and which participated in more than 20 initiatives, were particularly noteworthy. Peru closely followed, also driven by the importance of its Triangular Cooperation actions, which accounted for 1 out of 3 of its initiatives. Four geographically dispersed countries participated in over 15 actions and projects: Ecuador and Paraguay, on the one hand; Costa Rica and Spain, on the other. Brazil also stood out, with 10 initiatives, followed by Argentina, Bolivia, Colombia and Uruguay in South-America and the Dominican Republic in the Caribbean. These were followed by three Central-American countries: Guatemala, El Salvador and Panama, with 9 and 7 initiatives, respectively. Cuba's and Honduras' participation was more specific (in 5 and 4 exchanges, respectively) while Andorra, Portugal, Nicaragua and Venezuela were not active, at least individually.



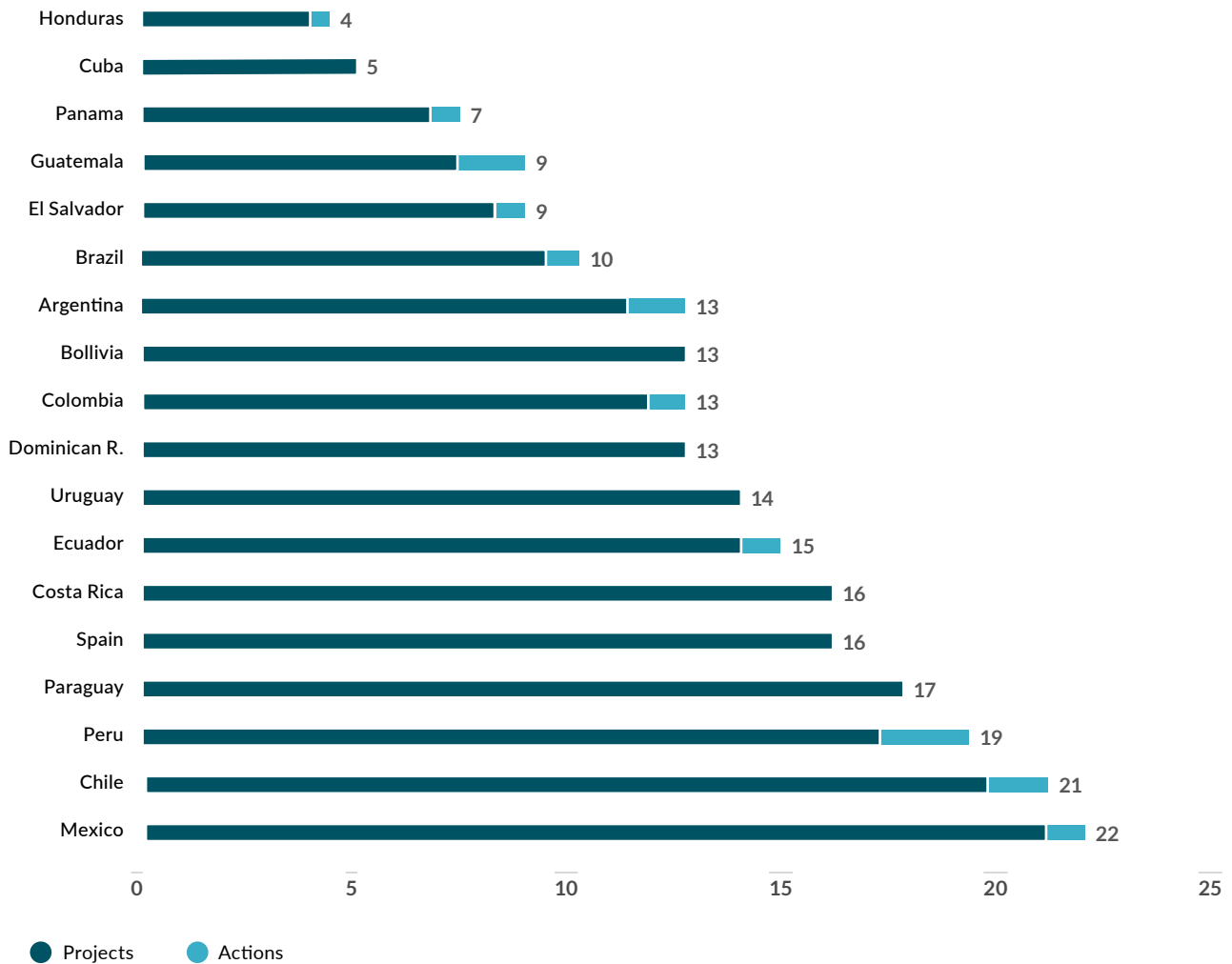
Photo: Maira Díaz studies design at the technical school of the Industry| Technology Center (*Polo Tecnológico Industry|* - PTI by its Spanish acronym) in Montevideo, Uruguay, and uses her skills in liquid packaging. Bilateral SSC project *Digital design and manufacturing for the development of vulnerable populations in Paraguay and Uruguay*. Image bank on South-South and Triangular Cooperation in Ibero-America. SEGIB-PIFCSS. 2021.

¹ In methodological terms, it should be specified that the analysis only considers those initiatives in which countries individually participate in any of the possible roles. Initiatives in which countries share the exercise of a role are not considered. This is very common when countries participate as recipients. In these cases, initiatives are grouped in the generic label *more than one country*.

→ GRAPH 3.5

Triangular Cooperation initiatives in Ibero-America exchanged by each Ibero-American country, by actions and projects. 2020-2021

In units



Note: The number of initiatives that corresponds to each country includes those in which it individually exercises any of the roles. Initiatives in which countries share one of the roles (usually recipient and, more occasionally, first and second provider) are not considered.

Source: SEGIB based on Agencies and Directorates-General for Cooperation

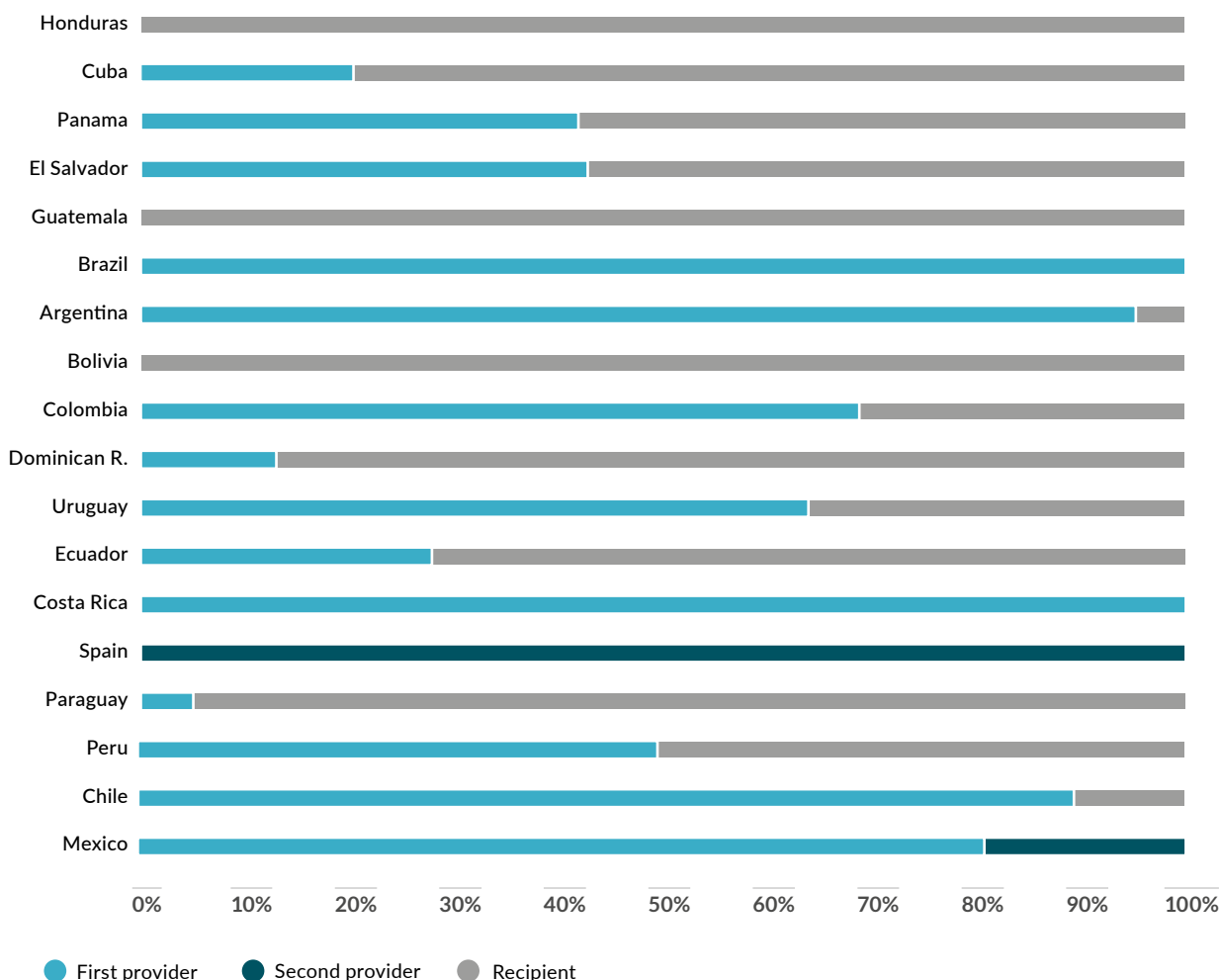
Countries' participation combined the exercise of different roles. Graph 3.6 arranges them, once again, in ascending order according to the number of initiatives in which they were involved and shows the distribution of the roles they exercised. Its interpretation suggests a trend: recipients tend to participate in a fewer number of initiatives while first and/or second providers usually implement a larger number of exchanges. In fact, the recipient role prevails in the case of the 5 countries that executed the lowest number of initiatives (less than 10 actions and projects - from Honduras to El Salvador). The provider role is more significant for those countries which participated in 10 initiatives or more (from Brazil to Mexico and in most countries' case). Bolivia, the Dominican Republic, Ecuador and Paraguay are exceptions to this pattern, all of which have executed more than 10 initiatives but act as recipients in between 70% and 100% of these.

Countries that participate in the fewest number of initiatives tend to be the main recipients while the most active ones frequently act as first and/or second providers

→ GRAPH 3.6

Distribution of Triangular Cooperation initiatives in Ibero-America in which each Ibero-American country participated, by role. 2020-2021

In percentage



Note: Countries are ordered from lowest to highest according to the number of initiatives in which they participated. Initiatives in which countries share one of the roles (usually recipient and, more occasionally, first and second provider) are not considered.

Source: SEGIB based on Agencies and Directorates-General for Cooperation

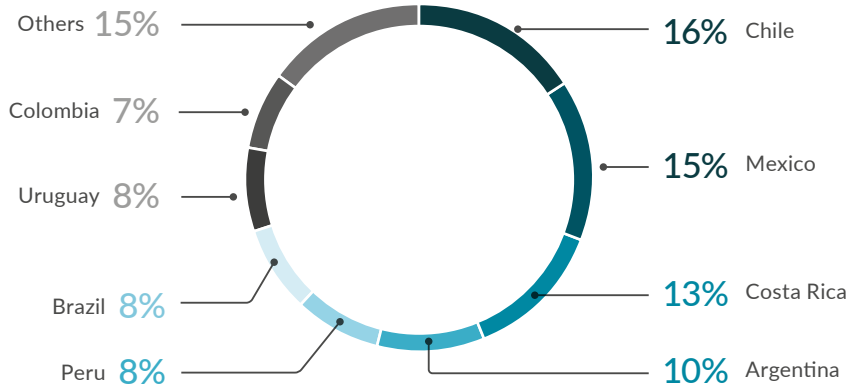
The above also explains the relative importance of each Ibero-American country in all Triangular Cooperation carried out in Ibero-America during the 2020-2021 period considering the possible roles. Graph 3.7 was plotted in order to illustrate this, as it shows the distribution of countries according to whether they act as first provider, second provider or recipient. Due to the adopted criteria and the nature of those which participate in these roles, the graph also shows other stakeholders (extra-regional countries and multilateral organizations) that were involved in Triangular Cooperation as second providers in 2020-2021.

→ GRAPH 3.7

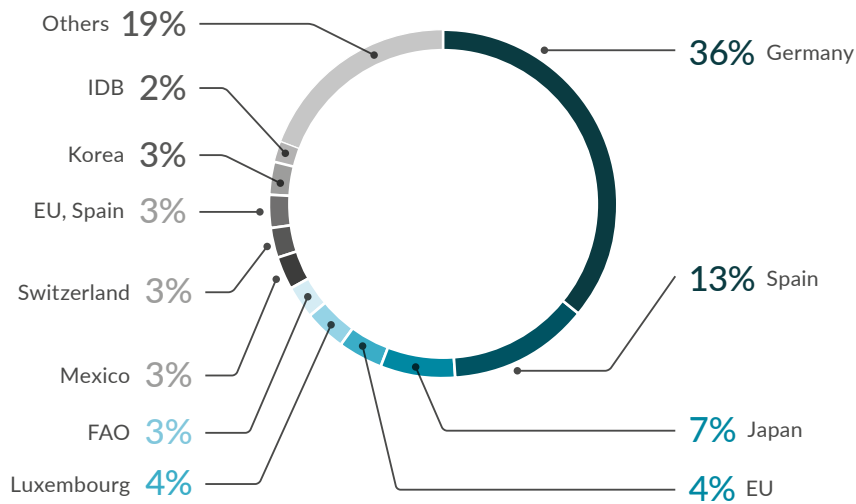
Distribution of Triangular Cooperation initiatives in Ibero-America, by roles and partners. 2020-2021

In percentage

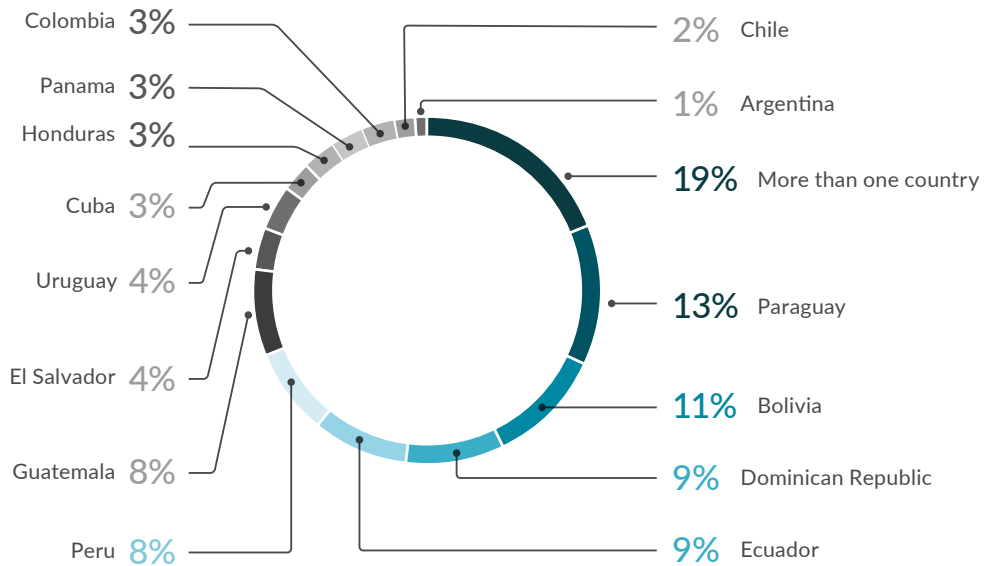
A. First provider



B. Second provider



C. Recipient



Source: SEGIB based on Agencies and Directorates-General for Cooperation

Chile, Mexico and Costa Rica were the three leading providers - transferring capacities - as their participation accounts for 4 out of 10 of the 121 Triangular Cooperation initiatives carried out in Ibero-America during the 2020-2021 period. More than one half of the experiences are explained when Argentina is added to these 3 countries. Four other South-American countries, in turn (Peru, Brazil, Uruguay and Colombia), account for more than 30% of the exchanges as first providers. The last 15% is explained by more specific interventions, including those carried out by Ecuador and El Salvador - first providers in 4 initiatives each -, but also by Panama, Paraguay, Cuba and the Dominican Republic, as well as by those initiatives in which the first provider role was shared between two partners: such is the case of the Dominican Republic itself, together with Costa Rica and Mexico.

Meanwhile, Graph 3.7.B shows the multiplicity of stakeholders involved in Triangular Cooperation in Ibero-America as second providers. Germany, a traditional partner of the region, is certainly the most significant, its participation accounting for more than a third of the initiatives that took place during the 2020-2021 period. Almost one half of all exchanges are explained when Spain - a country that has also been committed to TC with its Latin-American partners for years - is added to the analysis.

As the same graph depicts, the other half of the 121 TC initiatives that were implemented during the 2020-2021 period are distributed among a significant number of stakeholders. In fact, the remaining approximately 60 experiences involve the participation of up to 28

different second providers, such as countries, multilateral organizations and various partnerships among them. These include Japan, a traditional partner that is progressively losing participation; the European Union (EU) - individually or associated with some of its member countries -; nations from different continents such as Luxembourg and Switzerland, South Korea and Mexico itself; as well as other multilateral organizations such as the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), to name a few. In this sense, Box 3.1 shows the growing commitment of the EU and its member countries to promote TC with Latin-America and the Caribbean (LAC), and describes this bi-regional partnership's main features and potential.

Finally, during the 2020-2021 period and as has been the case in the past in terms of TC, the most common situation still was that *more than one country* simultaneously exercised the recipient role (in 20% of cases). Individually, Paraguay and Bolivia are the only two recipients which shares are above 10%, accounting for almost a quarter of the experiences. Guatemala, Peru, Ecuador and the Dominican Republic are close behind, each with shares of 8-9%. El Salvador, Honduras, Panama and Cuba in Central-America and the Caribbean, as well as Uruguay and Colombia in South-America (all with 4-5 initiatives) and, to a less extent, Chile and Argentina (2 and 1 in each case), account for the last 25%.

→ BOX 3.1

EU-LAC Triangular Cooperation: characterization and main trends

In recent years, Triangular Cooperation (TC) has received increasing attention from the international community. It has been recognized as a means for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, very much in line with the aim to promote partnerships for development and the protection of global public goods.

The European Union (EU) and its member states were no exception to this trend. An example of this is the European Commission's (EC) *Adelante* Program, a pioneer in this area that is now in its second edition, and the project *An innovative Triangular Cooperation for a new development*

agenda, which the EC carried out together with SEGIB and that has, among other things, developed research studies that shed light on the potential of this modality to address certain development problems.

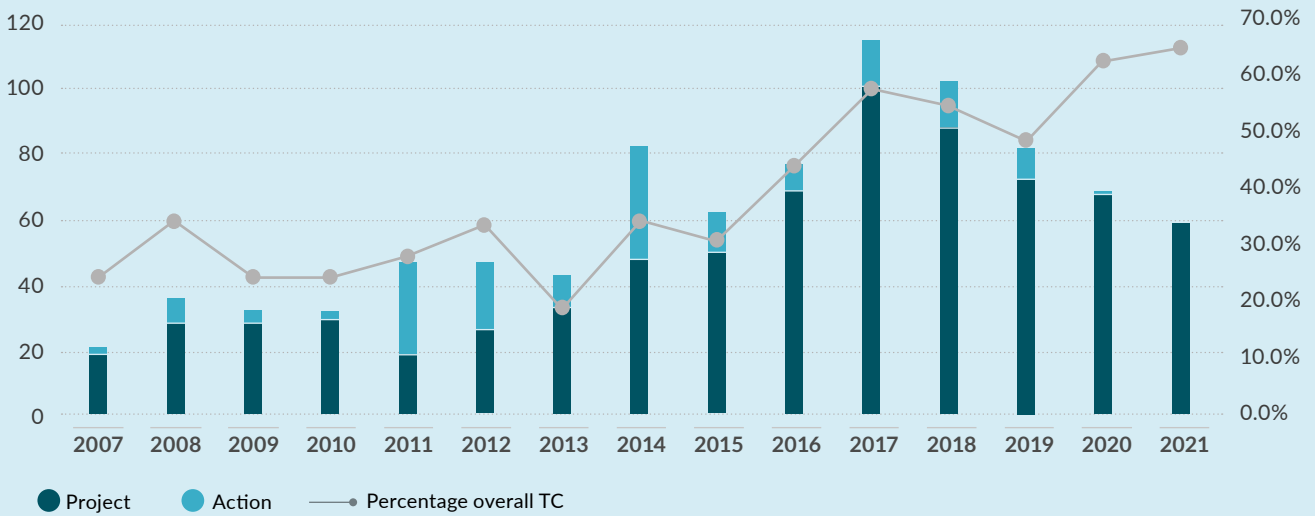
In addition, Latin-America and the Caribbean (LAC) is the region in which TC has been most dynamic, both from the point of view of the implementation of concrete initiatives as in terms of political and technical reflection (Olivié and Santillán, 2022). The document *Guidelines for the management of Triangular Cooperation in Ibero-America*, prepared by the countries in the framework of the Ibero-American Program for

the Strengthening of South-South Cooperation (PIFCSS by its Spanish acronym) in 2015, or the participation of 9 countries of the region in the Global Partnership Initiative (GPI) on effective TC, are examples of the above.

Part of the data available in SIDICSS was analyzed in order to examine these dynamics and to describe the most significant features of TC between the EU and LAC in recent years. The analysis focuses on the following aspects: initiatives' evolution; sectoral distribution and trends; and on the main stakeholders.

Evolution of EU-LAC Triangular Cooperation projects and actions and its percentage overall Triangular Cooperation in Ibero-America. 2007-2021

In units and percentage



Note: EU-LAC initiatives are those in which at least one European Union member country, or the European Commission as such, and at least one country of Latin-America and the Caribbean participates.

Source: SEGIB based on Agencies and Directorates-General for Cooperation

The first graph shows the evolution of TC initiatives involving countries in Europe and Latin-America and the Caribbean (LAC), according to data available in SIDICSS. In this sense, a growth stage can be identified - especially related to an increase in the number of projects - reaching 108 initiatives in 2017; as well as a phase when exchanges decline, between 2017 and 2021. This second period, however, is characterized by a greater strength in terms of the instruments

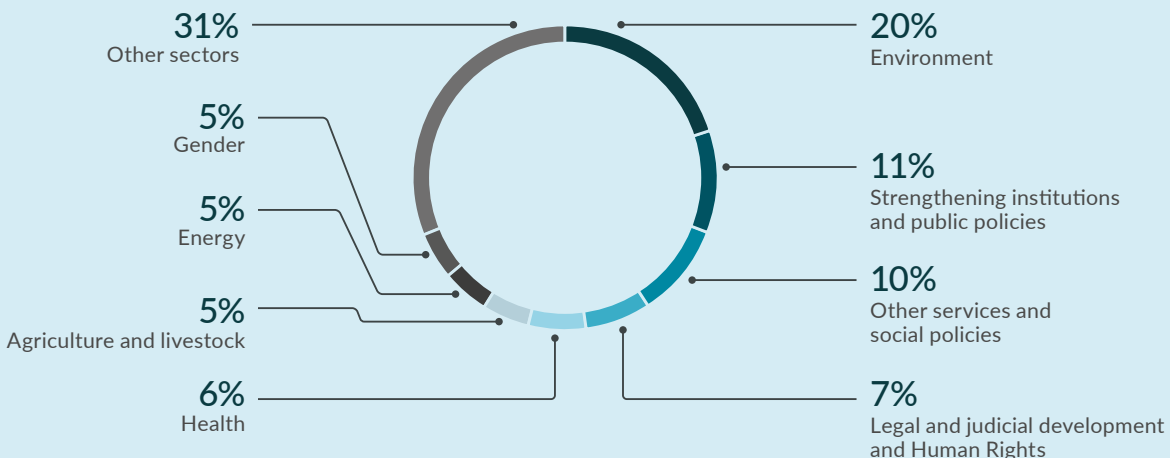
(almost all initiatives are projects and not specific actions), which is also an indicator of the consolidation of bi-regional TC.

The same graph also portrays the evolution of EU-LAC initiatives' share in the total number of triangular initiatives in Ibero-America. Until 2015, when the 2030 Agenda was adopted, this proportion remained between 25% and 35% approximately. However, since 2015, the growth

trend was sustained reaching its maximum in 2021: 64.8%. In other words, in 2021, almost two thirds of Ibero-American triangular initiatives were with the EU or its member states. This is an indicator of the importance the bi-regional relationship has to develop this modality and the potential Triangular Cooperation has to strengthen this partnership.

Sectoral distribution of EU-LAC Triangular Cooperation projects under execution between 2015 and 2021

In percentage



Source: SEGIB based on Agencies and Directorates-General for Cooperation

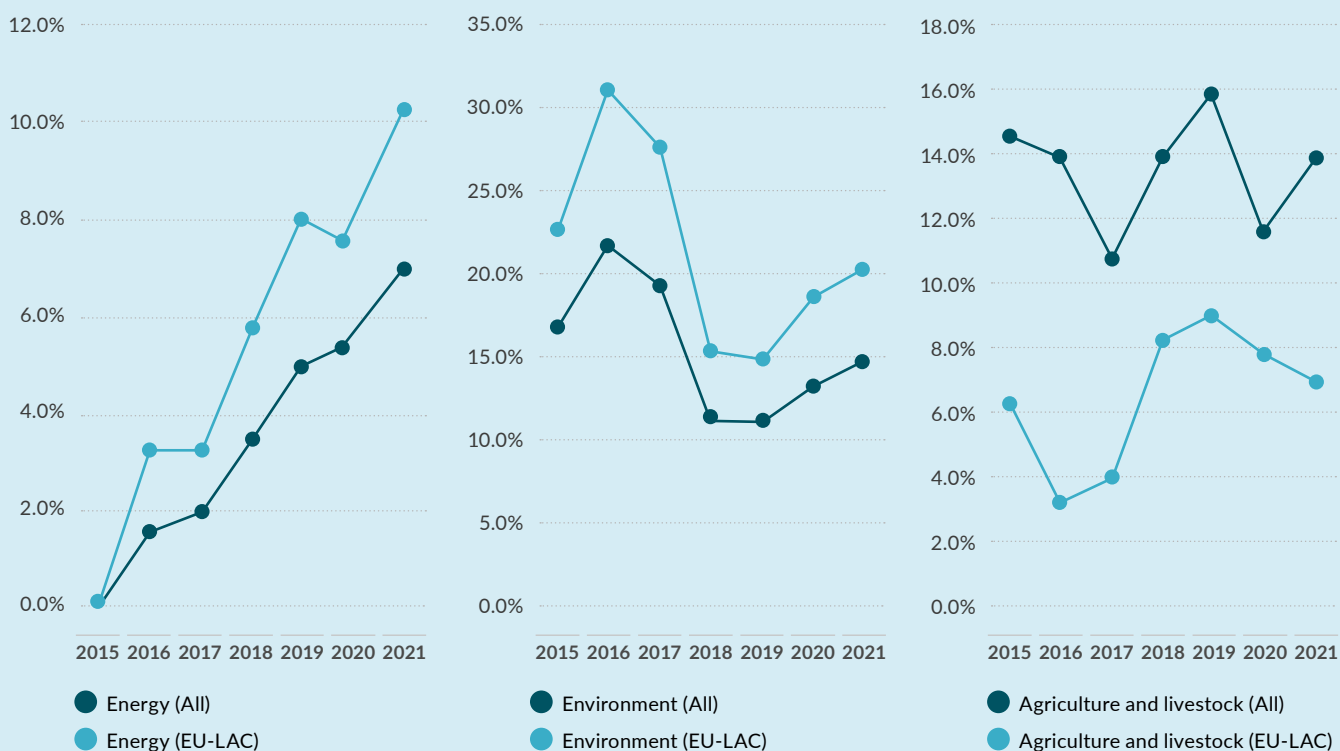
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In addition, the second graph confirms *Environment* has been the sector most strengthened by bi-regional TC between 2015 and 2021, as it accounts for one fifth

of the initiatives. *Strengthening institutions and public policies* and *Other services and social policies* followed, with approximately 10% each.

Evolution of Triangular Cooperation projects in EU-LAC and in Ibero-America, by selected sectors. 2015-2021

In percentage



Source: SEGIB based on Agencies and Directorates-General for Cooperation

Apart from the above, if the analysis focuses on the sectoral evolution of EU-LAC Triangular Cooperation and compares it with that of Ibero-America as a whole, in the same period (see the third of the graphs), it is possible to identify some differences. For example, although only 5% of EU-LAC triangular initiatives between 2015 and 2021 corresponded to *Energy*, this sector was increasing very steadily during the period and increased from 0% in 2015 to 10.2% in 2021. While this

growth occurred in all Ibero-American TC, it was much more evident in the EU-LAC bi-regional TC, reaching an absolute difference of 3% in 2021.

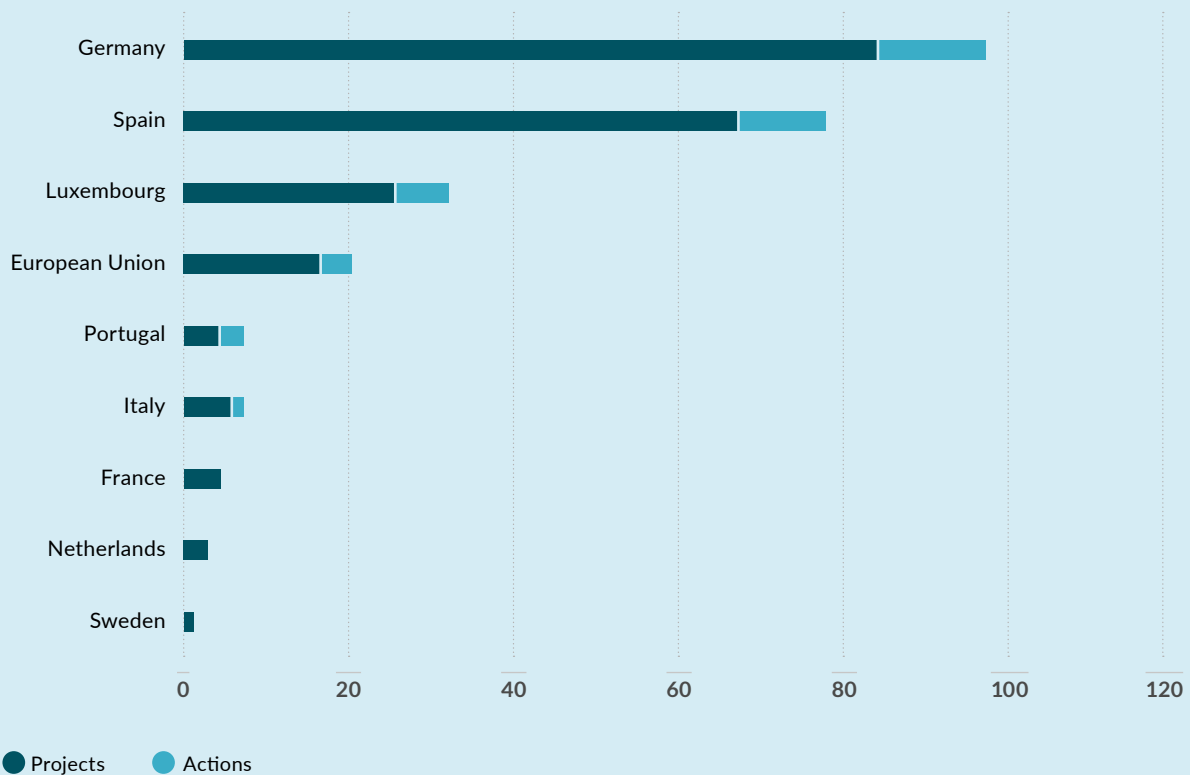
The evolution of EU-LAC TC in *Environment* is very similar to that of Ibero-America as a whole, but bi-regional TC is, on average, 6% higher in absolute terms in all the years that were analyzed. The behavior of *Agriculture and livestock* is completely opposite: while this sector, together with *Environment*, has been the one with the greatest relative

importance in Ibero-American TC in recent years, its share in EU-LAC triangular initiatives is, on average, 7 percentage points lower.

This analysis suggests a common and differential interest of the EU and its members in TC, which seems to be associated with issues that are key to sustainable development at a global level, such as environment care and clean energy production, in addition to institutional strengthening and social cohesion.

Triangular Cooperation projects and actions in Ibero-America in which the EU and its members countries participate. 2015-2021

In units



Source: SEGIB based on Agencies and Directorates-General for Cooperation

The last two graphs analyze countries' participation in bi-regional TC. Between 2015 and 2021, 8 of the 27 EU members have been involved in Triangular Cooperation initiatives with Ibero-America, excluding the EC. Two countries stand out in this sense: Germany - especially through its Regional Fund for Triangular Cooperation in Latin-America and the Caribbean - and Spain - that has TC agreements and even mixed funds with many of the countries of the region. These two countries, together with Portugal, are part of the GPI and have been leading the debate on this cooperation modality in recent years.

As for Ibero-American developing countries (see last graph), the dynamism of El Salvador stands out, especially due to its partnership with Luxembourg and Spain through the Salvadorean Fund for South-South

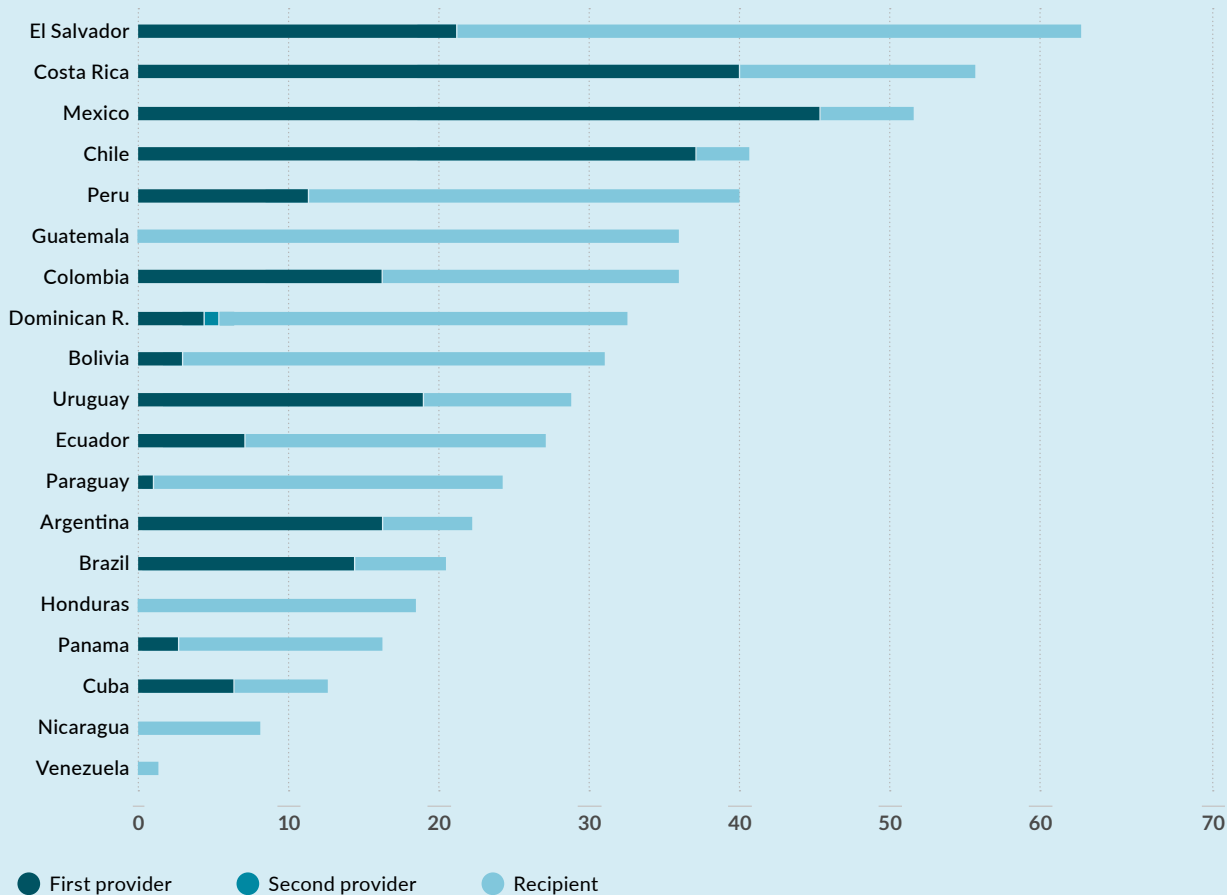
and Triangular Cooperation (FOSAL by its Spanish acronym). Costa Rica, Mexico and Chile follow. These three countries have mainly acted as providers in bi-regional TC during the analyzed period. In addition to the above, it is important to note that all 19 countries have participated in at least one EU-LAC triangular initiative between 2015 and 2021.

If the analysis considers only projects, it is possible to state that, for some countries, triangular partnerships with the EU and its members represent approximately two thirds of the total triangular exchanges in which they have been involved between 2015 and 2021. This is the case, for example, of El Salvador, Costa Rica, the Dominican Republic, Bolivia, Ecuador and Cuba, regardless of their roles. In contrast, partnerships are more diverse for other countries that

are very dynamic in this modality, such as Mexico and Chile, and this is more evident if actions are also taken into account (for example, courses with Japan for third countries).

Participation of Ibero-American countries in EU-LAC Triangular Cooperation initiatives, by role. 2015-2021

In percentage



Source: SEGIB based on Agencies and Directorates-General for Cooperation

Source: SEGIB based on Agencies and Directorates-General for Cooperation, SIDICSS (2022) and Olivié and Santillán (2022)

3.3.2. Partnerships for Triangular Cooperation

The increasing involvement of a multiplicity of stakeholders in the promotion of Triangular Cooperation cannot be dissociated from the simultaneous materialization of numerous and varied partnerships. Evidence suggests associations to carry out specific TC initiatives are becoming less frequent and that partners are committed to a more solid and longer-term TC that fosters development (Cartón, 2022).

However, this progress is also possible as a result of the strengthening of institutional frameworks. In fact, the region's TC is based on a network of instruments that, in addition to expressing the political will of the different partners to promote this modality, broadens the possibilities of associations between different

stakeholders and provides them with tools to support its operational and even financial implementation (Cartón, 2022) (Ortiz de Taranco, 2022).

In order to identify how this is achieved, Graph 3.8 distributes the 121 initiatives exchanged in Ibero-America in the 2020-2021 period according to the instrument that may have been used for their execution. This analysis is based on what Ibero-American countries have registered and the instruments are classified in the categories which are recognized in this space²: Funds, Programs and Memoranda/Cooperation Agreements between different stakeholders (two LAC partners; Spain, Portugal or Andorra and a LAC partner; a non-Ibero-American country or an international organization, alone or with a LAC partner; among others).

² In SIDICSS, countries have the possibility to register the instrument through which the TC initiative is carried out. However, this is not a mandatory information requirement, but an optional one, so answers may sometimes be incomplete and/or reflect partial information.



Photo: Erika started her beauty and hairdressing business more than 16 years ago. Today, she also trains other women so that they can start their own. Bilateral SSC initiative between Chile and Peru Program to strengthen women in entrepreneurship and innovation strategies in the regions of Tacna and Arica and Parinacota. Image bank on South-South and Triangular Cooperation in Ibero-America. SEGIB-PIFCSS. 2021.

The graph shows that more than a quarter of the initiatives (27.3%) were executed in the framework of a "Fund (country or international organization)". In almost 100% of the cases, this instrument was the Regional Fund for Triangular Cooperation in Latin-America and the Caribbean, financed by the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ by its German acronym) and executed by its Cooperation Agency (GIZ). This Fund, which has been active since 2011, responds to recipients' demands through various calls for proposals.

Another 10.7% of the actions and projects implemented in Ibero-America during the 2020-2021 period was executed in the framework of a "Cooperation Program (country or international organization)". Two instruments stand out in this category: the EU's Adelante 2 Program - which budget to finance TC initiatives between 2020-2024 amounts to more than 9 million euros; as well as FAO's South-South and Triangular Cooperation Program, relaunched in 2020 in order to support the countries of the region to achieve the 2030 Agenda, especially in terms of agriculture and nutrition.

Another 10% of TC carried out in Ibero-America in 2020-2021 was implemented in the framework of a "Cooperation Program between a non-Ibero-American partner (country or international organization) and a LAC partner". In this case, the role played by the Partnership

Program(s) that Japan has with Chile and Argentina, which, in turn and respectively, include(s) two training initiatives for third countries with strong sectorial specialization, was especially outstanding ("Human Resources Training Program for Latin-America and the Caribbean in Disaster Risk Reduction" (*Kizuna*); and the *TANGO Kaizen Project*, which trains professionals in the region to improve the quality, productivity and competitiveness of SMEs).

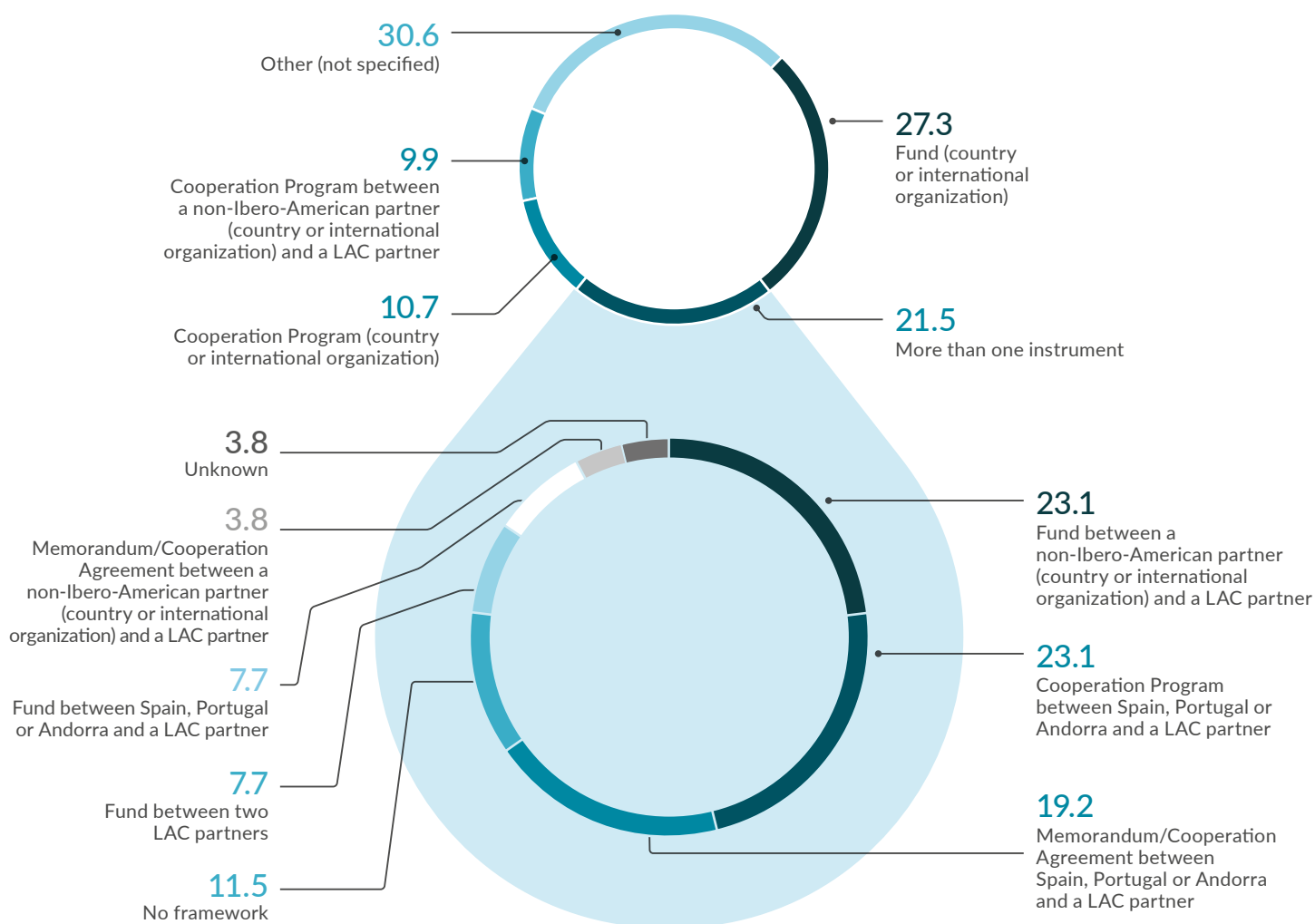
Graph 3.8 also reveals that a remarkable 21.3% of the initiatives are associated with "Other" instruments. As shown, their classification is diverse, but two cases stand out given their capacity to generate partnerships within the Ibero-American space itself: first, "Funds between two LAC partners"; and, second, the combination of all the possible instruments signed by Spain, Portugal or Andorra with another LAC partner.

Indeed, some of these TC initiatives were executed through the Chile-Mexico Mixed Cooperation Fund that was created in 2006 and has consolidated over the years as an essential instrument both to promote bilateral cooperation between these two countries and to promote triangular initiatives between them and a third developing country. Meanwhile, another important group of these same actions and projects were implemented in the framework of the multiple Funds, Programs, Memoranda and/or Cooperation Agreements that Spain has signed over the last decade with more than half of its LAC

→ GRAPH 3.8

Cooperation instruments through which triangular initiatives in Ibero-America have been executed. 2020-2021

In percentage



Source: SEGIB based on Agencies and Directorates-General for Cooperation

partners (Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Costa Rica, Mexico, Uruguay, Colombia, Ecuador, El Salvador, Panama and Peru).

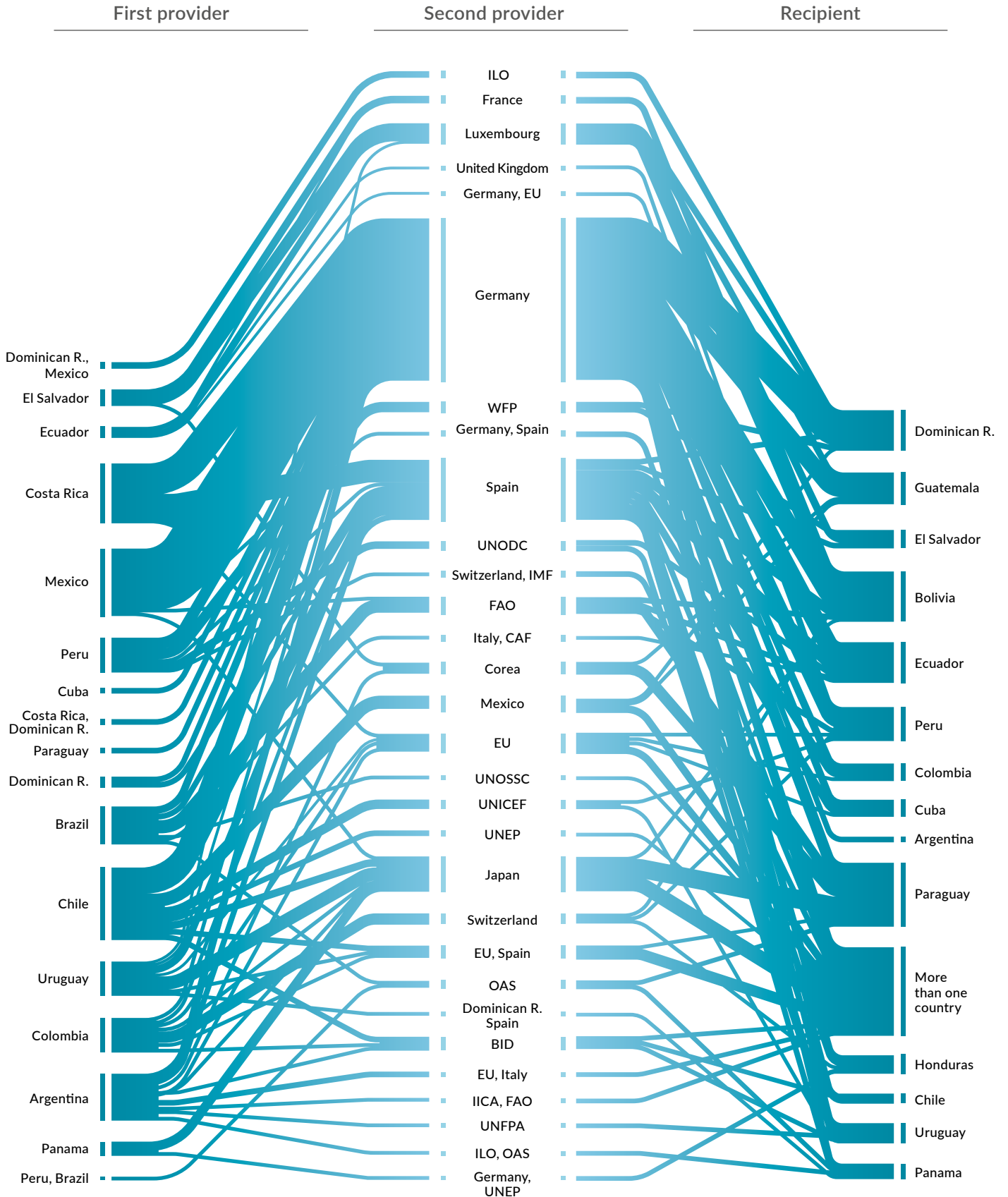
The category "Funds between a non-Ibero-American partner (country or international organization) and a LAC partner" completes this diversity of "Other" instruments. Special attention in this sense deserve the Mexico-Germany Mixed Fund, which focuses on supporting projects in third countries in areas related to migration, the fight against corruption and socio-environmental conflicts; and the Salvadorean Fund for South-South and Triangular Cooperation (FOSAL by its Spanish acronym) which, financially supported by Luxembourg, promotes triangular projects in countries of the region, associated with health, environment, entrepreneurship, innovation, tourism and youth, among others.

A review of these institutional frameworks sheds light on the partnerships that have effectively prevailed in the execution of Triangular Cooperation in Ibero-America during the most critical years of the COVID-19 crisis. The way in which these were established is shown in Graph 3.9. This flow diagram distributes the 121 initiatives carried out in the region in 2020-2021 based on the different partnerships through which each one of them is executed. In order to visualize the sequence, participating stakeholders are arranged according to their role: first providers in the left flow, second providers in the middle flow, and recipients in the right flow.

→ GRAPH 3.9

Distribution of Triangular Cooperation initiatives in Ibero-America, by roles and partners. 2020-2021

In units



Source: SEGIB based on Agencies and Directorates-General for Cooperation

As the graph shows, the most consolidated partnerships seem to be established between first and second providers. Some of these associate Mexico and Chile with Germany; Chile with Mexico; Costa Rica with Germany and Spain; Colombia with Switzerland; Uruguay with Spain; and Brazil and Peru with different international organizations, FAO and the World Food Program standing out in each case, respectively, both with a similar sectoral profile.

Frequent associations are also identified between recipients (Bolivia and Paraguay) and second providers (Germany). The category “more than one country” tends to be associated with TC supported by Japan and the European Union (EU) – individually or with others. Some other particular cases involve, for example, El Salvador, which, through FOSAL, is associated with Luxembourg (second provider) both as recipient and as first provider. Likewise, the most frequent first provider-second provider-recipient sequence occurs among Costa Rica, Germany and the Dominican Republic.

Graph 3.9 also reveals how partnerships are not only established by combining the exercise of different roles. An increasingly common situation is that at least two different stakeholders join efforts to participate in TC under the same role. In fact, in 2020-2021, more than one first provider participated in 3 initiatives; more than one second provider did so in 12 exchanges, and 23 initiatives involved more than one recipient. Graph 3.10 distributes the initiatives carried out under each of these roles, according to the combination of stakeholders that were involved.

Three partnerships have been identified among the first providers: Brazil and Peru; and those generated as a result of the Dominican Republic's association with Mexico and Costa Rica. This second case is particularly interesting as it is based on a previous TC experience in which the two countries - also with Germany as the second provider - shared the roles of first provider (Costa Rica) and recipient (Dominican Republic). As a result, both countries are now working together to transfer Honduras (recipient) their experience in coral reef protection. The details of this experience are summarized in Case 3.1.

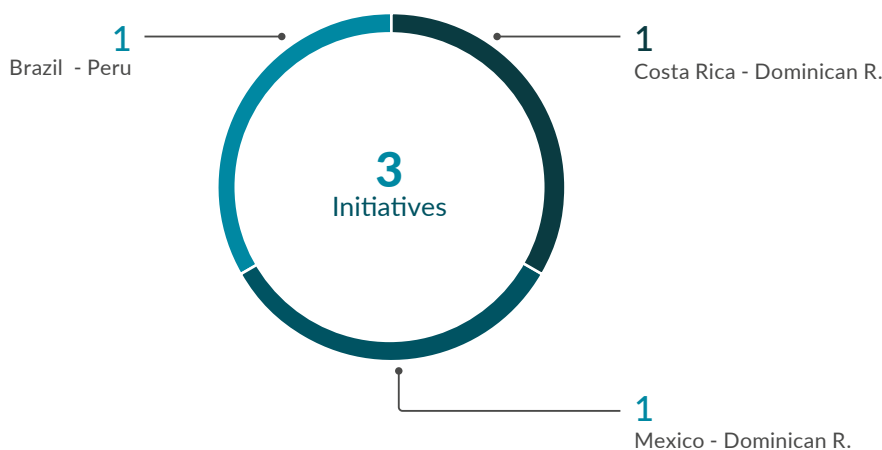
The most consolidated partnerships seem to be established between first and second providers. In contrast, reception tends to be more dispersed among different partners or exercised by several countries simultaneously

→ GRAPH 3.10

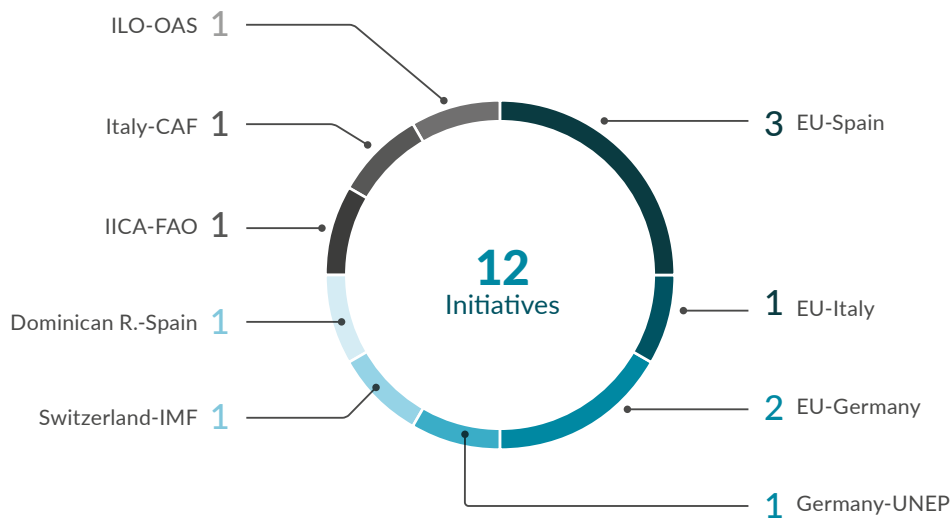
Triangular Cooperation initiatives in Ibero-America in which two or more partners share the same role. 2020-2021

In units and percentage

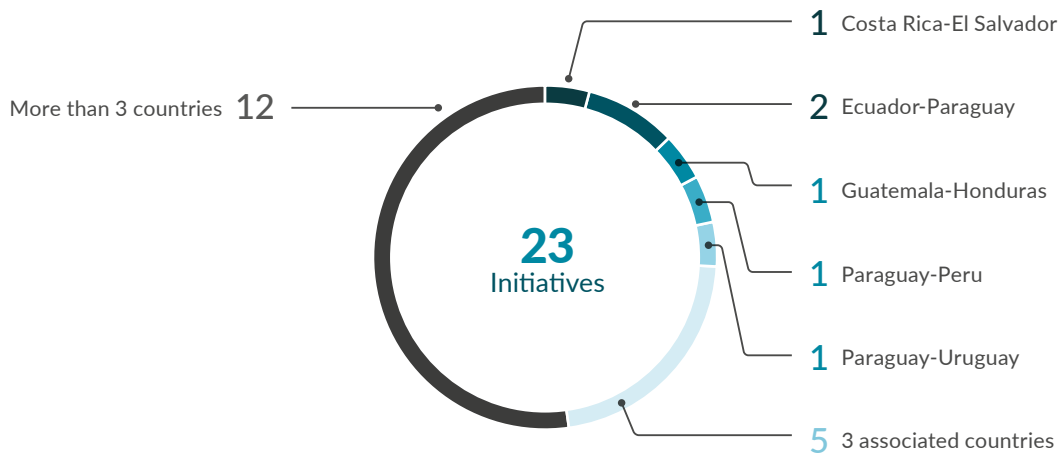
A. First provider



B. Second provider



C. Recipient



Source: SEGIB based on Agencies and Directorates-General for Cooperation

In the case of second providers, one half of the experiences respond to the same pattern: the association of the EU with one of its member countries - Spain, Germany and Italy, with which it has partnered on 3, 2 and 1 occasions, respectively. The other 50% involves international organizations, either associated among themselves (IICA-FAO and ILO-OAS) or with European countries (CAF, IMF and UNEP with Germany and Italy, apart from Switzerland). The exception to this pattern is the partnership between two Ibero-American countries: Spain and the Dominican Republic.

As for recipients, 75% of the experiences involve three or more countries, which is consistent with the importance of the category "more than one partner". Meanwhile, one quarter of the initiatives include the association of two countries. Two cases can be identified in this sense: one

between two Central-American countries (Costa Rica-El Salvador and Guatemala-Honduras); and the other among South-American countries, Paraguay playing an important role, associating on 2, 1 and 1 occasions with Ecuador, Peru and Uruguay, respectively.

→ CASE 3.1

Recovery and protection of reefs through Triangular Cooperation



Coral reefs host up to 25% of the total marine biodiversity and they are natural carbon reservoirs. However, reefs' natural balance has been severely affected by oil exploration, overfishing and excessive marine tourism (Fernández, Laura, 2021). Their protection requires national or regional policies and programs, the provision of significant financial resources, as well as the involvement of different stakeholders.

Being aware of this problem, between 2017 and 2021, Germany, Costa Rica and the Dominican Republic joined efforts through the project *Developing an Innovative Financial Mechanism for the Conservation of Coral Reefs in the Dominican Republic*, which aim was to measure reefs' economic contribution in order to implement actions for their preservation.

In order to achieve this, GIZ developed an economic valuation of the ecosystem services of coral reefs in Bayahíbe, Punta Cana and Samaná, and this research concluded that they generate more than 1,1 USD per year for the Dominican economy (MEPyD, 2021). In turn, the National System of Conservation Areas of Costa Rica

(SINAC by its Spanish acronym) has become a strategic partner for capacity building in this area and, since 2017, has been sharing its experience with this Caribbean country in policy development for the protection and sustainable management of natural resources. The Payment for Environmental Services scheme (PSA by its Spanish acronym), implemented since 1996, is an example of the above (Diario Libre, 2019).

One of the main features of this initiative was the involvement of the private sector, promoting co-responsibility in the provision of resources for the preservation of biodiversity. Indeed, the project included the participation of Biodiversity Partnership Mesoamerica (BPM), a multi-sectoral association that seeks the private sector's support for the integration of biodiversity in the economic activity (BPM, 2022).

In October 2021, authorities of the two countries and GIZ presented the project's results, among which the valorization of ecosystem services, awareness-raising in the private sector in pilot sites such as Bayahíbe, Punta Cana and Samaná, the communication

strategy for knowledge management, the systematization of lessons learnt and dissemination, as well as the creation of means and tools to replicate best practices, were especially highlighted (MEPyD, 2021).

The experience of this project definitely contributed to the fact that, even before it ended, in 2020, Costa Rica and the Dominican Republic renewed their partnership and their association with Germany to launch another triangular project on the same topic. However, it is possible to identify a remarkable and important change that helps understand how an experience that originated in TC can then be replicated to improve third countries' capacities. Indeed, in this new Triangular Cooperation project, financed by the German Regional Fund, Costa Rica and the Dominican Republic are joining efforts as first providers, transferring their knowledge to support Honduras, the new recipient, by applying innovative tools for the conservation and restoration of coral reefs in this Central-American country (National Aquarium of the Dominican Republic, 2020).

Sources: SEGIB based on Agencies and Directorates-General for Cooperation, National Aquarium of the Dominican Republic (2020), Biodiversity Partnership Mesoamerica (BPM, 2022), Diario Libre (2019), Fernández, Laura (2021) and Ministry of Economy, Planning and Development of the Dominican Republic (MEPyD, 2021).

3.4 Sectoral analysis of Triangular Cooperation in Ibero-America in 2020-2021

Partnerships between the different stakeholders also influence the type of capacities Triangular Cooperation strengthened during these two years of crisis. In order to identify them, this section examines the activity sectors and areas of action with which the 121 TC initiatives promoted in Ibero-America during the 2020-2021 period were associated. The analysis

is carried out from a double perspective: the first is related to overall TC, and the second, which reviews the profile of the different stakeholders - countries and organizations, most of them of a sectorial nature - that participated in the execution of these same initiatives.

3.4.1. Strengthened capacities

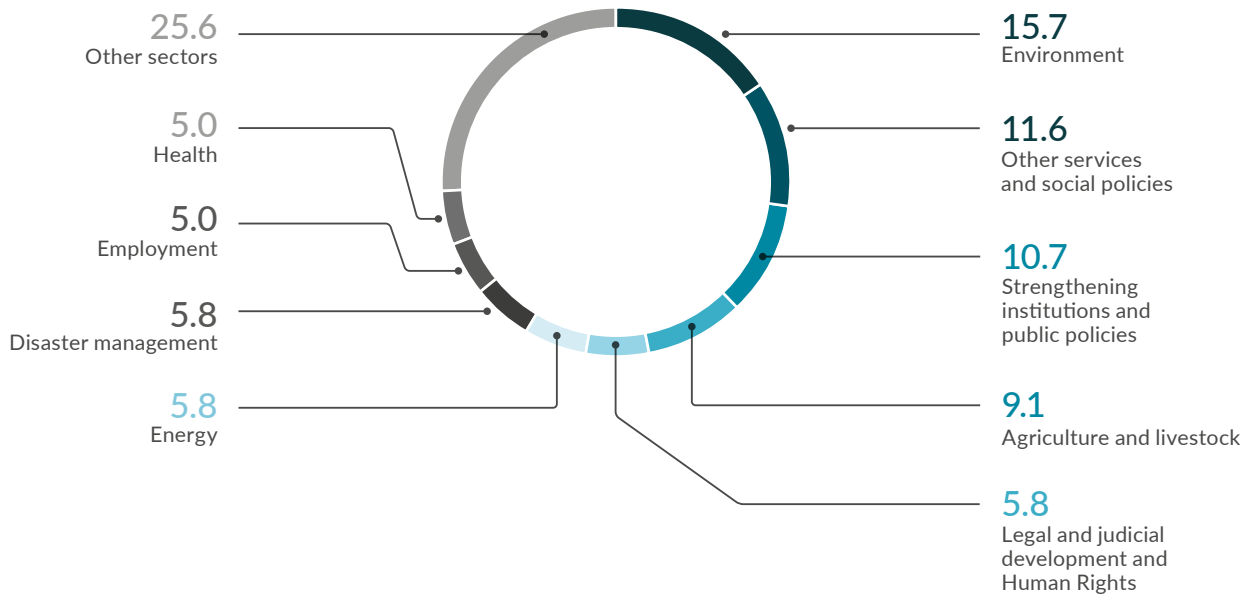
A combined analysis of Graph 3.11 and 3.12 sheds light on those capacities that were mainly strengthened in the region, through TC, during the 2020-2021 period, when the aim to advance sustainable development coincided with need to address the impact caused by COVID-19. The first graph distributes the 121 TC initiatives carried out during these years according to

the activity sector on which they focused. The second graph shows the areas of action, while distinguishing the different relative importance these same sectors had in the framework of each of the areas.

→ GRAPH 3.11

Distribution of Triangular Cooperation initiatives in Ibero-America, by the main activity sectors. 2020-2021

In percentage



Source: SEGIB based on Agencies and Directorates-General for Cooperation

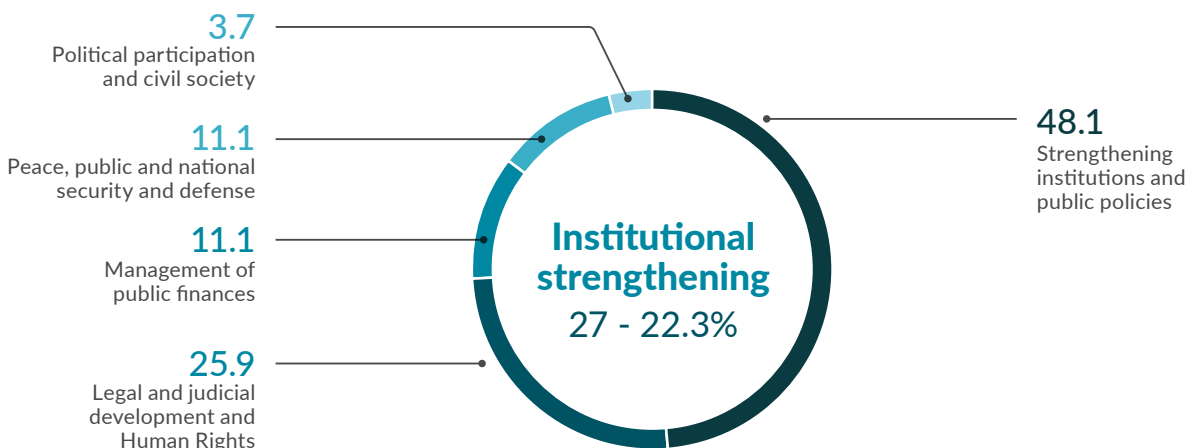
Three areas of action stood out in the 2020-2021 period: on the one hand, Institutional strengthening and Environment, both with more than 25 initiatives, each accounting for around 22% of the final number; and the Social area, on the other hand (24 initiatives, accounting for almost another 20% of the actions and projects). TC with a more economic profile, which aimed to strengthen

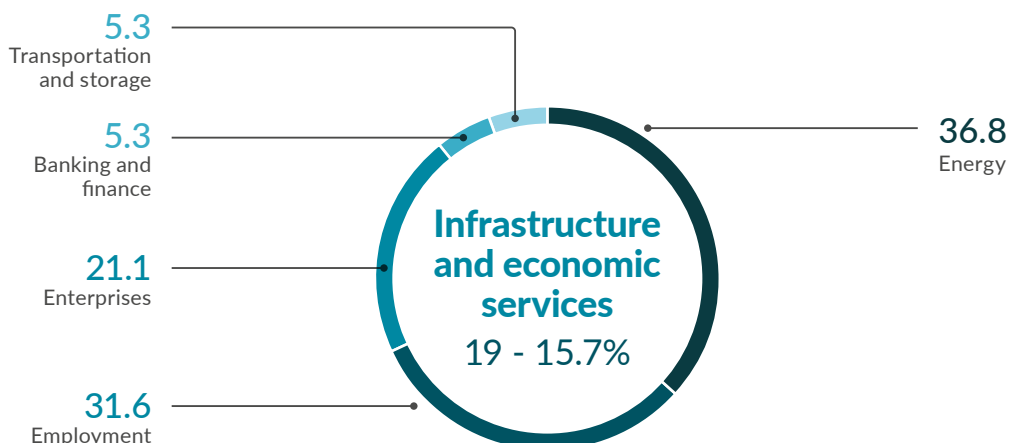
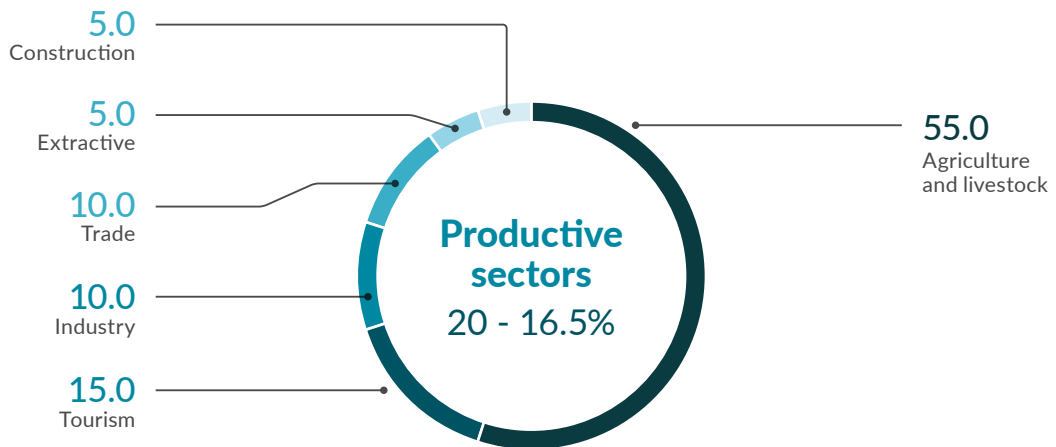
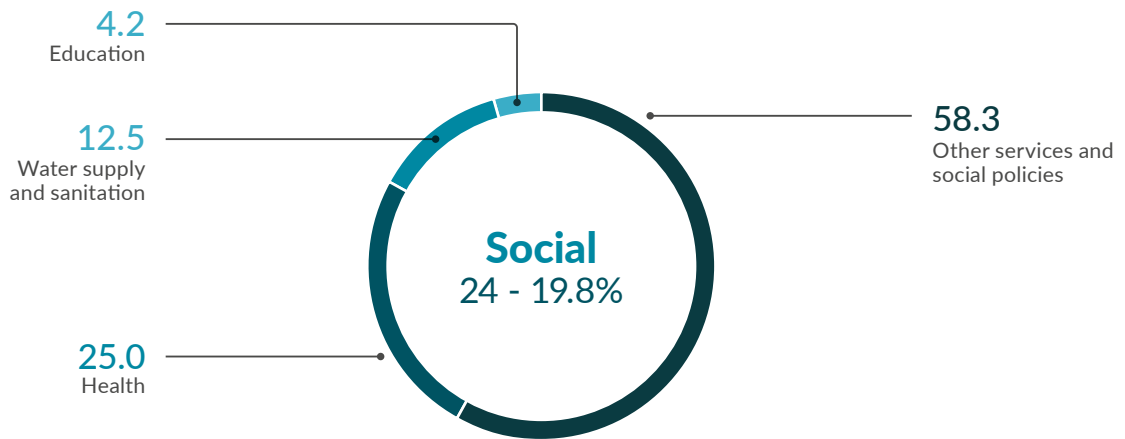
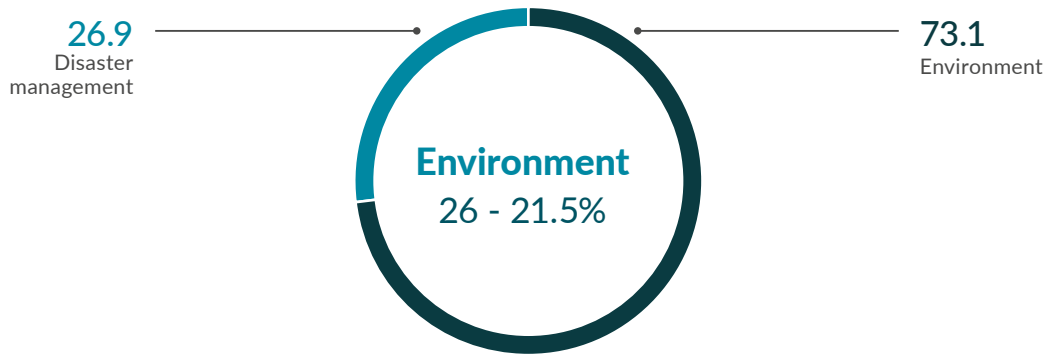
both the Productive sectors and the generation of Infrastructure and economic services, had a similar relative importance of around 16% respectively. The share of TC dedicated to Other areas was less significant, only 4.1%.

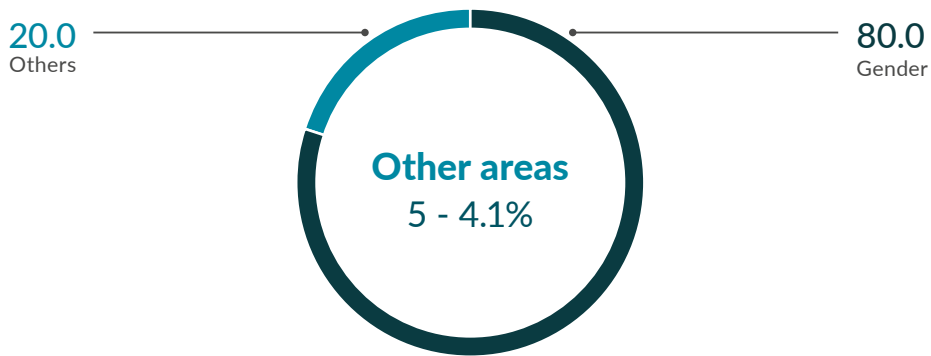
→ GRAPH 3.12

Distribution of Triangular Cooperation initiatives in Ibero-America, by area of action and activity sector. 2020-2021

In percentage







Source: SEGIB based on Agencies and Directorates-General for Cooperation

Specifically, the importance of Institutional Strengthening is explained by the contribution of initiatives that addressed two of the sectors of this area: *Strengthening institutions and public policies*, which accounts for almost one half of the cooperation carried out in this category and is the third sector with the greatest relative importance in overall TC in the 2020-2021 period; and *Legal and judicial development and Human Rights*, another 25% of what was implemented with an institutional purpose. This sector shares the fifth position in terms of relative importance in all TC.

In this sense, Triangular Cooperation experiences promoted in Ibero-America to face the challenges of urban and territorial planning, as well as those that seek to provide the different public administrations with better management tools related to procedures and processes of

decentralization of the civil service, are especially worthy of mention. Initiatives that aimed at strengthening the management of international cooperation in general and of SSC in particular should also be highlighted. As for the legal, judicial and human rights topics, projects that focused on the migrant population and, in particular, on unaccompanied minors and the promotion of actions to protect their rights and prevent them from becoming victims of smuggling and trafficking, deserve special attention. In addition, as Case 3.2 describes, other initiatives were implemented to promote policies for racial equality and to specifically address the Afro-descendant population.



Photo: This project of percussion and choir ensemble, in which more than 60 children and adolescents from the Maya Chuj community living in Chiapas, Mexico, and in northern Guatemala participate, incorporates the rich Mayan cultural tradition into musical didactics, and highlights the value of cultural and natural heritage. Regional SSC Program *Iberorquestas Juveniles*. Image bank on South-South and Triangular Cooperation in Ibero-America. 2021.

→ CASE 3.2

TC to advance the rights of people of African descent

Inequality is a major obstacle to Latin-America's sustainable development and to its democracies. Although the first axis of the region's social inequality matrix is the socioeconomic stratum, other inequalities that exist and persist are also determined by the axes of ethno-racial status (ECLAC and UNFPA, 2021).

The legacy of exclusion left behind by slavery (estimated in at least 134 million people) is still in evidence today, masking the contributions of Afro-descendant populations to development (ECLAC and UNFPA, 2021). "The current development model, structural racism and an enduring culture of privilege reproduce the structural inequalities, deprivations and rights violations that continue to affect Latin America's Afro-descendant populations and keep them from achieving well-being" (ECLAC and UNFPA, 2021).

According to a document prepared by the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean and the United Nations Population Fund (ECLAC and UNFPA, 2021), and based on available data, the incidence of poverty and extreme poverty in Latin-America is much higher among Afro-descendants. Shortcomings related to basic services, lack of access to quality education and health, and major deficits in decent work and social protection stand out among the main challenges. In addition, women and Afro-descendant youth are the most affected by inequality in terms of their access to the labor market.

In recent decades, some Latin-American countries have begun taking steps towards the recognition of Afro-descendant populations as part of their history and culture, while implementing policies aimed at improving their living conditions and guaranteeing their rights (SEGIB, 2020).

"Brazil is one of the countries in Latin-America that has made the most significant achievements to institutionalize policies against discrimination and in favor of racial equity" (SEGIB, 2020). For example, initiatives based on the National Policy for the Promotion of Racial Equality (2003) and the National Plan for the Promotion of Racial Equality (2009), which culminated in the Statute for Racial Equality (2010) and its regulations, stand out. This statute institutionalized a series of initiatives in education, culture, sports, leisure, justice, health, labor and social assistance (Ministry of Women, Family and Human Rights, MDH by its Portuguese acronym, 2021).

In Uruguay's case, the statistical visibility of ethnic-racial minorities, which began in 2006, shattered the myth that the Uruguayan society was relatively racially homogeneous (UNFPA, 2022), integrated and almost devoid of inequalities (Ministry of Social Development, MIDES by its Spanish acronym, 2019). The Law against Racism, Xenophobia and Discrimination (2004), the Law on Affirmative Actions for Afro-descendants (2013) - in which, for the first time, the State recognizes the discrimination to which the Afro-Uruguayan population has been exposed (MIDES, 2019) - and the First Plan for Racial Equity and Afro-descendants (2019), stand out among the main milestones in public policies on the subject. This plan was discussed with councils throughout the country and its main objectives are to organize and guide public policies for the inclusion of people of African descent, promote their social participation, and incorporate the ethnic-racial perspective in public policies (MIDES, 2019).

South-South and Triangular Cooperation have also supported these processes. For example, since

2008, Uruguay and Brazil have been promoting agreements to foster racial equality and, in particular, to comply with the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (1965) and the Durban Declaration and Program of Action (2001).

In this context, between 2019 and 2020, Brazil, Uruguay and Spain implemented the Triangular Cooperation project *Political and technical assistance for the implementation of public policies for racial equality in the framework of the National Strategy of Public Policies for Afro-descendant Population with subnational governments*. The initiative was financed by the Spanish Agency for International Development Cooperation (AECID by its Spanish acronym) in the framework of its Afro-descendant Cooperation Program. Through this program, AECID (2016) provides spaces for the different stakeholders (Afro-descendant organizations, multilateral agencies, government institutions in charge of the subject, etc.) to debate and promotes the improvement of the quality of life of this population and the strengthening of their own organizations.

The project focused on border areas between Uruguay and Brazil, specifically in the Uruguayan departments of Artigas, Cerro Largo and Rivera and the Brazilian neighbor cities (Quaraí, Jaguarão and Santana do Livramento). According to the 2011 National Census, the highest proportion of Afro-descendant population in Uruguay lives in these three departments (UNFPA, 2022).

As a result of the initiative, updated and quality information on the situation of the Afro-descendant population in the three Uruguayan departments in terms of health, education, economic development and culture, is available. This is a key input to design local ethnic-racial equity plans. The project has also strengthened Uruguayan institutions' technical capacities,

and has enabled the development of strategies to face this challenge together with Brazil.

In spite of the progress, the region still has a large social debt with Afro-descendant populations (SEGIB, 2020) and South-South and Triangular Cooperation can contribute to eradicate all forms of racial

discrimination, in line with the principle of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development to *leave no one behind*.

Sources: SEGIB based on Agencies and Directorates-General for Cooperation, AECID (2016), ECLAC and UNFPA (2021), MDH (2021), MIDES (2019), SEGIB (2020) and UNFPA (2022)

In addition, 3 out of 4 of the initiatives that are associated with the second area in terms of relative importance - the same that involves more than one fifth of overall TC - are explained by the attention that the region pays to the protection and care of the *Environment*, a sector that, over the last few years, has been consolidating as the highest priority for the region. The other 25% is completed by exchanges related to strengthening *Disaster management*, which also shows an increasing importance in countries' TC.

TC experiences dedicated to *Environment* and promoted in Ibero-America during 2020-2021 are varied and include a set of initiatives that combine two aspects: on the one hand, the specific purposes on which they focus (conservation, protection and restoration of nature; integrated resource and waste management); and, on the other, the type of instruments countries share to meet these objectives (environmental regulations, innovative financial mechanisms, or fees and payments for services). In any case, many of these initiatives have a higher purpose which is the preservation of biodiversity. Box 3.2 reflects on this aspect and on the way the region places TC at the service of this global challenge.

As for *Disaster management*, TC initiatives promoted in Ibero-America during the last two-year period are also diverse, addressing different phases of the disaster cycle: prevention (promotion of Early Warning Systems); emergency (training for search and rescue

in collapsed structures); and reconstruction and mitigation of effects (provision of tools for the social protection of the most affected populations). Although many have a generic approach, others focus on seismic and hydro-meteorological events and fires (technical capacities for integrated fire management).

— In recent years, the *Environment* sector has become the highest priority in terms of Ibero-American TC

→ BOX 3.2

Triangular Cooperation in Ibero-America and the preservation of biodiversity

Our life, health, nutrition and well-being depend, to a large extent, on what nature provides (Leibniz Research Network Biodiversity, 2022). While most of its services cannot be completely substituted and some are even irreplaceable (Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services, IPBES, 2019), the way we are making use of it is compromising its ability to provide those services in the future. "Since the Industrial revolution human activities have increasingly destroyed and degraded forests, grasslands, wetlands and other important ecosystems. Seventy-five per cent of the Earth's ice-free land surface has already been significantly altered, most of the oceans are polluted, and more than 85% of the area of wetlands has been lost" (WWF, 2020).

"Biodiversity - within species, between species and in ecosystems - is declining at a faster rate than ever before in human history" (IPBES, 2019). Although measuring biodiversity is complex, and there is no single measure that can capture all of the changes, the majority of indicators show net declines over recent decades (WWF, 2020). For example, the global Living Planet Index (LPI), which tracks the abundance of almost 21,000 populations of mammals, birds, fish, reptiles and amphibians around the world, shows an average 68% fall in analyzed populations between 1970 and 2016 (WWF, 2020).

The most important direct driver of biodiversity loss in terrestrial systems in the last several decades has been land-use change, primarily the conversion of native habitats into agricultural systems (WWF, 2020). Paradoxically, this loss of diversity "poses a serious risk to global food security by undermining the resilience of many agricultural systems to threats such as pests, pathogens and climate

change" (IPBES, 2019). However, by using appropriate farming methods, agriculture can also significantly contribute to the protection and promotion of biodiversity (Leibniz Research Network Biodiversity, 2022).

Human health is also linked to biodiversity, as the latter provides food and medicines, regulates climate, protects us from heat, cleans pollutants from water, air and soil, can restore physical and mental health (reducing stress, promoting transcendental experiences) and regulates the dynamics of biological communities (including their pathogens), among other factors (Leibniz Research Network Biodiversity, 2022).

On the other hand, indigenous peoples and local communities play a crucial role in the sustainable use and conservation of biodiversity and ecosystems. Recognizing their rights over territories and resources is essential to maintain biodiversity (Leibniz Research Network Biodiversity, 2022). In addition, "80% of the needs of the world's poor are linked to the planet's biological resources" (Oxfam Intermón, 2022) and, paradoxically, they have contributed the least to climate change and biodiversity loss and are suffering the most from its effects.

In short, biodiversity protection is essential for human life. What is the international community doing in this regard? The Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), which all Ibero-American countries have ratified, is the first multilateral treaty to address biodiversity as an issue of global importance. Signed at the 1992 Rio Earth Summit, CBD has three objectives: the conservation of biological diversity; the sustainable use of the components of biological diversity; and the fair and equitable

sharing of the benefits arising out of the utilization of genetic resources (CONABIO, 2022). This includes, for example, the protection of ecosystems, species, biosafety, among others.

South-South and Triangular Cooperation is also aligned with these commitments. Although the information available on the Ibero-American Integrated Data System on South-South and Triangular Cooperation (SIDICSS by its Spanish acronym) does not include a specific marker on biodiversity, an exercise was carried out to identify initiatives which main objective is related to its protection and those that could indirectly address this issue. Thus, between 2006 and 2021, a significant number of exchanges tackle biodiversity and Triangular Cooperation is the modality that has the highest percentage of initiatives with this focus. Specifically, 76 were associated with biodiversity (33 projects and 43 actions) and 171 could indirectly be related to it, representing 5.6% and 12.7% of the total, respectively. In other words, if the percentages are added up, 18% of triangular initiatives in the period could have directly or indirectly contributed to biodiversity protection.

According to their objectives, 30% of triangular actions and projects on biodiversity focused on protected areas and a quarter on forest protection. However, they also addressed other issues such as genetic diversity, marine ecosystems and coral reefs, among others.

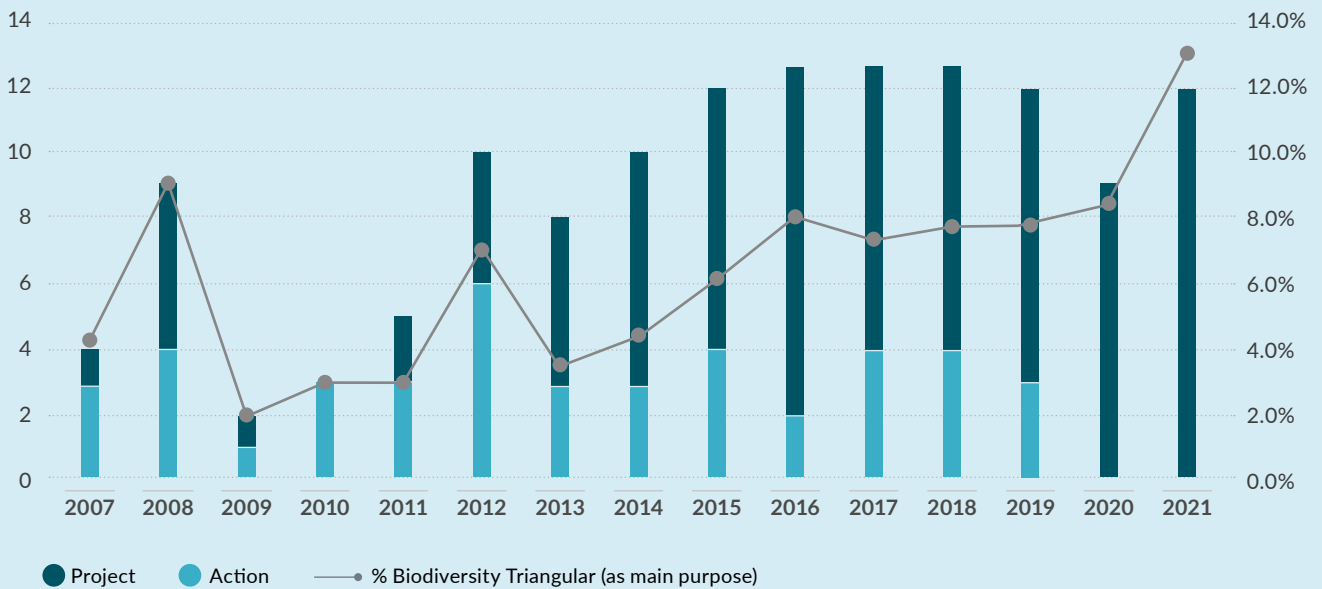
Those that indirectly focus on biodiversity were dedicated to improve environmental care (Planning and management; Data, evaluation and control; Education and Research), pollution reduction (water, soil, air, hazardous pollutants, waste, etc.),

sustainable production (agriculture, industry, aquaculture, etc.), integrated management of watersheds and water

resources, and the sustainable use of natural resources (tourism, ecosystem services, etc.).

Evolution of Triangular Cooperation initiatives in biodiversity (as main purpose) in Ibero-America. 2007-2021

In units and percentage



Source: SEGIB based on Agencies and Directorates-General for Cooperation

As the graph shows, Triangular Cooperation initiatives that focus on biodiversity have been increasing, especially in the last decade, regardless of annual fluctuations. Even in 2020 and 2021, during the COVID-19 pandemic, and although there was a drop in overall cooperation, biodiversity projects increased and the percentage over the total raised to a remarkable 13%.

A huge number of strengthened capacities lie behind these figures. For example, Brazil and Germany have been supporting the development

of Ecuador's National Biodiversity Institute (INABIO by its Spanish acronym) since 2016, through a triangular project that in 2021 began its second phase. Its aim is to strengthen INABIO's capacities in science, technology and innovation knowledge management and thus improve decision making. Among other things, work is being carried out on the bioinformatics platform developed to systematize information on the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity, and on data modeling.

Methodological note: The information available in SIDICSS was used to carry out this exercise. On this basis, a first broad filter was applied considering those cooperation initiatives that could be related to this topic and then a manual review was performed to double check this aspect and classify them. The first broad filter included initiatives in the Environment area (*Environment* and *Disaster management* sectors), those targeting SDGs 14, 15, 7 and 12 (main or second SDG, only available for initiatives implemented after 2015) and those which title and/or objective included any of the keywords related to the issue (both in Spanish and Portuguese, the two official languages of the Ibero-American space). The original list of keywords was broadened after the first manual review and contains more than 150 items. Due to limited descriptive information, figures may probably be underestimated.

Source: SEGIB based on Agencies and Directorates-General for Cooperation, CONABIO-Mexico (2022), IPBES (2019), Leibniz Research Network Biodiversity (2022), Oxfam Intermón (2022) and WWF (2020).

Meanwhile, 20% of Triangular Cooperation promoted in Ibero-America in 2020-2021 for social purposes is largely explained by the region's strong commitment to *Other services and social policies*, a sector that accounts for 6 out of 10 of the initiatives classified in this area and which, in the last two-year period, was the second most important in terms of all TC exchanged in Ibero-America (see Graph 3.11). This was followed, in terms of relative importance, by *Health*, which accounted for 25% of TC in the Social area. It should be added, however, that despite the health crisis caused by COVID-19, the importance of the *Health* sector in overall TC (5%) was relatively low.

In this context, experiences to promote and guarantee social inclusion stood out. To this end, initiatives were implemented to specifically address different population groups in special conditions of vulnerability (early childhood, youth, migrants and the elderly) and to promote instruments that can contribute to this, such as education, school canteens, sports and access to employment and decent housing. Initiatives in the *Health* sector were varied, including those that aimed at controlling chronic malnutrition, preventing HIV and reducing infant mortality, as explained in Case 3.3, related to a network of pediatric care specialized in cardiology.

→ CASE 3.3

Prevention of child mortality in Bolivia through Triangular Cooperation



According to the World Health Organization (WHO, 2020), 1 in 33 infants worldwide has congenital heart disease (impairment in the normal development of the heart). However, thanks to different innovative technologies, preventive diagnoses can be made which, together with prenatal care and the required treatments, can make a difference and prevent future complications.

According to Revista Hitos, cases of congenital heart disease in Bolivia have annually increased and “the probability of being born with heart disease doubles” in higher regions. The estimated annual number of Bolivian children born with congenital heart disease reaches between 2,500 and 3,000 cases” (2020, p.5). In response, Bolivia, together with Germany and Argentina, have implemented the project *Consolidation of the pediatric care network and capacity building in infant cardiology, as a decentralized healthcare model. A contribution to the reduction of childhood mortality rates (COTRICI by its Spanish acronym)*. The objective of this initiative focuses on capacity strengthening in pediatric cardiology through the optimization of healthcare networks and the decentralization of pediatric services.

According to the project's Evaluation Report, 2 lines of action were defined to achieve this goal: on the one hand, institutional development to manage healthcare networks for the timely care of congenital heart diseases in a coordinated manner; and, on the other hand, strengthening pediatric heart care, improving the capacities of healthcare professionals from a preventive approach (Durán, D. and Peres, J. 2021, p.10). Thus, the measures promoted included both the strengthening of pre-existing capacities and the promotion of new ones.

This project, which contributes to the alignment of Ibero-American cooperation with SDG 3 Good health and well-being, was the result of joints efforts made by Argentina (first provider), Bolivia (recipient) and Germany (second provider). In this regard, since 2010, Argentina has been implementing the National Congenital Heart Disease Program, through which in 2016 more than 1,800 free surgeries were performed throughout the country on children who suffered from congenital heart disease and had no formal health coverage in cardiovascular centers (Garrahan Pediatric Hospital, 2017). GIZ, in turn, provided technical and financial

assistance to its Ibero-American partners and Bolivia, in line with its own needs and guidelines, made its institutional framework and experience available for the proper implementation of this project.

Meanwhile, the group of initiatives that had a more economic orientation aggregately represented another 30% of all TC carried out in Ibero-America in the 2020-2021 period. Actually, this cooperation was very evenly distributed between the support to Productive sectors (16.5% of total initiatives) and the generation of Infrastructure and economic services (15.7%). In this sense, it is important to highlight the *Agriculture and livestock* sector, which accounted for 55% of TC in the Productive sectors area and was fourth in terms of relative importance for the region's TC, with a remarkable 9.1% share.

Still from the economic perspective, a special mention should be made to initiatives dedicated to strengthen capacities in *Energy, Employment and Enterprises*, all three among the six sectors that had the highest relative importance in the period. Experiences described in Cases 3.4 and 3.5 stand out in this sense: the first focuses on the

support provided by Uruguay and Germany to Paraguay to advance the design and implementation of an energy policy based on a greater use of renewable energies, one of its great strengths; the second refers to the partnership between Germany, Mexico and Guatemala so that the latter can design education and labor inclusion policies to prevent migration flows driven, to a large extent, by precariousness and lack of opportunities.

→ CASE 3.4

Paraguay strengthens its energy policy supported by Uruguay and Germany



Almost all of Paraguay's domestic primary energy supply is renewable (El Periódico de la Energía, 2022). However, more than 39% of final energy consumption is based on imported fossil fuels (diesel and gasoline in large proportion) especially used for transportation, while the incidence of electricity in final consumption is slightly over 17% (United Nations Development Program, UNDP, 2021, p.5).

In 2017, Germany, Paraguay and Uruguay agreed to cooperate on issues related to sustainable energy supply. Two years later, the project *Affordable and Sustainable Energy for Paraguay: Implementing the 2040 National Energy Policy*, began its execution. The initiative's main aim was to provide Paraguay with practical mechanisms to encourage the use and incorporation of alternative and competitive renewable and sustainable energy sources (SIDICSS, 2022).

This project was supported by GIZ, through the Regional Fund for Triangular Cooperation in Latin-America and the Caribbean, and it was based on two pillars: renewable energies and energy efficiency. It also included activities related to regulatory frameworks, electric mobility and the review of the efficiency plan, among others (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Paraguay, 2019). It is important to highlight, in addition, that this was the first Triangular Cooperation initiative between these three countries. Between 2017 and 2021, the project implemented the exchange of experiences and on-site visits to energy efficiency laboratories as well as consultancies, a mid-term evaluation and training activities, among others, (Vice-Ministry of Mines and Energy, 2021).

The following outcomes were highlighted in the final report presented by the Vice-Ministry in July 2021: technical capacities for

innovation in the use of renewable energies; knowledge for decision making in innovation for load distribution systems and technological alternatives; inputs for the implementation of energy efficiency labeling of efficient appliances. It is also worth noting that, in early 2022 and after completing several electrification plans with energy from hydroelectric power plants in Bahía Negra, Paraguay became the only country in the world with 100% clean and renewable electricity generation (El Periódico de la Energía, 2022).

→ CASE 3.5

Migration, education and labor market inclusion: searching for a virtuous circle

According to Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) in Mexico, the COVID-19 pandemic and pre-existing inequalities in Latin-America and the Caribbean have deepened the structural causes that drive migration in the continent (Telesur, 2021).

One of the most dynamic sub-regions in terms of migration is Central-America where, according to the Migration Data Portal (2021), it is possible to identify significant return migration flows mainly from the United States and Mexico to countries in northern Central-America (Honduras, Guatemala and El Salvador). Regarding this last group of countries and specifically in Guatemala, migration is usually associated with young men from rural areas (12th Population Census and 7th Housing Census 2018). Precarious livelihoods and the lack of opportunities are among the most remarkable causes that play a critical role in the decision to migrate (IOM and UNFPA, 2021).

In light of this complex context and in the framework of the German Fund for Triangular Cooperation with Latin-America and the Caribbean, Germany, Mexico and Guatemala designed the project *Support for education and job integration for Guatemalan youth, adults and migrants (CEDUC by its Spanish acronym)*, which implementation is expected from 2020 to 2023. This initiative combines strategies to motivate Guatemalans to stay in their country and works with the population that has already migrated but has decided to return for different reasons, through the strengthening of training for work and the incorporation in labor markets.

According to GIZ (2021), the project carries out different activities in order to improve needs-based education and job integration for young people, adults and migrants in Guatemala; for example: the elaboration of educational material, technical training focused on entrepreneurship for teachers and cooperation with the private

sector. On the other hand, Mexico provides its experience in this area by promoting an educational strategy to support returnees in Guatemala and, together with the recipient, exchanges experiences through workshops and courses to find innovative solutions to improve educational services and access to labor markets, and to contribute to the generation of entrepreneurship.

Source: SEGIB based on Agencies and Directorates-General for Cooperation, GIZ (2021), IOM and UNFPA (2021), Telesur (2021) and 12th Population Census and 7th Housing Census 2018.

A special mention should be made regarding the 5 TC initiatives (4.1% of the total) the region dedicated to strengthen the heterogeneous category Other areas. This TC mainly focused on supporting *Gender equality* (in 80% of the cases) and almost all initiatives also shared a common goal: to fight, prevent and put an end to violence against women. This Triangular Cooperation was supported by Spain as second provider, and it materialized through the promotion of public policies and the generation of evidence to guide their design and main lines of action.

Finally, it is also important to review how TC has addressed the response to the crisis caused by COVID-19. In this sense, the combined analysis of Graphs 3.13 and 3.14 confirms that the global health crisis has not

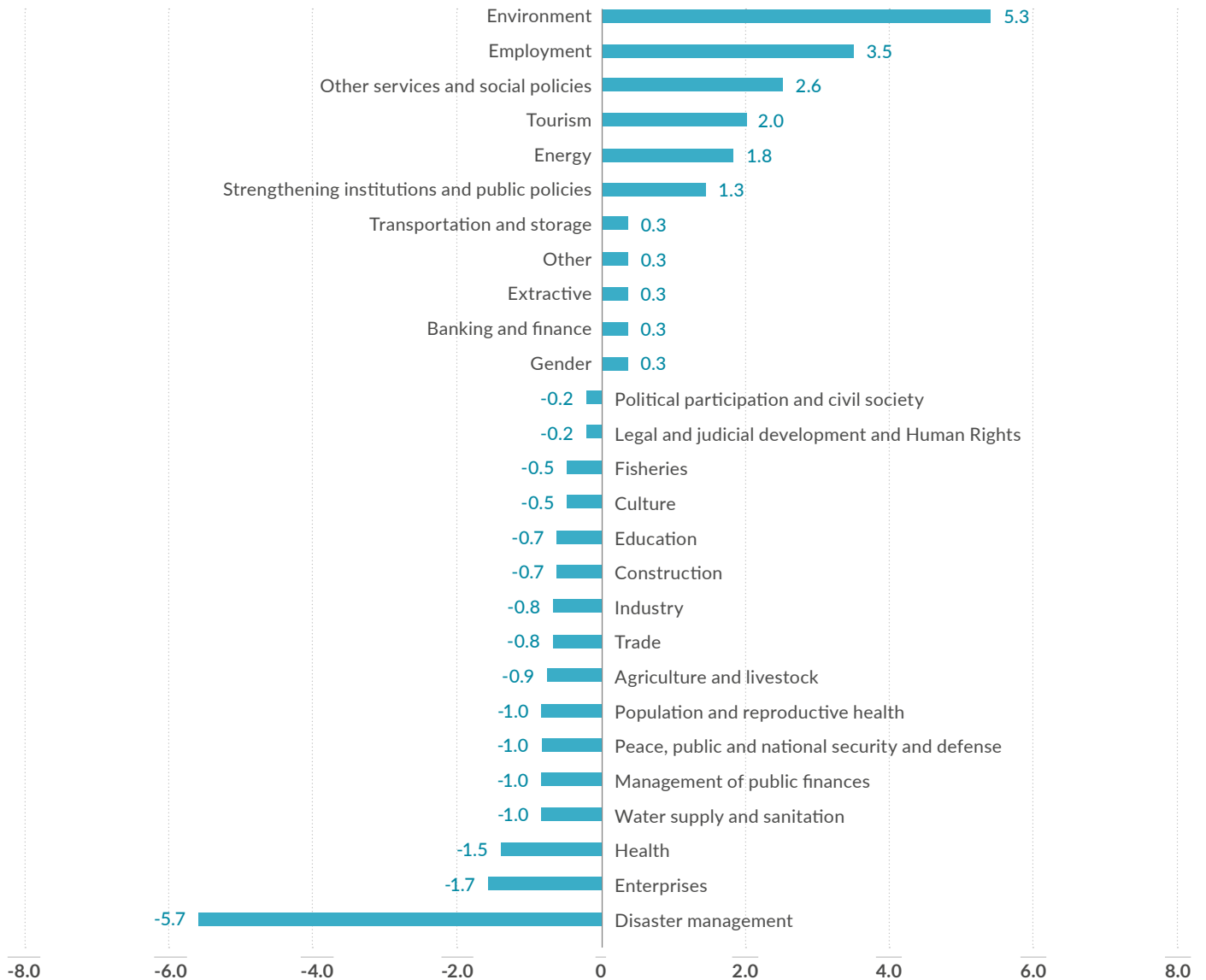
succeeded in reversing the trend of recent years in which the *Health* sector is being progressively outperformed by *Environment*.

— In recent years, and despite the COVID-19 crisis, the *Health* sector has progressively been displaced by the *Environment* sector

→ GRAPH 3.13

Variation of activity sectors' share in the total number of Triangular Cooperation initiatives in Ibero-America. 2018-2019 and 2020-2021

In percentage points



Source: SEGIB based on Agencies and Directorates-General for Cooperation

Indeed, the first graph shows how the relative importance of the different activity sectors in the total number of TC initiatives executed in the 2020-2021 period varied compared to the two previous years. Figures in 2018-2019 already reveal how *Environment* had increased its share (5.3 percentage points) while *Health* registered a drop of 1.5 points.

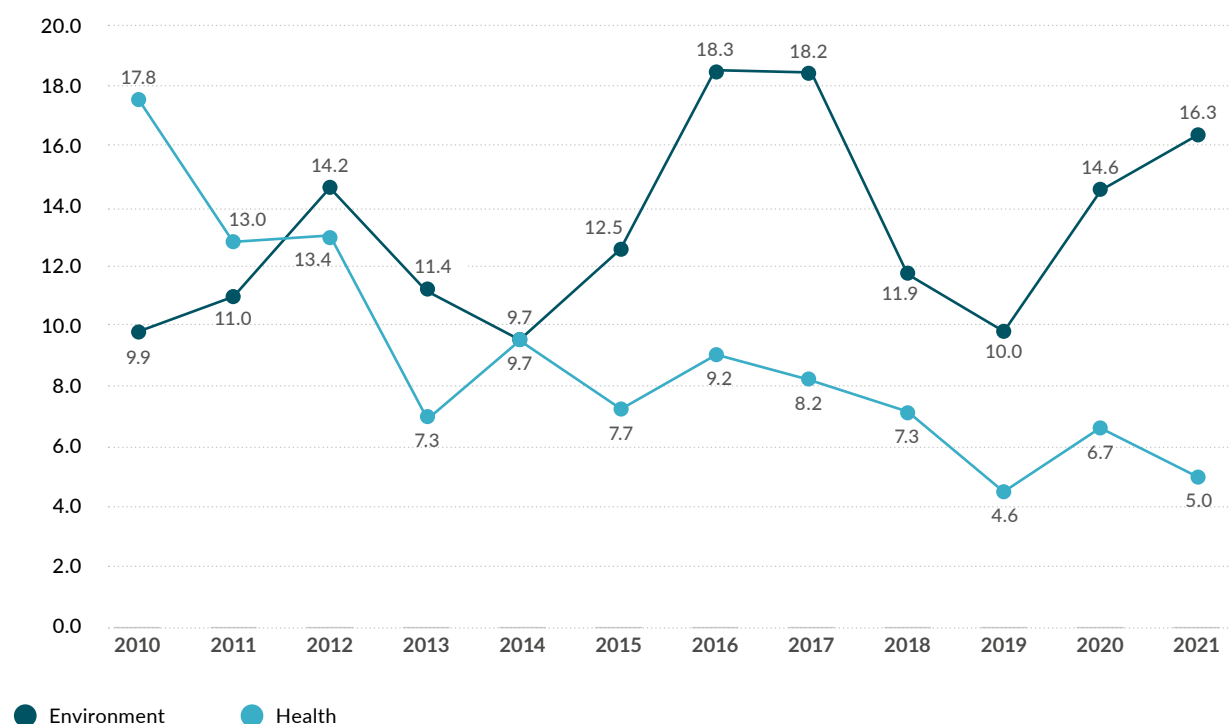
The second graph illustrates the evolution of the relative importance of each of these two sectors in the total number of triangular initiatives implemented each year in the 2010-2021 period. As can be seen, in 2010, most TC initiatives focused on *Health*, with a share of almost 18%, 8 percentage points higher than *Environment*. Slightly

more than a decade later, in 2021, the ratio was reversed, *Environment* being the leading sector and its share (16.3%) more than tripling that of *Health* (5.0%).

→ GRAPH 3.14

Evolution of Environment's and Health's share in the total number of Triangular Cooperation initiatives in Ibero-America. 2010-2021

In percentage



Source: SEGIB based on Agencies and Directorates-General for Cooperation



Photo: Young people take English lessons in Villa Monaco, El Salvador. Bilateral SSC Project between Mexico and El Salvador *Jóvenes construyendo el futuro*. Image bank on South-South and Triangular Cooperation in Ibero-America. 2021.

The above does not mean, however, that Ibero-America did not take advantage of the potential of Triangular Cooperation to respond to the new challenges in the context of the pandemic. As suggested in Graph 3.15, TC focused on other dimensions of the crisis. Indeed, the chart details 10 TC initiatives carried out in Ibero-America in the 2020-2021 period that, in their titles and/or objectives, make explicit reference to COVID-19. As

shown, these initiatives tackle the challenges posed by the new scenario, especially in its economic and social dimensions, and aim to promote experiences that contribute to addressing them (banking, agriculture, tourism, energy or employment).

→ **GRAPH 3.15**

Selected Triangular Cooperation initiatives promoted in Ibero-America to respond to the economic dimension of the COVID-19 crisis. 2020-2021

Initiative	Stakeholders, objective and main features
Protected Areas - Strategic Spaces for the Development of Sustainable Tourism post COVID-19	<p>Project - <i>Tourism</i> - SDG 8 (Decent work and economic growth) Costa Rica - Germany - Paraguay and Ecuador</p> <p>Objective: Contribute to the reactivation of sustainable tourism post-COVID-19, through the exchange of information and experiences for planning, training and positioning of selected Protected Areas in Paraguay and Ecuador.</p>
Development and implementation of resilient, sustainable and replicable solutions to support a post-COVID-19 green recovery by using solar energy.	<p>Project - <i>Energy</i> - SDG 7 (Affordable and clean energy) Cuba - Germany - Dominican Republic</p> <p>Objective: Strengthen knowledge on green recovery and increase the technological capacities of relevant institutions in the Dominican Republic, based on the development and implementation of climate resilient and replicable solutions for the use of solar energy (photovoltaic and solar thermal).</p>
Boosting employment and entrepreneurship in Paraguay and Uruguay in a COVID-19 environment	<p>Project - <i>Employment</i> - SDG 8 (Decent work and economic growth) Paraguay - Germany - Uruguay</p> <p>Objective: Reactivate the labor market and decent employment in Paraguay and Uruguay and make them more dynamic, consolidating an entrepreneurial ecosystem and a digital transformation in the face of a COVID-19 environment.</p>
Promoting the competitiveness of the Guatemalan cocoa value chain post-COVID-19	<p>Project - <i>Agriculture and livestock</i> - SDG 8 (Decent work and economic growth) Dominican Republic - Germany - Guatemala</p> <p>Objective: Promote the competitiveness of the cocoa value chain by strengthening productive capacities with a sustainable approach for the generation of added value.</p>
Promoting solar thermal technology as part of the strategy to address the COVID-19 crisis in the health and MSME sectors of Honduras	<p>Project - <i>Energy</i> - SDG 7 (Affordable and clean energy) Panama - Germany and UNEP - Honduras</p> <p>Objective: Improve the conditions associated with the use and management of energy in the hospital system of Honduras and the MSME sector, optimizing energy consumption, reducing direct operating costs and thus contributing to healthcare during and after the COVID-19 pandemic and to a green economic recovery post-pandemic. All this through the promotion of solar thermal energy, which will facilitate the installation of modern and affordable solutions, also contributing to the goals of reducing CO2 emissions.</p>

<p>Strengthening the resilience of communities that depend on nature-based tourism to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic</p>	<p>Project - <i>Tourism</i> - SDG 8 (Decent work and economic growth) Mexico - Germany - Guatemala</p> <p>Objective: Strengthen the resilience of communities that depend on nature-based tourism in the face of the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, by supporting the development of tourist activities in line with post-pandemic requirements, and the consolidation of networks to promote training and the exchange of experiences at the regional level.</p>
<p>Management of tourist destinations respectful of biodiversity and resilient to health crises</p>	<p>Project - <i>Tourism</i> - SDG 8 (Decent work and economic growth) Costa Rica - Germany - Dominican Republic</p> <p>Objective: Strengthen the management of resilient tourist destinations, respectful of biodiversity, in Costa Rica and the Dominican Republic, through the transfer, exchange and consolidation of tools and experiences in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, consistent with each country's sustainable development models.</p>
<p>Promoting decent work through the inclusion of vulnerable groups in vocational training in Central-America, the Dominican Republic and Mexico in the context of COVID-19 (Forum)</p>	<p>Action - <i>Employment</i> - SDG 8 (Decent work and economic growth) Dominican Republic and Mexico - ILO - Guatemala</p> <p>Objective: Share South-South Cooperation initiatives that are being promoted in the context of COVID-19 for the inclusion of vulnerable groups in vocational training.</p>
<p>Recovery and sustainability of Transition Economies (Re-SET in Spanish)</p>	<p>Project - <i>Banking and finance</i> - SDG 8 (Decent work and economic growth) Mexico - Germany - Ecuador</p> <p>Objective: Exchange experiences and best practices to strengthen Development Banks' technical and financial capacities in order to promote, in the short term, a green recovery that is economic, productive, financial, sustainable and inclusive, in the face of the COVID-19 health emergency; thus, moving forward, in the medium term, towards sustainable development banking in Mexico and Ecuador.</p>

Source: SEGIB based on Agencies and Directorates-General for Cooperation

3.4.2. Profile of the main stakeholders

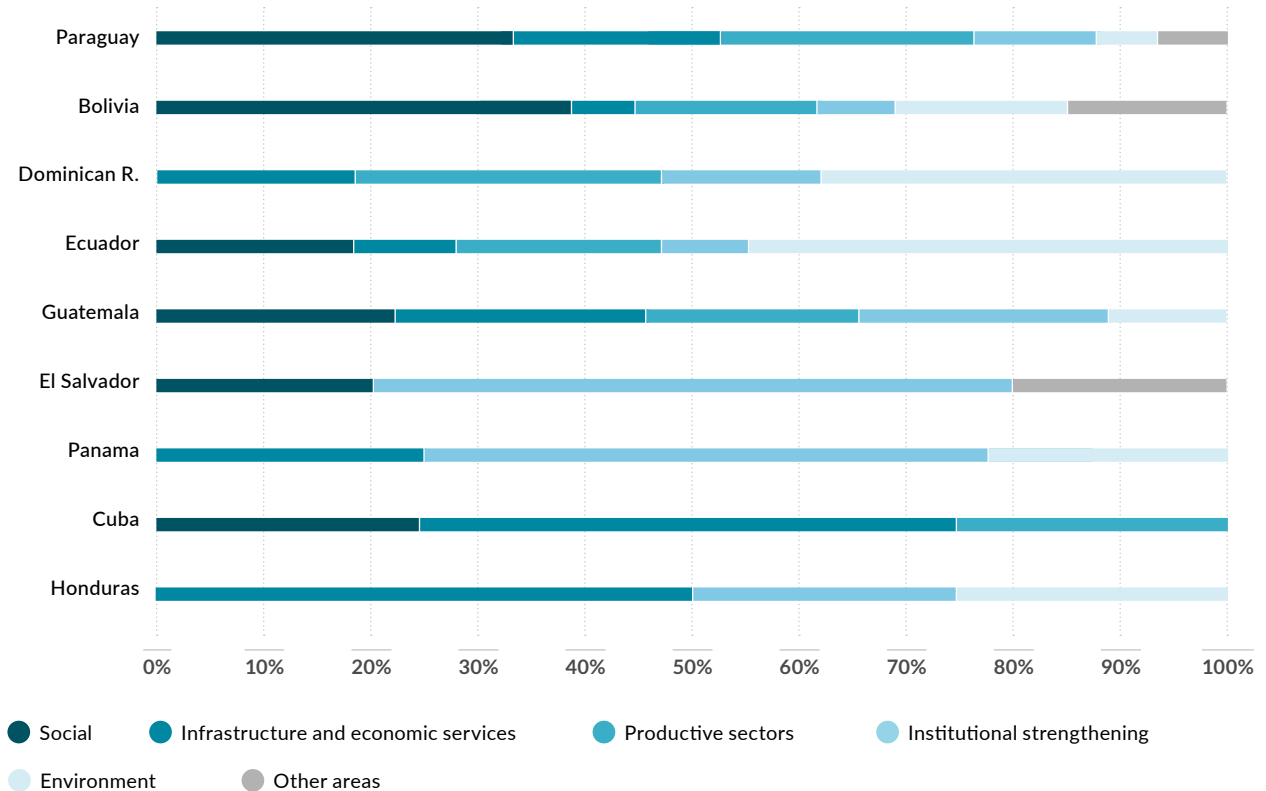
The type of capacities that were strengthened in Ibero-America as a result of TC implemented during the 2020-2021 period responds to a combination of aspects: the main stakeholders that participated in the different partnerships; the participation (or not) of international organizations with a strong sectoral mandate - FAO, IICA, ILO, UNEP or UNICEF, among others; and the different types of knowledge and experience countries transferred (as providers) or needed to address (as recipients).

Graphs 3.16 and 3.17 were prepared to specifically illustrate Ibero-American countries' sectoral profile in terms of TC that was carried out in the region in 2020-2021. The first focuses on the countries for which the recipient role is most important and arranges them in descending order according to the number of initiatives in which they participated in this role. It also shows initiatives' distribution by area of action. The second graph does the same for the main providers.

→ GRAPH 3.16

Distribution of Triangular Cooperation initiatives in Ibero-America in which countries that mainly act as recipients participated, by area of action. 2020-2021

In percentage



Note: The graph includes those countries that (individually) acted as recipients in more than 50% of the total initiatives in which they participated in the 2020-2021 period. Those initiatives in which they shared the recipient role with other partners were not included. Additionally, countries are arranged in descending order according to the number of initiatives in which they participated in this role.

Source: SEGIB based on Agencies and Directorates-General for Cooperation

As Graph 3.16 suggests, countries for which the recipient role prevailed showed varied profiles. Two patterns can be identified if the analysis focuses on the first 4 countries, which received more than 10 initiatives: Paraguay and Bolivia, which mainly strengthened their capacities in the Social area (31.3% and 38.5% of their respective initiatives); and Ecuador and the Dominican Republic, for which Environment was the leading priority (54.5% and 36.4%, in each case).

Besides the similarities, however, a detailed analysis of the thematic classification of these sectoral profiles also suggests some differences. In this sense, TC allowed Paraguay to improve its capacities in the *Other services and social policies* sector, prioritizing those initiatives that aimed to promote coexistence and social inclusion. However, equally important for Paraguay were the interventions in the productive area (another 31.3% of the initiatives), mainly due to the importance of *Agriculture and livestock*, where emphasis was placed on improvements in irrigation and water use and the promotion of financial inclusion mechanisms for family farming.

Almost 40% of TC initiatives that took place in Bolivia were dedicated to strengthen capacities related to water (sanitation, efficient management of its use and specific plans for medium-sized cities), as well as *Health* (plans at the local level, in addition to the aforementioned pediatric network). Meanwhile, Ecuador and the Dominican Republic received significant support to advance biodiversity protection (national germplasm banks, conservation corridors and protection of reefs, among others). In the case of the Caribbean country, TC also provided better tools for *Disaster Management* and Institutional strengthening (27.3% of the initiatives), especially in land-use planning.

On the other hand, three types of profiles can be distinguished for countries that act as recipients in less than 10 initiatives: Guatemala's was highly diversified and based on social, economic and institutional aspects (22.2% for each of the related areas); Panama and El Salvador focused their efforts on Institutional strengthening (50% and 60% of their TC); and Honduras and Cuba

took advantage of half of the initiatives in which they participated as recipients to support the generation of Infrastructure and economic services.

Specifically, and as it was mentioned above, TC received by Guatemala was highly diversified, with an emphasis on *Other services and social policies, Employment and Legal and judicial development and Human Rights*. Besides this diversity, a large group of initiatives combined elements to comprehensively address the same purpose: facilitate the social inclusion of young people - especially those who may decide to migrate - and provide them with education, employment and housing, and greater opportunities, thus preventing them from becoming victims of trafficking and smuggling.

A similar purpose characterized El Salvador's TC, in this case through the adoption of tools to promote a Culture of Peace which, as will be detailed below, are also a means for social inclusion. This Central-American country also took advantage of TC to strengthen procedures related to its administration and public sectoral policies. Meanwhile,

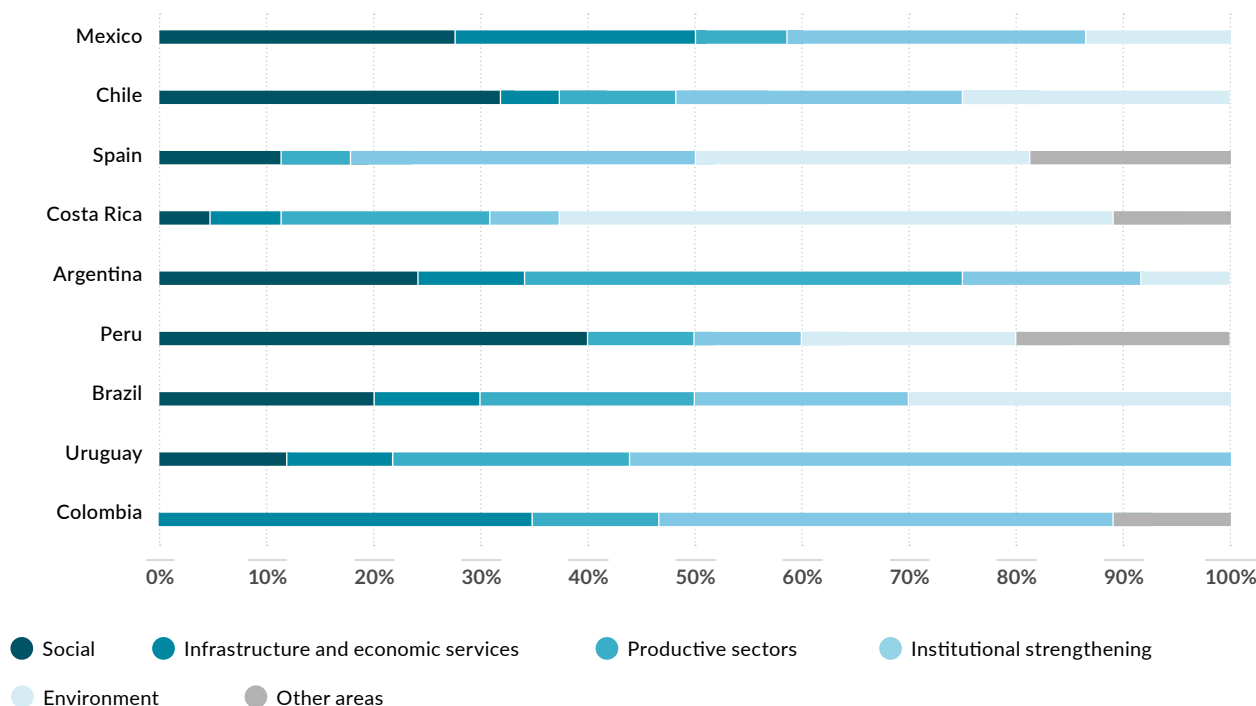
Honduras and Cuba focused on *Energy*, through actions to foster the use of renewable sources (solar thermal technology) and a more efficient management, which, in the case of the Caribbean country, is expected to have a special impact on industry.

— Paraguay, Bolivia, the Dominican Republic and Ecuador have been the main recipients of TC initiatives, with a wide variety of strengthened capacities

→ GRAPH 3.17

Distribution of Triangular Cooperation initiatives in Ibero-America in which countries that mainly act as first and/or second providers participated, by area of action. 2020-2021

In percentage



Note: The graph includes those countries that (individually) acted as first and/or second provider in more than 50% of the total initiatives in which they participated in the 2020-2021 period. Those initiatives in which they shared these roles with other partners were not included. Additionally, countries are arranged in descending order according to the number of initiatives in which they participated in these roles.

Source: SEGIB based on Agencies and Directorates-General for Cooperation

Different patterns can also be identified among providers (Graph 3.17). Mexico's and Chile's profile - both participating in around 20 initiatives - was mainly concentrated in the Social and Institutional strengthening areas. The detail of the topics that were addressed reveals coincidences, as these exchanges were implemented in the framework of their Mixed Fund, which facilitates their partnership based on a distribution of the first and second provider roles (Central-American countries act as recipients). In this sense, it is understood that the profile of this TC coincides with that which seeks to promote the improvement of the living conditions and opportunities of young people.

The differences in the capacities transferred by each of these countries, both in the social and institutional areas, are related to the following topics: while Mexico places emphasis on housing and housing policies, Chile focuses on early childhood care and protection, as well as on the promotion of coexistence and social inclusion, which is especially important in its partnership with Paraguay. Other differences are associated with the third of the areas to which each also gives priority: Infrastructure and economic services, in the case of Mexico (basically due to the importance of *Energy* and its partnership with Cuba as recipient); and Environment in Chile's (exchange of regulations and better waste management).

The cases of Costa Rica and Spain should also be analyzed. These two countries also mainly acted as providers and were involved in at least 15 Triangular Cooperation initiatives. In this sense, Costa Rica mostly transferred capacities related to Environment, which accounts for 50% of its exchanges. A large group of projects were promoted in this area to protect and preserve biodiversity. All these are mainly associated with its collaboration with Ecuador and the Dominican Republic (natural heritage, genetic resources and coral reefs). In fact, environmental matters also cut across initiatives that have other purposes; for example, TC in *Tourism*, all based on the promotion of sustainable models.

As second provider, Spain works together with its Latin-American partners to strengthen their capacities in various areas. On the one hand, those related to Environment stand out, where two different topics coincide: biodiversity preservation - through a preferential partnership with Costa Rica and Ecuador - and waste management - common in its association with South-American countries. Spain also transferred its institutional expertise for the *Management of public finances* (tax and public procurement practices). In addition, the significant relative importance of this country's TC in Other areas (about 20%) deserves a special mention and is explained by how it shared its experience to fight violence against women.

Finally, the profile of capacities that were strengthened by the 5 providers which participated in between 10 and 15 TC initiatives, respectively, is highly diversified. For example, Argentina's accumulated experience and know-how is based on productive issues, basically related to *Agriculture and livestock* and *Industry* and even a on

combination of both, as suggested by the fact that several initiatives were specifically dedicated to agriculture, livestock, sericulture and viticulture, to name a few.

In Peru's case, TC to promote *Other services and social policies* specially stood out, as many initiatives were dedicated to social inclusion and the role that sport can play in this process. It is also worth highlighting 20% of the initiatives that were classified in Other areas, which are considered as part of Peru's association with Spain to try to put an end to violence against women.

On the other hand, 30% of TC provided by Brazil focused on Environment, including matters related to *Disaster management* (rescue techniques in collapsed structures). However, as Graph 3.17 portrays, this country's cooperation is highly diversified. In this regard, and in order to highlight Brazil's effort to fight hunger and promote school canteens, initiatives associated with productive and institutional purposes, but also to social ones, should be specially mentioned.

Mexico, Chile, Spain and Costa Rica were the most active Ibero-American countries in the roles of first and/or second provider

Finally, Colombia and Uruguay have accumulated remarkable experience in Institutional strengthening, an area that accounts for 44.4% and 55.6% of the TC in which they participated as first providers. Colombia's cooperation focused on Culture of Peace and urban planning, while Uruguay's mainly stressed administration and public policies' management and evaluation procedures and practices, with a special emphasis on the local level. These profiles were complemented by TC to address the economy (*Employment and Enterprises*, especially entrepreneurship), in Colombia's case. As for Uruguay, its recognized experience in the *Agriculture and livestock sector*, in which several initiatives on water use and irrigation were implemented, stood out.



Photo: Students and academics of the University of Morelos work on the sound and audiovisual recording of 100 bird species in order to disseminate the natural heritage of the area and preserve the knowledge of indigenous communities in San Andrés de la Cal and Coatetelco, Morelos, Mexico. Regional SSC Program *Ibermemoria sonora y audiovisual*. Image bank on South-South and Triangular Cooperation in Ibero-America. SEGIB-PIFCSS. 2021.

3.5 Triangular Cooperation in 2020-2021 and the Sustainable Development Goals

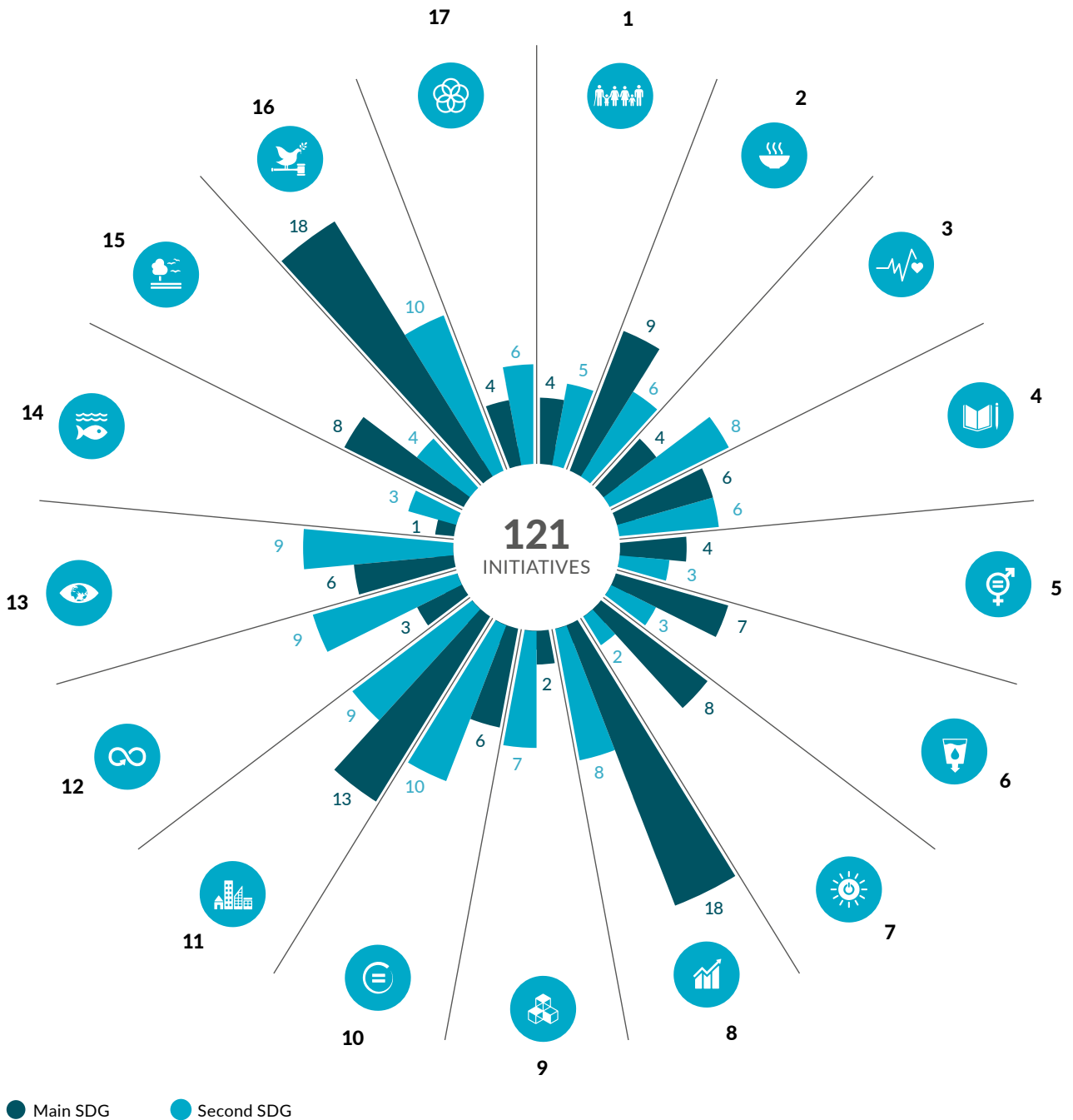
The profile of the capacities TC has enabled to strengthen in Ibero-America during the 2020-2021 period has another interpretation related to the way in which this modality can contribute to the region's progress to achieve the SDGs and the 2030 Agenda. In this sense, Malacalza (2022) points out that, since its adoption in 2015, the potential TC has to advance Sustainable Development has been gaining strength. This is reflected in the increasing importance this modality is having in international development fora.

Graph 3.18 was prepared in order to illustrate how the above has materialized in Ibero-America's case, in a period determined by the dual challenge to Continue advancing more sustainable development while facing the crisis caused by COVID-19. Thus, and considering TC can simultaneously address different purposes - consistent with the search for multidimensional development - Graph 3.18 distributes the 121 TC initiatives carried out in Ibero-America in 2020-2021 according to two criteria: on the one hand, considering the main SDG with which they are aligned; and, on the other, reviewing those SDGs (up to two per initiative) with which they are indirectly aligned (second SDG). As stated by the countries, 55% of TC that has been executed could be classified based on these criteria.

→ GRAPH 3.18

Distribution of Triangular Cooperation initiatives in Ibero-America, by their alignment with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). 2020-2021

In units



Source: SEGIB based on Agencies and Directorates-General for Cooperation

In this regard, Graph 3.18 suggests 40% of the 121 TC initiatives implemented in Ibero-America in the 2020-2021 period had the promotion of three main SDGs among their purposes: SDG 16 (Peace, justice and strong institutions) and SDG 8 (Decent work and economic growth), with almost 20 initiatives in each case (see Case 3.6 on a project that focused on tools for a Culture of

Peace); and SDG 11 (Sustainable cities and communities), with 13 actions and projects. If the analysis considers the 5Ps defined by the United Nations³, it can be stated that the region focused on advancing in terms of Peace and Prosperity.

³ According to the United Nations, the 17 SDGs can be categorized into the 5Ps to better assess them: Planet (SDG 6, 12, 13, 14 and 15), People (SDG 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5), Prosperity (SDG 7, 8, 9, 10 and 11), Peace (SDG 16) and Partnerships (SDG 17).

→ CASE 3.6

Promoting a Culture of Peace through Workshop Schools



Workshop Schools promoted by the Spanish Agency for International Development Cooperation (AECID by its Spanish acronym) support thousands of vulnerable young Colombians through comprehensive training aimed at achieving human development based on technical training for employment and entrepreneurship. This prevents young people from joining illegal armed groups, in addition to supporting the reintegration of demobilized persons or of those at risk of exclusion.

As a result of the potential this experience has to be replicated, between 2020 and 2022, a Triangular Cooperation project was carried out to transfer the Colombian National Workshop Schools Program to Workshop Schools in San Salvador and Zacatecoluca, specifically the “Culture of Peace Toolbox” (CHCP by its Spanish acronym), which promotes peaceful coexistence and social and labor inclusion of young people at risk of exclusion.

According to the project’s systematization report, this toolbox will strengthen human competencies in Central-American Workshop Schools while providing know-how on the use of this instrument to develop a culture of peace in Colombia (Case study factsheet, 2021, internal document).

The implementation of this initiative coincided with the COVID-19 pandemic, so activities had to be adapted to available tools and resources. The project was carried out in different phases, all of them online, with the exception of a final seminar that took place in March, 2022, in El Salvador. In this event, participants shared how the CHCP was adapted to another context with delegates from Honduras, Guatemala, Panama and the Dominican Republic. In addition to addressing Workshop Schools’ current challenges, other activities aimed at the application of the Program and its appropriation by participating countries were also carried out.

This initiative has proven to be remarkably replicable, as it was first transferred from Colombia to El Salvador and later to Central-America as a result of the similarities between all contexts and the adaptability of the tool itself, which introduces a participatory approach. Through this project, which strengthened capacities in the *Peace, public and national security and defense* sector, Colombia, El Salvador and Spain contributed to the alignment of Ibero-American cooperation with SDG 16 (Peace, justice and strong institutions), as the main SDG, and SDG 4 (Quality education) and SDG 8 (Decent work and economic growth), as second SDGs.

Source: SEGIB based on Agencies and Directorates-General for Cooperation and AECID (2017) (2012).

Another 41% of the initiatives (in a proportion of between 5 to 10 in each case), aimed to address up to 7 different SDGs. Once again, considering the 5Ps, the region's commitment would be focused on: improving People's living conditions, based on the alignment with SDG 2 (Zero hunger) and SDG 4 (Quality education); contributing to the protection of the Planet, through SDG 6 (Clean water and sanitation), SDG 13 (Climate action) and SDG 15 (Life on land); and achieving Prosperity, which is planned to be accomplished through progress on SDG 7 (Affordable and clean energy) and SDG 10 (Reduced inequalities).

The remaining 18% of the initiatives would be related to a third group of SDGs (7, with between 1 and 5 initiatives in each case). The analysis suggests Ibero-America must Continue making progress in order to achieve a more sustainable and comprehensive development that considers the economic, social and environmental dimensions. In this sense, the relatively small emphasis placed on TC to address three of the Goals that have the greatest impact on People's living conditions (SDG 1, No poverty; SDG 3, Good health and well-being; and SDG 5, Gender equality), is particularly worthy of mention.

It should be added, however, that TC's alignment with a group of these same Goals is higher when they are considered second SDGs (Graph 3.18). For example, SDG 10 (Reduced inequalities) or SDG 3 (Good health and well-being), are among the most significant second SDGs. In fact, this is a rather common pattern in Goals that may have a more “cross-cutting” nature and that broaden the action of initiatives which priority is to meet other types of purposes.

This could be the case, for example, of SDG 12 (Responsible consumption and production) and SDG 13 (Climate action), which tend to appear as second SDGs in TC initiatives that focus on other main Goals, such as SDG 8 (Decent work and economic growth) and SDG 9 (Industry, innovation and infrastructure) with interventions of a more economic nature towards sustainability.



Photo: Gorgona Island in the Colombian Pacific coast. Bilateral SSC project between Colombia and Costa Rica on ecotourism, biodiversity monitoring and environmental safety in the marine areas of both countries. Image bank on South-South and Triangular Cooperation in Ibero-America. SEGIB-PIFCSS. 2022.

CHAPTER 4

Ibero-America and Regional South-South Cooperation

Regional SSC in Ibero-America in the 2020-2021 period aimed to respond to COVID-19 and to the 2030 Agenda.

In recent years, Regional South-South Cooperation (SSC) has gained importance as an instrument to find innovative solutions to Ibero-American countries' common problems. Part of this boom can be explained by the possibility it has to bring together an increasing number of stakeholders of a different nature while broadening the scale and the scope of other cooperation modalities. This chapter analyzes Regional SSC in Ibero-America in the 2020-2021 period, in a context determined by two major challenges: the need to respond to the COVID-19 crisis while advancing the achievement of the 2030 Agenda.

4.1 Evolution of Regional SSC in Ibero-America: a first approach

Graph 4.1 was prepared to show the evolution of Regional SSC in which Ibero-America has participated over the last 15 years based on two different variables: the number of initiatives Ibero-American countries annually had under execution during the 2007-2021 period; and the share of these same exchanges in the total number of initiatives registered in the three modalities recognized in this space.

Its interpretation suggests two stages of clear contrast: a first phase of intense growth in terms of the number of initiatives, between 2007 and 2013; and a second one in which there is a progressive reduction, definitely accelerated during the most severe years of the pandemic. Indeed, during the first period, the volume of initiatives

doubled, from a minimum of 68 to a maximum of 139. From that moment on, the aggregated number of programs and projects decreased; at first, gradually, at an average annual rate of -2.5% and, as a result, in 2018-2019, the total number of initiatives still remained at 120. Then, it is possible to identify a sharp decline, coinciding with the outbreak of the COVID-19 crisis, with an average annual drop of -15.5% that pushes the final number down to 85 in 2021.

Meanwhile, the evolution of Regional SSC's share suggests the performance of this modality, in almost the entire period, was relatively better than that of SSC and TC in which Ibero-American countries participated. This would explain the fact that, up to 2020, the importance Regional SSC exchanges had over the total number of initiatives executed in the framework of the three modalities recognized in this space registered an upward trend: from 6.9% in 2008 and 2009 to almost 15% in 2020. Thus, in 2021 alone, Regional SSC's performance is relatively poorer than that of all SSC, its share losing more than 1 percentage point as a result.

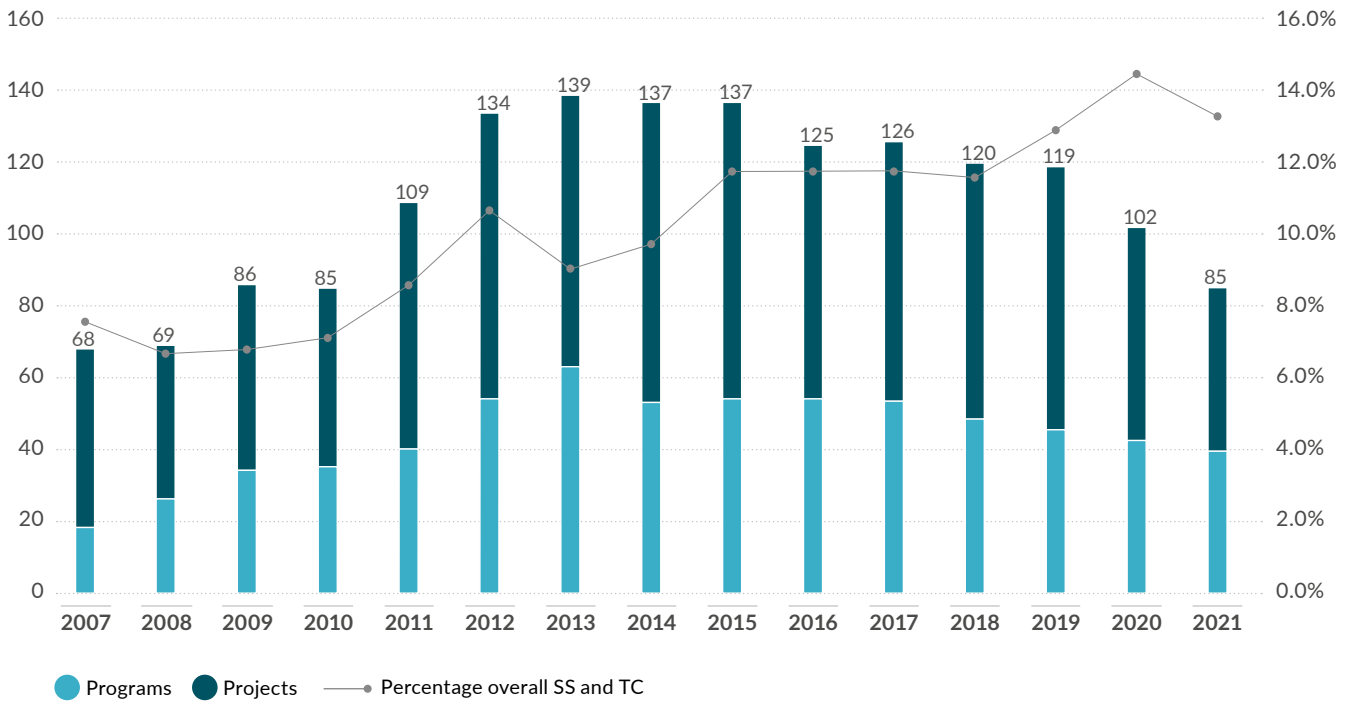
In addition, this general behavior underlies different dynamics regarding the two instruments through which Regional SSC initiatives are executed: projects and programs. First, it is essential to understand that they are both very different, especially in terms of their scale. In this sense, and considering their estimated time frame in the 2020-2021 period, projects had an average duration of 2.5 years while programs could have been active for an average of 8 years.

The above suggests these two instruments have very different scopes, and choosing one or the other when implementing SSC in its Regional modality definitely has different implications in terms of time, objectives and even the volume of allocated resources. This also implies that, depending on the type of instrument, Regional SSC initiatives will have more or less capacities to adapt and/or be resilient to a crisis such as the COVID-19 pandemic. For example, and as it was explained in Chapter II, Bilateral SSC actions had a greater capacity to dynamize this modality than projects, due to their nature. In this same sense and regarding Regional SSC, programs were more resilient to COVID-19's context.

→ GRAPH 4.1

Evolution of Ibero-American Regional SSC initiatives with all partners, by programs and projects, and their share overall Ibero-American South-South and Triangular Cooperation. 2007-2021

In units and percentage



Source: SEGIB based on Agencies and Directorates-General for Cooperation

In light of the above, the reduction associated with the most severe years of the COVID-19 crisis was more pronounced for projects. Indeed, in 2019, 73 Regional SSC projects and 46 programs were registered. Very significant although different average annual decreases occurred during the next two years (-21.5% and -6.7%, respectively), which pushed the final figures to 45 projects and 40 programs.

This changes the distribution of Regional SSC initiatives considering the two instruments and, more specifically, it translates into a relative increase in the importance of programs to the detriment of projects. Graph 4.2 shows this variation and the evolution of projects' and programs' share in the total number of Regional SSC initiatives annually implemented by Ibero-America in the 2007-2021 period. Throughout this period, the distribution in terms of projects and programs has been changing and tending to converge and it is possible to identify three moments with different ratios: the first of 75%-25% in 2007; the second, which, with variations, remains stable at 60%-40% until 2019; and the third, of almost 50%-50% in 2021.

It is easier to understand that the decline during the most severe years of the COVID-19 crisis has been more pronounced for projects than for programs

→ GRAPH 4.2

Evolution of projects' and programs' share in Ibero-American Regional SSC initiatives with all partners. 2007-2021

In percentage



Source: SEGIB based on Agencies and Directorates-General for Cooperation

4.2 Narrowing the analysis: the 2020-2021 period and Regional SSC in Ibero-America

The biennial nature of this *Report on South-South and Triangular Cooperation in Ibero-America*, as well as the need to understand how the COVID-19 crisis has influenced the evolution of SSC in the region, has led to choosing the 2020-2021 period as the time frame for this analysis. For this reason, this chapter's review of Regional SSC also focuses on these two years.

Graph 4.3 shows the 116 Regional SSC initiatives in which Ibero-American countries participated that were active in 2020-2021. In this sense, in order to further delimit the analysis on which this chapter focuses, the same graph distributes these 116 initiatives considering the way in which the different partners (Ibero-American countries and/or other developing regions) were involved.

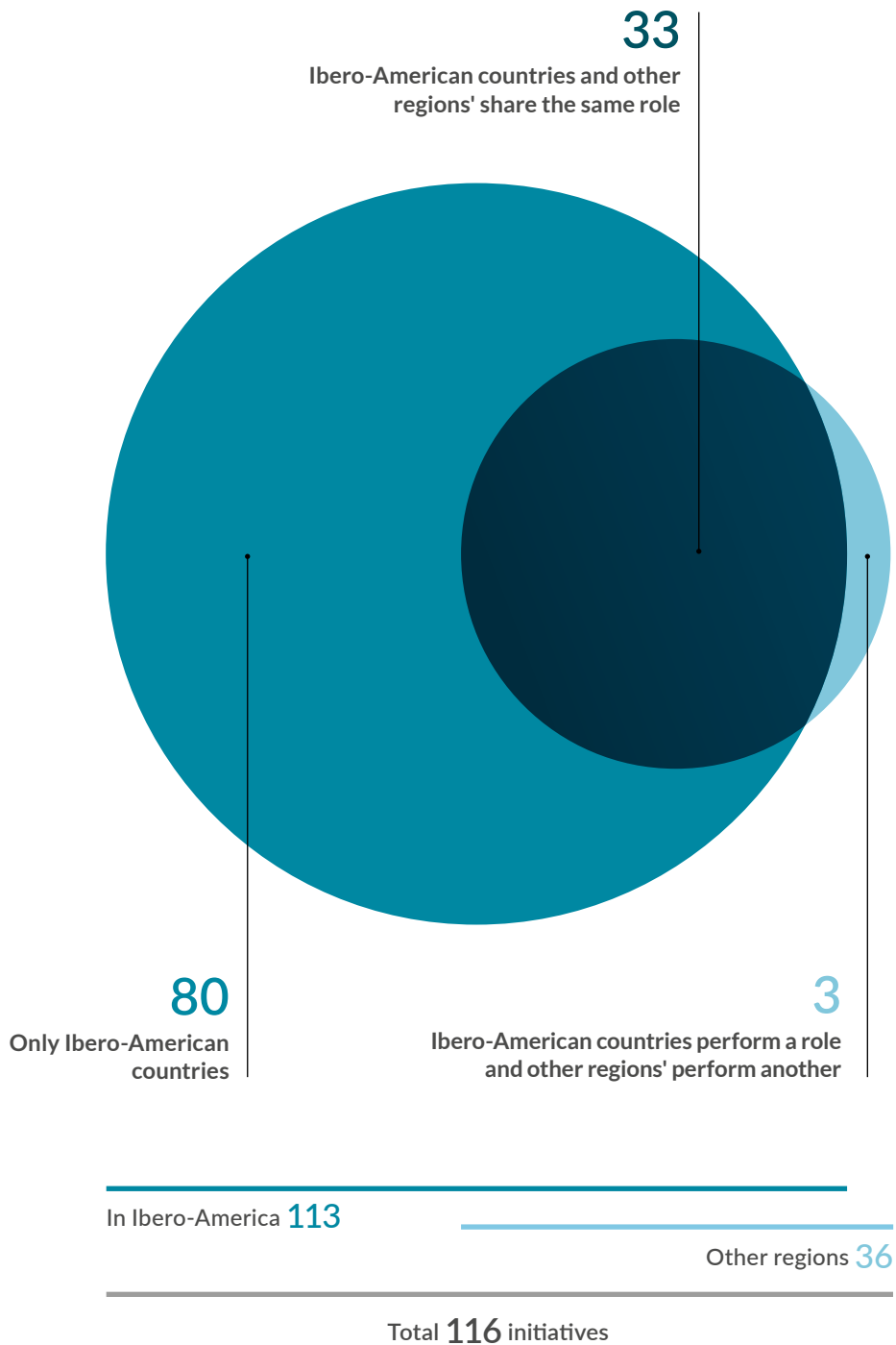
Specifically, it is possible to identify three groups of initiatives: the first, with 80 programs and projects, in which only Ibero-American countries exchange among themselves; the second, with only 3 initiatives, where there is a clear distribution of roles (provider and recipient) between Ibero-American countries and those of other developing regions; and the third, with 33 programs and projects, in which Ibero-American countries and those of other regions coincide in the same role. This is very common, for example, in experiences that involve Mesoamerica, where the recipient role is exercised both by Central-American countries and by an extra-regional one such as Belize, considered part of the non-Ibero-American Caribbean.

In short, this chapter analyzes the 113 Regional SSC initiatives that involved exchanges *in Ibero-America* and that were under execution during the 2020-2021 period. As Graph 4.4 shows, this figure reflects the reduction and the dynamics already described, as it is 20% lower than that registered in 2018-2019, when it was over 140.

→ **GRAPH 4.3**

Distribution of Ibero-American Regional SSC initiatives, by the region with which they were exchanged. 2020-2021

In units



→ GRAPH 4.4

Variation in Ibero-American Regional SSC initiatives, by the region with which they were exchanged. 2018-2019 and 2020-2021

In units



■ 2018-2019 ■ 2020-2021 ▾ Variation

Source: SEGIB based on Agencies and Directorates-General for Cooperation



Photo: Manatees are marine mammals in danger of extinction due to the extensive hunting they have been suffering for centuries and as a result of the loss of the mangroves they inhabit. Regional SSC project *Strengthening the Biological Corridor in the Caribbean* with the participation of the Dominican Republic and Cuba. Image bank on South-South and Triangular Cooperation in Ibero-America. SEGIB-PIFCSS. 2022.

4.3 Participation of the different stakeholders during the 2020-2021 period

The characterization of Regional SSC that took place in Ibero-America during the 2020-2021 period begins with an analysis of the participating stakeholders: Ibero-American countries, on the one hand; and, on the other, regional and international organizations that joined them in this cooperation. In this sense and, as a first approach, the aim is to identify the different stakeholders that were involved and understand the level of their relative participation in the 113 initiatives that were carried out.

However, this section also sheds light on other relevant aspects in terms of the way in which this participation took place. The first refers to relationships between countries and, in a way, to the role played by the region as a whole (as another stakeholder), which emerges due to the different options countries have to establish partnerships, but also due to the opportunities they have to associate in the framework of the organizations to which they belong. The second aspect is related to one of the implications that the participation of these organizations has: the possibility of being able to provide an institutional and concrete operational framework, and even to define a thematic priority for Regional SSC initiatives promoted by the different integration systems.

4.3.1. Ibero-American countries and multilateral organizations

As it was already mentioned, the main purpose of this section is to identify the intensity of the participation of Ibero-American countries in Regional SSC that took place in Ibero-America in the 2020-2021 period, as well as the most active multilateral organizations in the region.

In Graph 4.5, which is based on the map of the region, the 22 Ibero-American countries are associated with colors of increasing intensity to indicate, according to the legend, the range of values where the number of initiatives in which it participated is situated.

In this sense, two countries stand out in particular: Argentina and Uruguay, both in the Southern Cone and with participations above 60 Regional SSC initiatives (66 and 62, respectively). In terms of relative importance, they were followed by 4 countries (with more than 50

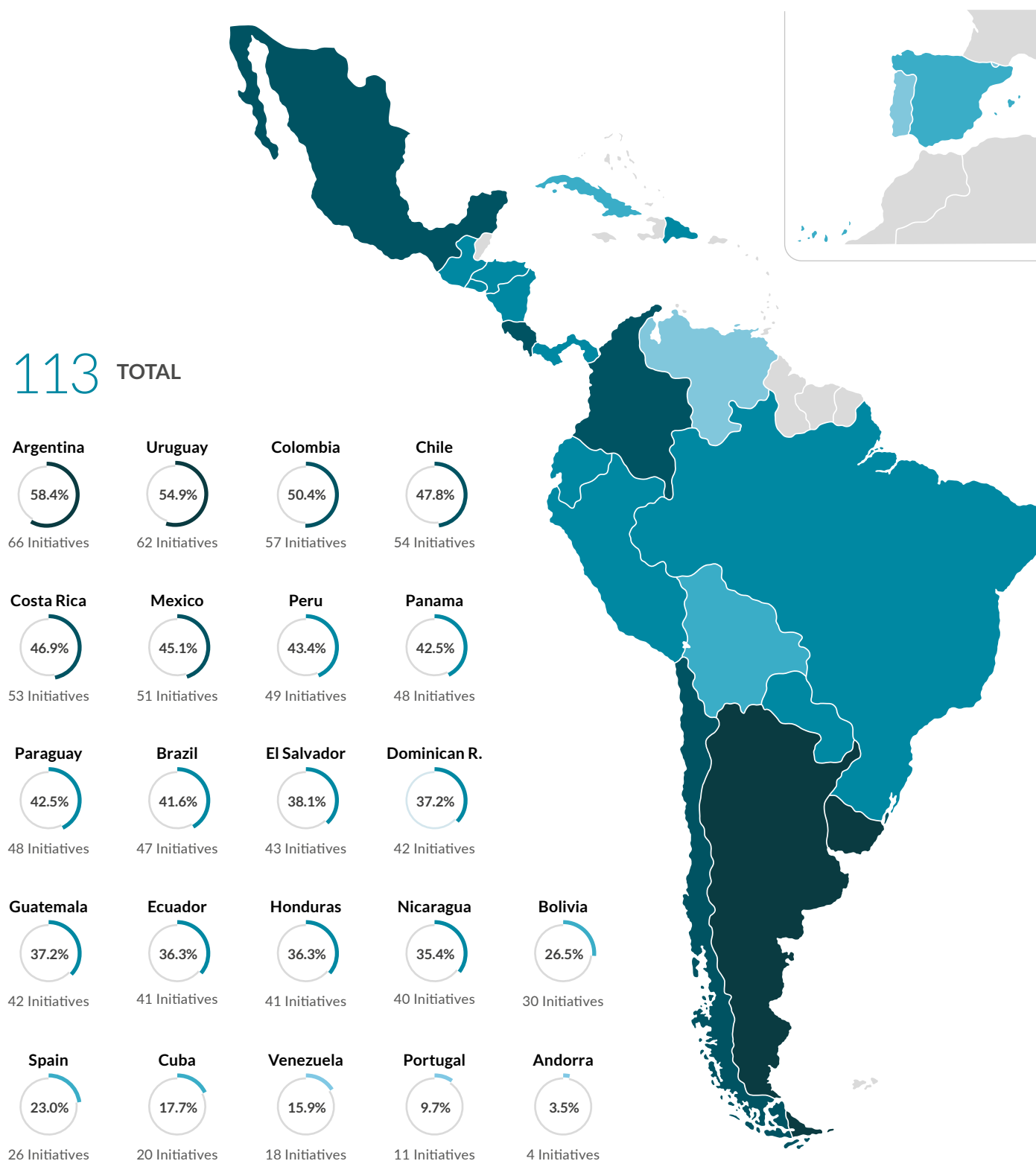
initiatives in each case) that are geographically distributed throughout the continent: in the South and North, Chile and Mexico, respectively; Costa Rica in Central-America; and Colombia in the Andean sub-region. Meanwhile, most countries (up to 10) participated in 40 to 50 initiatives, for example: El Salvador, Honduras, Guatemala, Nicaragua and Panama in Central-America; the Dominican Republic in the Caribbean; and Ecuador and Peru, together with Paraguay and Brazil, in South-America. Bolivia and Cuba, in the Andean and Caribbean sub-regions, had relatively lower records, with 30 and 20 initiatives in each case. Spain, in the Iberian Peninsula, had mid-range values (26 programs and projects). The other two peninsular countries, Portugal and Andorra, together with South America's Venezuela, close the analysis with records below 20 initiatives.

— Argentina and Uruguay, both in the Southern Cone, had outstanding participations in Regional SSC, with more than 60 initiatives (66 and 62, respectively)

→ GRAPH 4.5

Ibero-American countries' participation in Regional SSC initiatives in Ibero-America. 2020-2021

In units and percentage over the total



Number of Regional SSC initiatives in which each country participated in 2020-2021

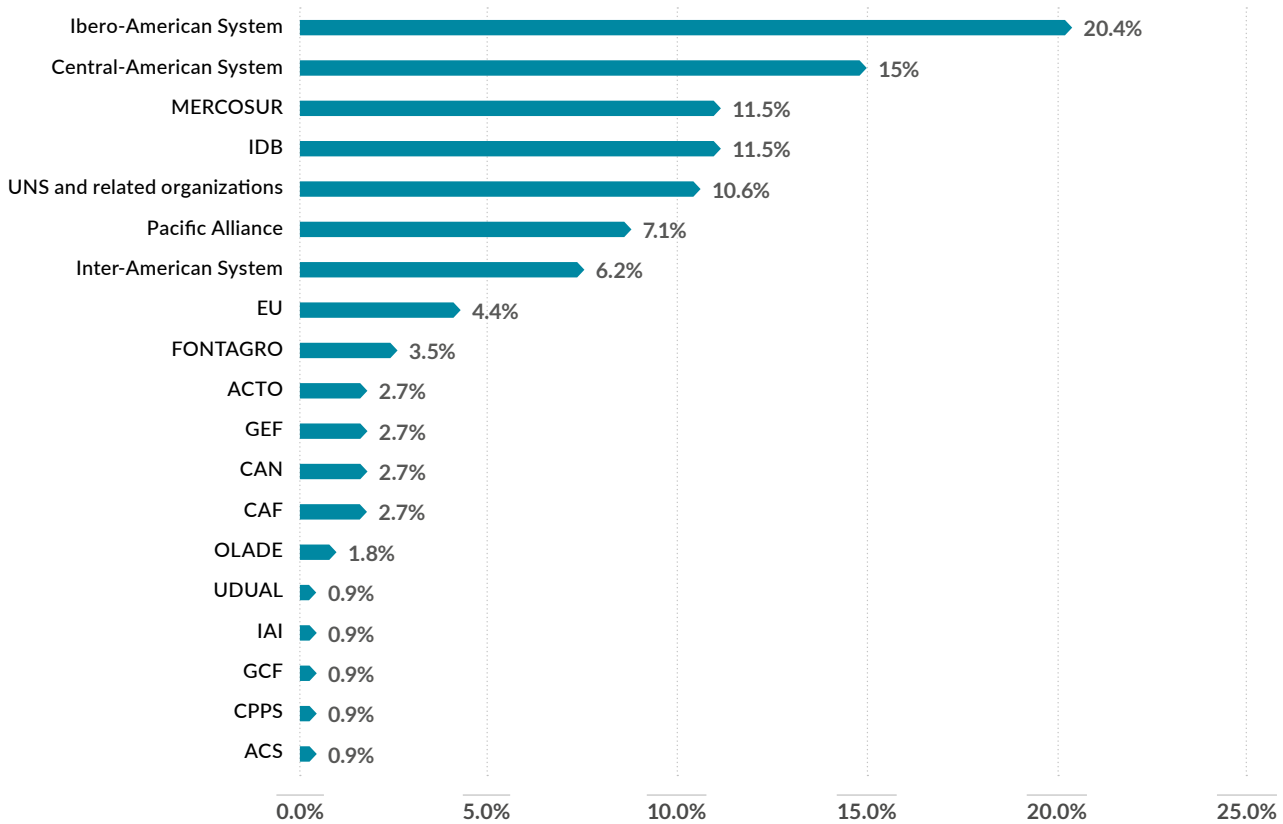
- 60 or more
- Between 50 and 59
- Between 40 and 49
- Between 20 and 39
- Less than 20
- No initiatives registered

Source: SEGIB based on Agencies and Directorates-General for Cooperation

→ GRAPH 4.6

Multilateral organizations' participation in Regional SSC initiatives in Ibero-America. 2020-2021

In percentage



Methodological note: The analysis considers the number of initiatives in which each organization participates (both individually and when grouped with those of the system to which they belong) and their importance in the total. In this sense, and given that several organizations can simultaneously participate in the same initiative, some initiatives are counted more than once. This means the percentages associated with each organization and/or group cannot be aggregated and in no case can the total add up to 100%.

Source: SEGIB based on Agencies and Directorates-General for Cooperation

A second analysis considers the multilateral organizations (another key stakeholder in this modality) that joined Ibero-American countries in the implementation of each and every one of the 113 Regional SSC initiatives of the 2020-2021 period. Graph 4.6 shows these organizations and arranges them according to their relative level of participation in the exchanges that were carried out.¹

As illustrated, one or more organizations of the Ibero-American System participated in at least 1 out of every 5 of the more than 110 Regional SSC programs and projects executed in 2020-2021: for example, the Ibero-American General Secretariat (SEGIB by its Spanish acronym), the Organization of Ibero-American States for Education, Science and Culture (OEI by its Spanish acronym) and the Ibero-American Organization for Social Security (OISS by its Spanish acronym).

The presence of the organizations of the Central-American System, active in 15% of the cooperation initiatives in the 2020-2021 period, was also important. The Central-American Integration System (SICA by its Spanish acronym) is a key stakeholder in this sub-region but also for Mesoamerica as a whole, through the Tuxtla Dialogue and Agreement Mechanism, on which joint work between Mexico and SICA is based.

The participation of organizations that are part of the Central-American System, active in 15% of the 2020-2021 initiatives, was also important

¹ It should be added that several multilateral organizations may simultaneously participate in the same initiative. This determines the way in which their participation is considered in the analysis (see methodological note in Graph 4.6).

The Southern Common Market (MERCOSUR by its Spanish acronym) and the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) also deserve a special mention, both participating in 11% of the Regional SSC initiatives that were implemented in Ibero-America during the last two years. They were closely followed (with another 10%) by the agencies of the United Nations System and related organizations. In this sense, reference should be made to the role played by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the Pan-American Health Organization (PAHO), the International Labor Organization (ILO), the United Nations Environment Program (UNEP) and the Economic Commission for Latin-America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), among many others.

Finally, it is important to highlight the support provided by the Pacific Alliance (PA) (participating in 7.1% of the Regional SSC initiatives carried out in Ibero-America in 2020-2021), as well as by the Inter-American System (mainly through the Organization of American States, OAS); and the European Union (EU), both with shares of 6.2% and 4.4% respectively.

4.3.2 Partnerships and sub-regions

The analysis of the participation of multilateral organizations in this modality is in turn decisive to understand some of the dynamics which characterized Regional SSC that took place in Ibero-America in 2020-2021. This, as it was mentioned above, enables the identification of the most common types of partnerships and associations between countries, based on a “sub-regional” approach.

Graph 4.7 precisely portrays this information through a heatmap which distributes the 22 Ibero-American countries in the vertical columns and horizontal rows of the resulting matrix, according to their association pattern. The color of each cell is more intense as the number of initiatives in which each pair of partners coincides is higher.

Graph 4.7 suggests the coexistence of different relationship dynamics, not only in terms of countries, but also regarding the sub-regions to which they belong. In this sense, for example and according to the matrix, the relatively low levels of association registered by Andorra,



Photo: Demonstration of butterfly irrigation to develop a water management program for efficient water use. Bilateral SSC project *Increased water efficiency and care through a joint experience between the communities of Sonora, Mexico, and Linares, Chile*. Image bank on South-South and Triangular Cooperation in Ibero-America. SEGIB-PIFCSS. 2021.

→ GRAPH 4.7

Regional SSC initiatives in Ibero-America in which the countries of the region coincide, according to pairs of partners. 2020-2021

In units



Number of Regional SSC initiatives in which each pair of partners coincided in 2020-2021

- From 1 to 11
- Between 12 and 17
- Between 18 and 26
- Between 27 and 59

Methodological note: the colors and values assigned to the respective ranges are the result of the distribution of the initiatives by quartiles. Value ranges go from the lowest number of initiatives in which each pair of partners can coincide (0), to the highest number registered in 2020-2021 (59).

Source: SEGIB based on Agencies and Directorates-General for Cooperation

Portugal and Venezuela and, to a less extent, by Cuba, contrast with the high number of partnerships established between the countries of Central-America and the Caribbean (from Costa Rica to Guatemala, including the Dominican Republic) and among those of South-America (from Brazil to Chile in the Southern Cone, plus Colombia, Ecuador and Peru in the Andean sub-region).

Likewise, the high intensity of the association at the "intra-regional" level tends to fall when the focus shifts to exchanges between different sub-regions. Thus, the relationship between several Central-American countries (Nicaragua, Honduras and Guatemala) is more intense with their sub-regional neighbors than with South-American countries. In line with this, for example, Bolivia, has a more active relation with South-American partners than with Central-American ones.

Part of the patterns described above result, in turn, from a combination of at least three aspects: first, the different options countries have to establish partnerships as they simultaneously belong to several intergovernmental integration systems; second, the dynamism each country has in the framework of those same spaces; and third, how involved these organizations were in Regional SSC cooperation that was implemented in the 2020-2021 period.

Mexico, for example, has a very active relationship with most of the countries of South-America, as well as with Costa Rica and El Salvador, and a high - but relatively lower - degree of association with its Central American neighbors. This pattern is influenced by the fact that Mexico's participation in three spaces that were particularly dynamic in 2020-2021 is very significant. Specifically, being a member of the Ibero-American System, having a special cooperation agreement with SICA and Central-American countries, and joining the Pacific Alliance (PA), which other partners are South-American countries, determined an important part of Mexico's profile.

In addition, the partnership options and the way in which each country was involved in Regional SSC in the last two-year period may be very different. This explains, for example, Portugal's and Andorra's aforementioned lower level of relative associations; their alternatives being very

limited to the Ibero-American space. However, differences also exist within Latin-America. In order to illustrate this aspect, Graph 4.8 shows the participation of each country in the 113 initiatives and their potential "growth margin", distinguishing between two sub-regions: Mexico, Central America and the Ibero-American Caribbean; and South America.

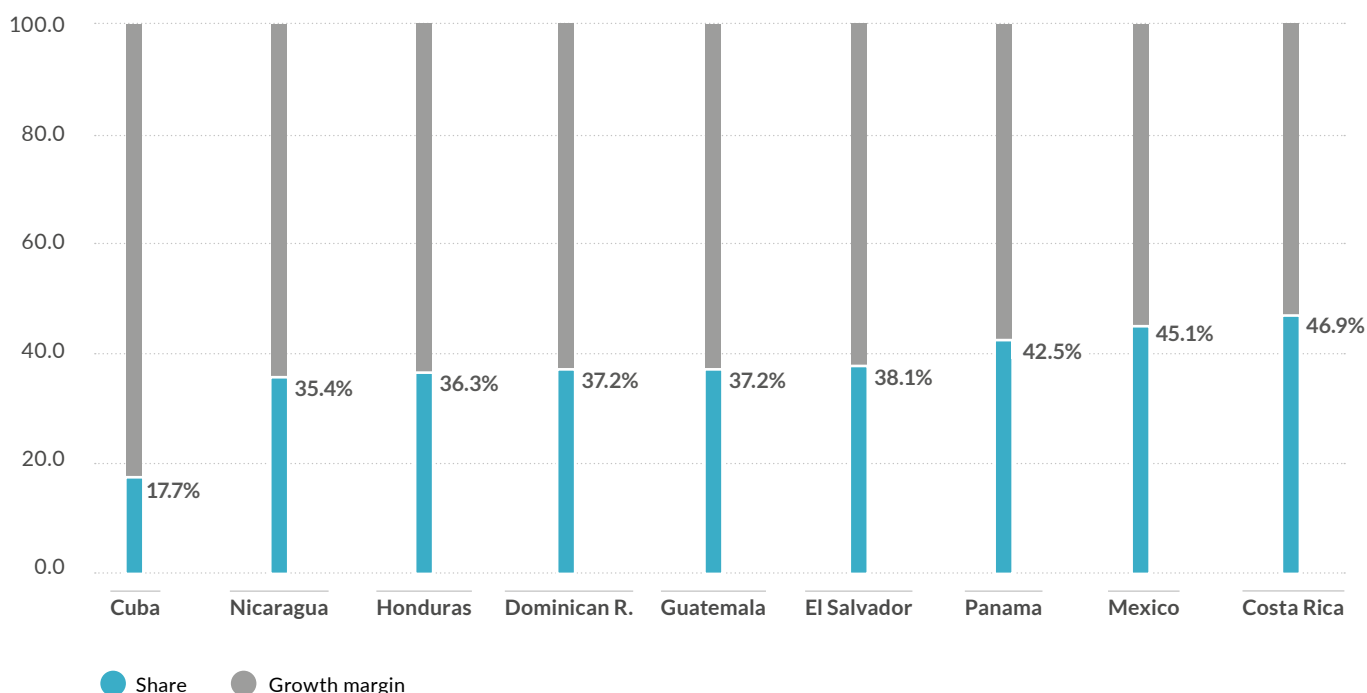
As can be seen, the level of participation of the countries that are part of each of these sub-regions differs and fluctuates in different ranges of values: lower for those located in the North of continent; higher for those located in the South. Indeed, most Central-American and Caribbean countries participated in between 30% and 40% of the 2020-2021 initiatives; Panama's, Mexico's and Costa Rica's records standing out, with relative shares above 40%. In contrast, most South-American countries (7 out of 10) moved precisely in this range (40% to 50%) and even in the next higher range (50% to 60%).

→ GRAPH 4.8

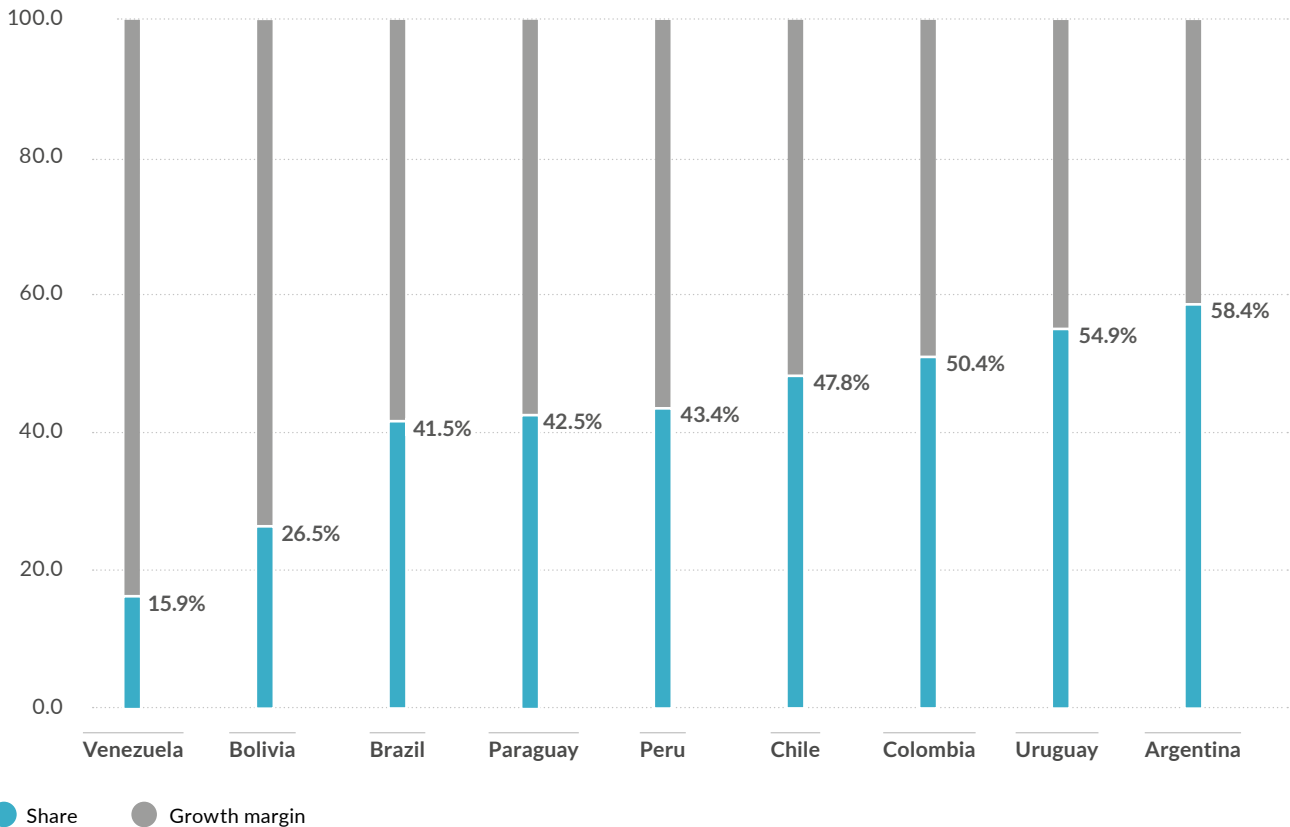
Ibero-American countries' participation in Regional SSC initiatives in Ibero-America and "growth margin" of that participation, by region. 2020-2021

In percentage

A. Mexico, Central-America and Ibero-American Caribbean



B. South-America



Source: SEGIB based on Agencies and Directorates-General for Cooperation

4.3.3 Operational frameworks and thematic priorities

The participation of multilateral organizations in Regional SSC also provides information on other relevant aspects related to how this modality works in practice. Multilateral organizations' cooperation is usually based on institutional frameworks and on different criteria that guide and regulate its implementation in terms of participants, roles, financial mechanisms and the types of partnerships, among others. The presence of these organizations can also be important to identify the thematic priorities addressed by the initiatives carried out in the different integration systems.

Graph 4.9 was prepared to make a first analysis of these operational frameworks. This graph defines and characterizes the cooperation mechanisms through which the initiatives promoted in the 4 most active multilateral spaces in the 2020-2021 period (the Ibero-American System, the Central-American System, IDB and MERCOSUR) are usually executed. The first two include all cooperation carried out in the framework of these platforms (Programs, Initiatives and Ascribed Projects -

PIPAs by its Spanish acronym - and the Mechanism for the Management, Coordination and Information on Regional Cooperation). Cooperation implemented within the other two, is based on the Regional Public Goods Initiative - RPG - and MERCOSUR's Structural Convergence Fund - FOCEM by its Spanish acronym).

The chart outlines the differences between these mechanisms, all of them conceived to promote collective action among their participants while defining clear procedures regarding the way in which this SSC is carried out, for example: the type of cooperation (technical and/or financial); resource allocation and distribution; the types of partnerships; and the possibility for other stakeholders - apart from governments - to participate, to name a few. In the Ibero-American and Central-American Systems, all these aspects are detailed in different documents explicitly prepared for this purpose, such as the Operating Manual for Ibero-American Cooperation and the technical guidelines for the Regional Cooperation Mechanism.

Graph 4.9 suggests these mechanisms are also a guideline to set the thematic priorities addressed by each of these integration systems. In this sense, and although they all aim to strengthen their member countries and bring them together as part of one same region, the specific mechanisms and purposes to reach this end differ in each case.

For example, SSC in the framework of the Ibero-American System focuses on development and on the region's identity, which leads it to promote joint actions for its cohesion, placing emphasis on culture, science, education

and social issues. Other spaces prioritize regional integration, but seek to strengthen it through different strategies: MERCOSUR, by reducing asymmetries among its members, especially through the improvement of economic infrastructure; IDB, through the generation of products (regulatory frameworks, sectoral action plans, methodologies) that facilitate regional coordination and result in common benefits for all its members; and the Central-American System, by emphasizing the need to solve common problems that make the region especially vulnerable, such as the prevention and mitigation of natural disasters and the worst effects of climate change.

→ GRAPH 4.9

Institutional frameworks and cooperation mechanisms on which the implementation of Regional SSC initiatives in Ibero-America is based: some selected examples. 2020-2021

Multilateral Organization	Cooperation Mechanism	Definition and main features
Ibero-American System	Ibero-American Programs, Initiatives and Ascribed Projects (PIPAs by its Spanish acronym)	<p>According to the Operating Manual for Ibero-American Cooperation, PIPAs are intergovernmental cooperation mechanisms through which governments express their will to cooperate in a given sector, agreeing on its design and assuming its execution. Their ultimate purpose is to strengthen the Ibero-American identity through collaborative efforts to develop and consolidate capacities in the cultural, scientific, educational, social and economic fields.</p> <p>The difference between Programs and Initiatives is mainly based on their scope: Programs' time frames and objectives are long or medium-term and Initiatives' are more limited.</p> <p>Decisions are made on an horizontal basis; all participating countries contribute with financial, human, technical and material resources - according to their capacities - and mutually benefit from the activities that are carried out. PIPAs' nature may be technical and/or financial: the former aim to develop human and institutional capacities through a wide range of activities; the latter provide financial resources to achieve development objectives and mainly materialize through competitive funds.</p>
Central-American System	Mechanism for the Management, Coordination and Information on Regional Cooperation	<p>SICA's Mechanism for the Management, Coordination and Information on Regional Cooperation and its complementary technical guidelines serve as regional regulations to strengthen the processes of management, execution, follow-up and evaluation of regional cooperation.</p> <p>This instrument defines concepts, principles and criteria for the selection of projects; procedures; stakeholders and roles; and transparency and accountability mechanisms. It seeks to align all cooperation with the five priorities of regional integration (social and economic integration, democratic security, prevention and mitigation of natural disasters and the effects of climate change, and institutional strengthening).</p> <p>Three main procedures have been established for the management of this cooperation: first, a direct one, for general projects of SICA's General Secretariat; a second one for regional projects of SICA's Secretariats and institutions; and a third one for regional projects that result from Dialogue and Cooperation Fora, Bilateral Meetings or other mechanisms established by SICA.</p>

Inter-American Development Bank (IDB)	Regional Public Goods Initiative (RPG)	<p>It is based on the premise that countries of Latin-America and the Caribbean (LAC) share numerous development challenges and opportunities that can be more effectively and efficiently addressed through regional collective action and cooperation.</p> <p>The Initiative defines Regional Public Goods (RPGs) as goods, services or resources that are collectively produced and consumed by the public sector and, if appropriate, the private, non-profit sector in a minimum of three borrowing member countries of the IDB. It focuses on RPGs that have the potential to generate significant shared benefits and positive spillover effects.</p> <p>The RPGs Initiative seeks to finance specific regional coordination products (for example, regulatory frameworks, sectoral action plans and methodologies, among others) that can then be implemented at the national level by the participating countries and other interested countries.</p> <p>Each year, IDB calls for proposals to finance projects that promote RPGs by means of collective action. In the case of the 2022 call, eligible topics were to be framed within priority areas of IDB Group's "Vision 2025" for the achievement of IDB's Institutional Strategy and the region's post-pandemic recovery.</p>
MERCOSUR	MERCOSUR's Structural Convergence Fund (FOCEM by its Spanish acronym)	<p>This is the first solidarity-based financing mechanism for MERCOSUR member countries, aimed at reducing asymmetries between them. It is based on their contributions to finance projects to improve infrastructure, business competitiveness and social development, as well as to strengthen MERCOSUR's own institutional structure.</p> <p>The Fund works through a system of contributions and inverse distribution of resources, which means countries with greater relative economic development make greater contributions and, at the same time, countries with less relative economic development receive more resources. These are distributed as non-refundable grants. The presentation, analysis, approval and follow-up of projects considered to be of interest to the Parties is carried out on the basis of FOCEM's Regulations. Cooperation in sanitation, drinking water, rehabilitation and construction of roads, maintenance of electrical networks, improvement and expansion of school buildings, rehabilitation of railroads, among others, stands out in the framework of this mechanism.</p>

Source: SEGIB based on Agencies and Directorates-General for Cooperation, SEGIB (2016), SIDICSS (2022), and IDB, MERCOSUR and SICA websites.

These differences are clearly illustrated in Graphs 4.10 and 4.11, which distribute Regional SSC programs and projects that were implemented in the framework of each of these systems, in the 2020-2021 period, according to the area of action and activity sector they addressed. In this regard, Graph 4.10 precisely shows that more than 50% of the initiatives executed in each of these spaces focused on very different areas: Other areas, in the case of the Ibero-American System (56.5% of PIPAs); Environment was the most significant for Central-American cooperation (58.8% of the initiatives); and Productive Sectors, through 53.8% of the programs and projects supported by the IDB. MERCOSUR, however, deserves a special mention, since

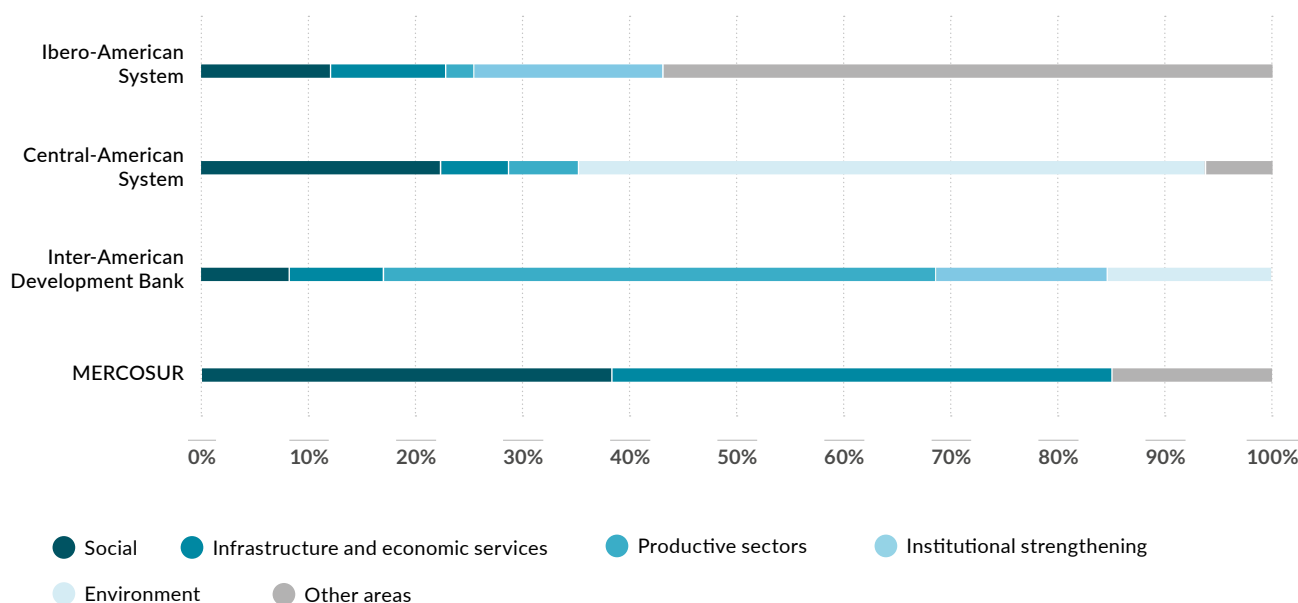
46.2% of its initiatives were dedicated to strengthening Infrastructure and economic services but, when exchanges associated with the Social area are added, the figure rises to a remarkable 85%.

As for the classification of the initiatives according to activity sectors (Graph 4.11), the differences in the purposes addressed by the 4 systems are also evident. In this sense, the Ibero-American System and IDB concentrate their greatest efforts in the *Culture* (56.5%) and *Agriculture and livestock* (53.8%) sectors, respectively. On the other hand, initiatives promoted by the Central-American System are distributed between

→ GRAPH 4.10

Thematic priorities in Regional SSC initiatives in Ibero-America in the framework of the main intergovernmental systems, by area of action. 2020-2021

In percentage



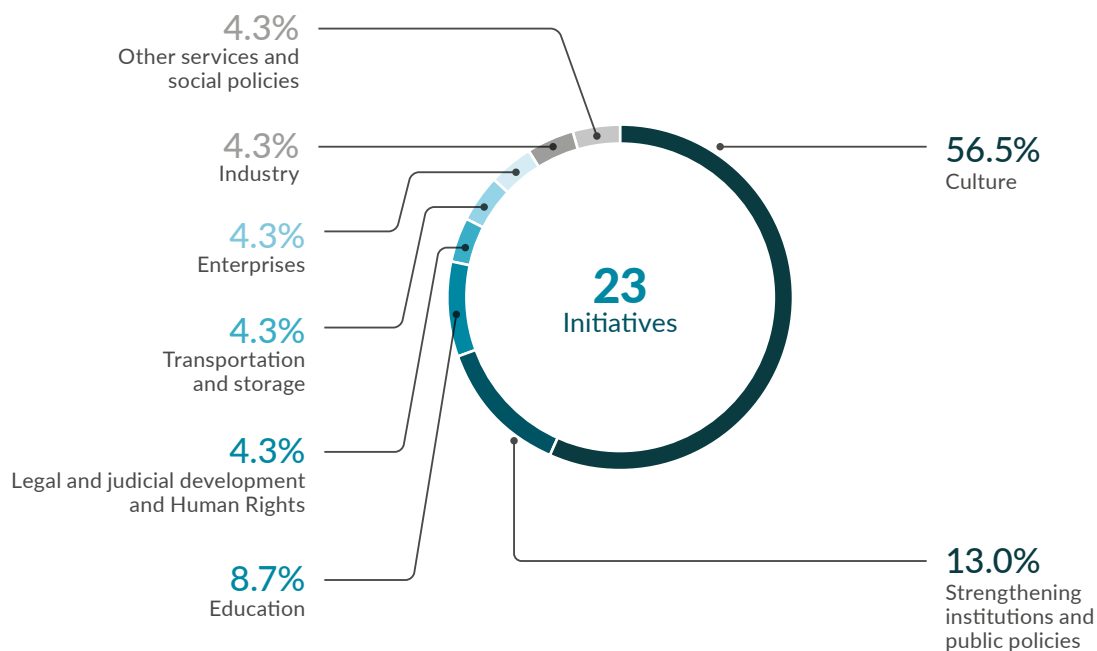
Source: SEGIB based on Agencies and Directorates-General for Cooperation

→ GRAPH 4.11

Distribution of Regional SSC initiatives in Ibero-America in the framework of the main intergovernmental systems, by activity sector. 2020-2021

In percentage

A. Ibero-American System



B. Central-American System



C. Inter-American Development Bank (IDB)



D. MERCOSUR



Disaster management (35.3%) and Environment (23.5%), while MERCOSUR prioritizes *Transportation and storage* (38.5%); *Education* (15.4%) also standing out among other economic and social sectors.

4.4 Sectoral analysis: common problems, shared solutions

One of Regional SSC’s main strengths is the possibility to bring together a growing number of stakeholders which join efforts to carry out a collective action to advance the achievement of a shared purpose. The combination of purposes this modality addresses reveals in the type of capacities the region decides to strengthen through SSC.

In order to illustrate the capacities that Regional SSC strengthened in Ibero-America in the 2020-2021 period, Graph 4.12 shows the distribution of the 113 initiatives according to the area of action (12.A) and the activity sector (12.B) with which they were associated.

The Social area concentrates most initiatives (1 out of every 5). This figure contrasts with cooperation related to Institutional strengthening, which is almost one half (10.6%). In addition, a rather homogeneous distribution of Regional SSC programs and projects around the rest of the areas of action recognized in the Ibero-American space (Environment, Productive sectors, Infrastructure and economic services and Other areas) was the most frequent pattern: thus, their share in the total number of initiatives during the period remained very close, ranging from 16% to 18%.

When the above is contrasted with the details by sector, however, the information reveals the performance of each area is based on very different sectoral dynamics: very concentrated in a few sectors, in some cases; and very diversified, in others.

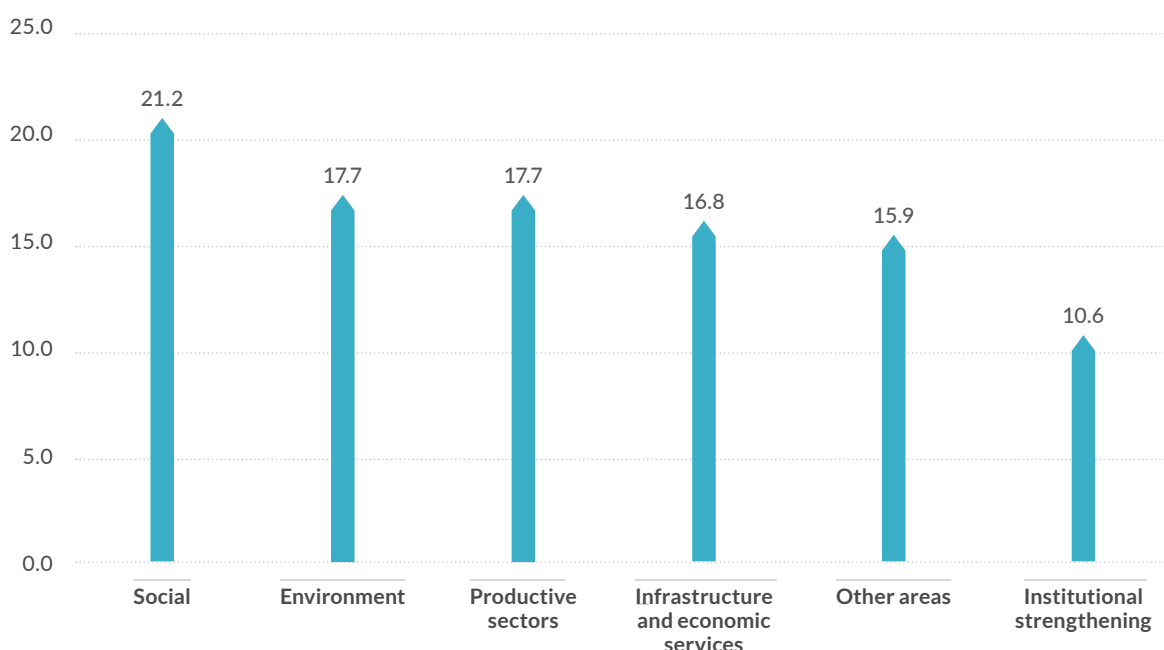
An illustrative example of the above is the most important area (Social) since, as Graph 4.12.B confirms, the sectors that are associated with it are not among the most significant of the 2020-2021 period. In fact, the main sector within the Social area is *Education*, which, with 8% of the initiatives, ranks fourth in terms of relative importance. This is complemented by *Other services and social policies*, *Health* and *Water supply and sanitation*, with shares that slightly exceed or barely reach 5%. In any case, considering the topics, the most remarkable initiatives

→ GRAPH 4.12

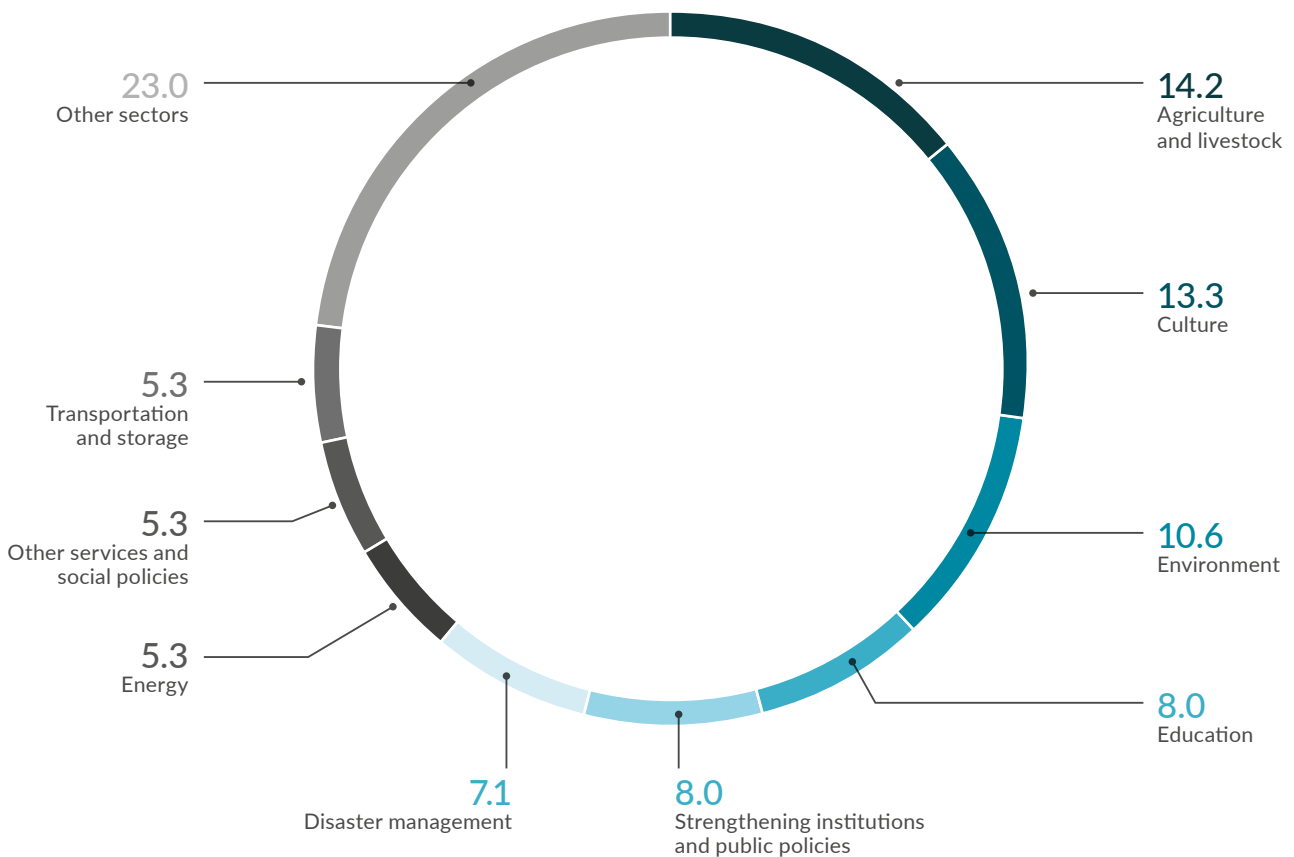
Distribution of Regional SSC initiatives in Ibero-America, by activity sector and area of action. 2020-2021

In percentage

A. Area of action



B. Activity sector



Source: SEGIB based on Agencies and Directorates-General for Cooperation

shared the objective (from different perspectives and through different strategies) of promoting the mobility of students and teachers, as well as the integration and improvement of the living conditions of certain population groups, such as young adults, the elderly and migrants.

In contrast, the relative importance of Productive sectors and Environment - both with a 17.7% share in the total number of initiatives of the 2020-2021 period - is explained by very few sectors. Specifically, in the case of the former, its importance is explained by *Agriculture and livestock* (the most important sector in the period, with a share of 14.2% of the total) and, in the latter, by the aggregate contribution of the second most important sector (*Environment*, which accounts for 1 out of every 10 initiatives), together with *Disaster management* (a remarkable 7.1%).

The *Agriculture and livestock* sector includes cooperation that combines agricultural and livestock issues and focuses on crops that are relevant to the region (potatoes, rice, coffee) as well as on animal species which are key for food security (meat and dairy products). Likewise, this kind of initiatives combine elements that aim to contribute to increase and diversify production, especially in family environments, which are highly dependent on the income

these activities can generate. To this end, this cooperation combines different types of interventions, including: the adoption of technological innovations; improvements in irrigation systems and efficient water use; treatment of fodder and livestock feed; pest management; genetic improvements; and the incorporation of information systems to assess the risks, losses and damages that may be caused by natural disasters and the increase in temperatures resulting from climate change, among others. An illustrative example of the way in which it combines several of these elements is the project developed in Central-America for the management of coffee rust, described in Case 4.1.

→ CASE 4.1

Regional strengthening of agricultural health in Central-America

Central-American System

Rust is a fungus that affects coffee plants causing premature leaf drop, weakening infected trees and ultimately causing their death. The impact of this disease is very high in Latin-America since coffee is one of the region's main exports and, in addition, many families directly depend on some of the processes associated with its production and sale (InfoAgro, 2014).

The first rust outbreak in Central-America dates back to end of the 1970s; however, between 2012 and 2013, climatic factors, reduced phytosanitary measures and a fall in international coffee prices triggered the most serious epidemic to date in the region (Piñeiro, V., Morley, S. and Elverdin, P., 2015, p.2). In 2013, in the framework of the Coffee Rust Summit in Guatemala, the countries of the region committed to jointly address the problems of coffee production in the region and approved the Regional Action Plan with Immediate Measures, which included the creation of the Central-American Program for Integrated Coffee Rust Management (PROCAGICA by its Spanish acronym).

This program aims to promote the

adoption of climate change mitigation and adaptation measures, as well as natural disaster risk reduction to support regional and national efforts to control coffee rust. On this basis, it seeks to build resilience among coffee-dependent families by introducing sustainable agricultural practices, diversifying crop patterns and strengthening their livelihoods (IICA, 2021, p. 2).

This Regional SSC initiative, implemented by the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation in Agriculture (IICA by its Spanish acronym), involves the Central-American Integration System member countries (SICA by its Spanish acronym) and is supported by the European Union (EU). Additionally, and according to IICA (2021), the Program has benefited 7,059 small-scale coffee producers (of which 35% are women and 10% are young people under the age of 30) and the Program's beneficiary organizations are now able to offer members more services, generating additional income (p.4). All this has had positive impacts related to environmental sustainability, improved competitiveness, the

strengthening of partnerships among producers and the reactivation of the local economy.

Source: SEGIB based on Agencies and Directorates-General for Cooperation, Piñeiro, V., Morley, S. and Elverdin, P. (2015), IICA (2021), and InfoAgro (2014).

On the other hand, it could be stated that Regional SSC to address the care and protection of *Environment* is motivated by the search for shared solutions to collective problems in the region. Thus, an important part of the initiatives brings together countries which priorities are the following, among others: the Mesoamerican Caribbean Reef Ecoregion; the Mesoamerican Biological Corridor; endangered species of the Amazon; marine resources of the Caribbean Ecosystem; environmental problems of the Andes; and Central-American and Caribbean biodiversity (see the experience of SICA and its member countries, in Case 4.2). Other initiatives deal with more general topics and seek to provide the countries of

the region with instruments to achieve their international commitments, such as those related to climate financing and plastic waste management and Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs), to name a few.

Regional SSC on *Environment* is motivated by the search for shared solutions to collective regional problems

→ CASE 4.2

SICA member countries join efforts to preserve biodiversity

Central-American System

The Central-American region is geographically rich in terms of biodiversity. Eight percent of the world's biological biodiversity is distributed in 206 ecosystems, 33 ecoregions and 20 life zones in Central-America, and around 12% of the coasts of Latin-America and the Caribbean, including 567,000 ha of mangroves and 1,600 km of coral reefs, are located in this region (Central-American Integration System, SICA by its Spanish acronym, 2022a).

Biodiversity provides important goods and services that are essential to local and national economies and ecosystems also play an important role in water regulation, erosion control and reservoir sedimentation, filtering of pollutants and scenic beauty (SICA, 2022b). There is also a close relationship between climate change and biodiversity loss as "biodiversity is essential to maintain the concentration of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere at a level that somehow mitigates further

impacts of climate change. Anything that can avoid the deforestation of ecosystems (...) is important" (Soto M., 2019).

Being aware of this priority, SICA member countries and the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) joined efforts to promote the Regional SSC project *Capacity building for an integral management and conservation of biodiversity in the region*. This initiative - currently under execution - is expected to finish in 2024 and is led by the Executive Secretariat of the Central-American Commission on Environment and Development (CCAD by its Spanish acronym). Belize, Costa Rica, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, Panama, the Dominican Republic and El Salvador are the beneficiary countries.

The first year of the project's execution was dedicated to define the activities of its Action Plan, an effort that resulted in a regional technical

workshop held in San Salvador in September 2019, sponsored by CCAD together with the environmental authorities of countries and partners involved.

Subsequently, last September, during the presentation of the results to CCAD Council of Ministers, countries highlighted the implementation of pilot projects in cross-border areas such as the Maya Forest (between Belize and Guatemala), the Gulf of Fonseca (between El Salvador, Honduras and Nicaragua), La Amistad (between Costa Rica and Panama) and Montecristi in the Dominican Republic. Other achievements, such as the Regional Environmental Observatory, set in the framework of other CCAD projects, as well as the training of Central-American officials through JICA's Knowledge Co-creation Program were also worthy of mention (El Día, 2022).

Source: SEGIB based on Agencies and Directorates-General for Cooperation, El Día (2022), Central-American Integration System (2022a), (2022b) and Soto M. (2019).

Meanwhile, 7.1% of the Regional SSC initiatives that in the 2020-2021 period addressed issues related to *Disaster management* focused on providing countries with tools to improve their capacities for prevention, response, adaptation, mitigation and resilience in the face of different types of phenomena. The aim of this cooperation is to share sectoral policies, impact strategies, intersectoral and/or multidisciplinary approaches, public-private partnership formulas or information systems, among others. As it was mentioned in another section, most of these initiatives involve countries in sub-regions which are especially affected by these disasters, such as the Caribbean, Central-America and Mesoamerica.

On the other hand, Regional SSC destined to generate better conditions in terms of Infrastructures and economic services is mainly explained by the contribution of two activity sectors: *Energy* and *Transportation and storage*, each with relative shares of 5.3%. These initiatives aim

to promote renewable energy, energy efficiency and electricity interconnection, as well as to rehabilitate roads and railways to ensure the necessary connectivity between countries that are part of the same economic space. As stated, these programs and projects focused on the Central and South-American regions, with the special involvement of SICA and MERCOSUR, in each case.

The importance of Other areas deserves a special mention, as it is mainly explained by the commitment of the Ibero-American System to programs and projects to strengthen *Culture*, the second most important sector of the 2020-2021 period (13.3% of the initiatives, as Graph 4.12.B shows). PIPAs tackle a wide range of issues in this sense, including the strengthening of performing and audiovisual arts, music, the protection and digitization of historical and diplomatic archives, museums and libraries, among others. However, the comprehensive approach to culture, considered an instrument to achieve Sustainable Development, is actually more important than the addressed topics. In this regard and in the Ibero-American

space, culture contributes to build a collective identity, but also plays a decisive role in peoples' well-being and in greater social cohesion and inclusion.²

Finally, the importance of the *Strengthening institutions and public policies* sector in the sixth area of action (Institutional strengthening) should also be stressed, as it accounts for 8.0% of the total number of initiatives in the period, a figure that places it, together with *Education*, as the fourth most important sector in relative terms. As its name suggests, cooperation associated with this sector focused on providing instruments (registration and communication systems, training, statistics and use of data, among others) that enable governments at different levels - national and subnational - to strengthen their capacities in the design, implementation and management of their public policies. Among these initiatives, special

mention should be made to those that, in the framework of the Meso and Ibero-American systems, aim to strengthen SSC.

Given the context of 2020 and 2021, a final interesting aspect to analyze in this section is how the response to the COVID-19 crisis may have impacted the type of capacities countries strengthened through Regional SSC. Graph 4.13 sheds light on the above and compares this period with the two previous years (2018-2019) showing

— Culture is the second most important sector in the 2020-2021 period (13.3% of the initiatives)



Photo: Family producers in La Colmena, Paraguay, which has a large fruit and bee production, work on the care and reproduction of bees, as well as on honey collection, through Bilateral SSC. Image bank on South-South and Triangular Cooperation in Ibero-America. SEGIB-PIFCSS. 2021.

² For more details, see the Ibero-American Strategy for Culture and Sustainable Development, approved at the 27th Ibero-American Summit of Heads of State and Government, held in April 2021 in Andorra.

the different sectors' variation in terms of their share over the total number of Regional SSC initiatives that were carried out in Ibero-America in each of these time frames.

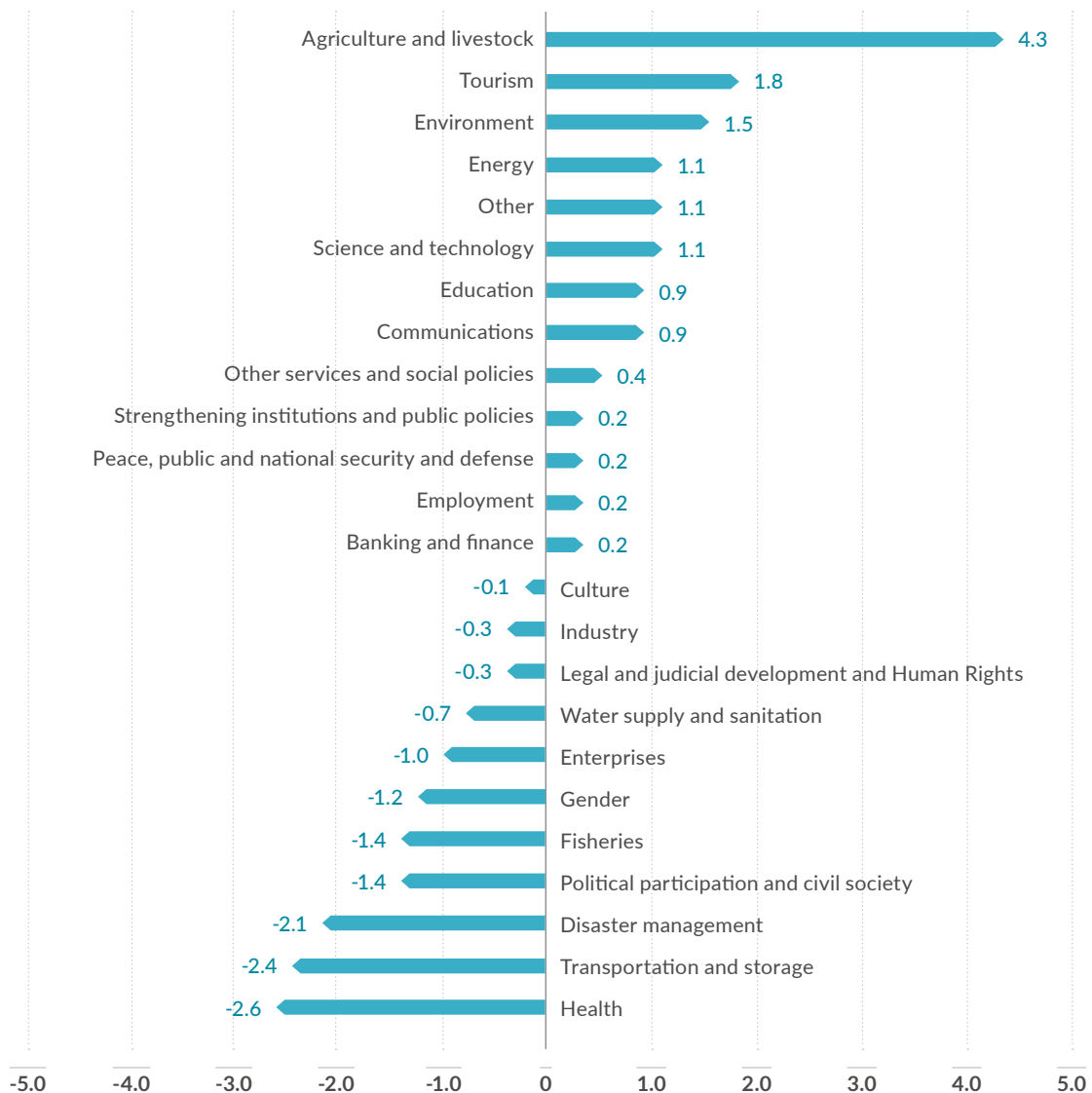
In this sense, it is possible to identify two particularly striking aspects: the strong increase of *Agriculture and livestock* (4.3 percentage points, which explains its position as the most important sector in 2020-2021); and the significant drops of *Disaster management* (-2.1 points), *Transportation and storage* (-2.4) and *Health* (-2.6). Indeed, given this dynamic, *Health* had a relatively low participation in Regional SSC as a whole in the analyzed period (4.4%), a figure far below that registered, for

example, in the framework of Bilateral SSC (18.6%). In addition, as a result of the different relative importance both modalities also have overall the region's SSC, the contrast in absolute figures is even greater: 123 initiatives were bilaterally exchanged in Ibero-America in the *Health* sector, compared to only 5 at the regional level.

→ GRAPH 4.13

Variation of activity sectors' share in the total number of Regional SSC initiatives in Ibero-America. 2018-2019 and 2020-2021

In percentage points



The above does not mean Regional SSC has not addressed the COVID-19 crisis. The dimension of the initiatives carried out in this modality and its special characteristics imply the response cannot be easily analyzed based on aggregate data though. In this sense, it is possible to state that, in most cases, initiatives that were already under execution carried out activities in response to the pandemic, adapting them to their usual mechanisms. However, this was not reflected, for example, either in the title of the program and/or project or in the sector in which they are classified. Decisions made by the Ibero-American Program for the Strengthening of South-South Cooperation (PIFCSS by its Spanish acronym) are an example of this. As detailed in Case 4.3, ever since the outbreak of the pandemic, PIFCSS adapted its

Structured Mechanism for the Exchange of Experiences of South-South Cooperation (MECSS by its Spanish acronym) to support specific interventions in response to COVID-19.

Partners facing COVID-19 accounted for South-South and Triangular Cooperation's capacity and flexibility to adapt to unexpected scenarios

→ CASE 4.3

Partners facing COVID-19: a regional response to a global challenge

Ibero-American System

In August 2020, the Ibero-American Program for the Strengthening of South-South Cooperation (PIFCSS by its Spanish acronym) invited its 21 member countries to participate in the *Partners facing COVID-19* call for proposals, which aim was to support initiatives in response to the challenges of the emergency context caused by the pandemic. This call was launched in the framework of one of the most significant instruments developed by the region to achieve the strategic objective of strengthening institutional capacities of the institutions in charge of South-South and Triangular Cooperation in Ibero-America: the Structured Mechanism for the Exchange of Experiences of South-South Cooperation (MECSS by its Spanish acronym) (SEGIB, 2022). This way, PIFCSS, together with the countries, adapted the traditional MECSS to provide a concrete response to the pandemic.

Partners facing COVID-19 considered initiatives proposed by institutions responsible for international cooperation, sectoral institutions and/or subnational/local governments, to address the impacts of the pandemic

in the health, social policy, education, employment, and science and technology areas, among others.

Interested parties were invited to submit one proposal per country (not exceeding USD 10,000) or in collaboration with others (with an additional 50% budget). In addition to submitting projects and/or specific actions, countries were also allowed to hire experts to provide technical assistance and/or to support the design or implementation of diagnoses, studies, strategies, applied research and/or projects in different areas. This mechanism also included the possibility of purchasing specific goods or services to support the strengthening of development processes or project execution in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic (for example, specific supplies, software licenses, publications, among others). Finally, *Partners facing COVID-19* included short-term academic training for government officials (2020-2021 Annual Report, PIFCSS, P.14).

Since 2020 to date, PIFCSS has launched 4 specific calls of this special mechanism and 38 proposals

in different thematic areas have been financed in this framework. In addition to stressing the importance of conceiving and materializing shared solutions - specifically based on regional efforts and capacities - in the face of crises which have an impact on development, *Partners facing COVID-19* accounted for South-South and Triangular Cooperation's flexibility and its capacity to adapt to unexpected scenarios, while proving to be an effective mechanism for capacity building, as proposed in SDG 17 Partnerships for the goals.

Another alternative has been the effective promotion of new initiatives that, although their specific objectives make reference to the response to COVID-19, do not include these key words in their titles. This Regional SSC focused on other dimensions of the crisis, so none of them are classified in the *Health* sector. The 3 initiatives which are shown in Graph 4.14, promoted in the framework of the Pacific Alliance to address some of the economic and social impacts of the crisis, are an example of the above.

The profile of strengthened capacities in the framework of Regional SSC coincides with the way in which initiatives aimed to contribute to the SDGs

→ GRAPH 4.14

Regional SSC initiatives promoted in Ibero-America by the countries of the Pacific Alliance and which objective makes specific reference to the COVID-19 crisis.

Initiative	Objective and main features
Strengthening the digital skills of teachers and school administrators in basic education	<p>Program – Education – SDG 4 (Quality education)</p> <p>Objective: Strengthen teachers' and authorities' digital skills, capacities and competencies in order to develop innovative options for comprehensive development and remote learning, in the context of the current emergency of COVID-19 and possible new confinements.</p>
Promoting a plan for the reactivation of tourism in the Pacific Alliance member countries	<p>Program – Tourism – SDG 8 (Decent work and economic growth)</p> <p>Objective: Implement a campaign through a strategic media plan to promote the Pacific Alliance member countries with the aim to reactivate the regional tourism industry, in order to mitigate the effects that the COVID-19 pandemic is having on the sector.</p>
Social Observatory of the Pacific Alliance	<p>Project - Other services and social policies - SDG 10 (Reduced inequalities)</p> <p>Objective: Design and implement the Social Observatory (SO) of the Pacific Alliance (PA) as a cutting-edge virtual instrument to compile, systematize, manage and publish updated information on the social sector that will contribute to design and strengthen public policies to improve the well-being of our peoples. As a result, the entire community will be able to benefit from those practices that have been applied in terms of Social Development to address the health crisis caused by COVID-19 which, in turn, are aligned with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Regional Agenda for Inclusive Social Development (ARDSI by its Spanish acronym).</p> <p>The structure of the SO has been designed considering the following dimensions, with their respective indicators:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Social development (poverty, social and labor inclusion, health, education and housing). 2. Social management (standards, institutional design, strengthening and participation). 3. Social investment (social spending). 4. Systematization of experiences (international cooperation). 5. Social innovation (in social policies). 6. Programs, public policies and national strategies of the PA member states to face the COVID-19.

4.5 Regional SSC in 2020-2021 and the Sustainable Development Goals

The profile of the capacities that were strengthened by Regional SSC initiatives implemented in Ibero-America during the 2020-2021 period has a correlation with the way in which they, in turn, aimed to contribute to the

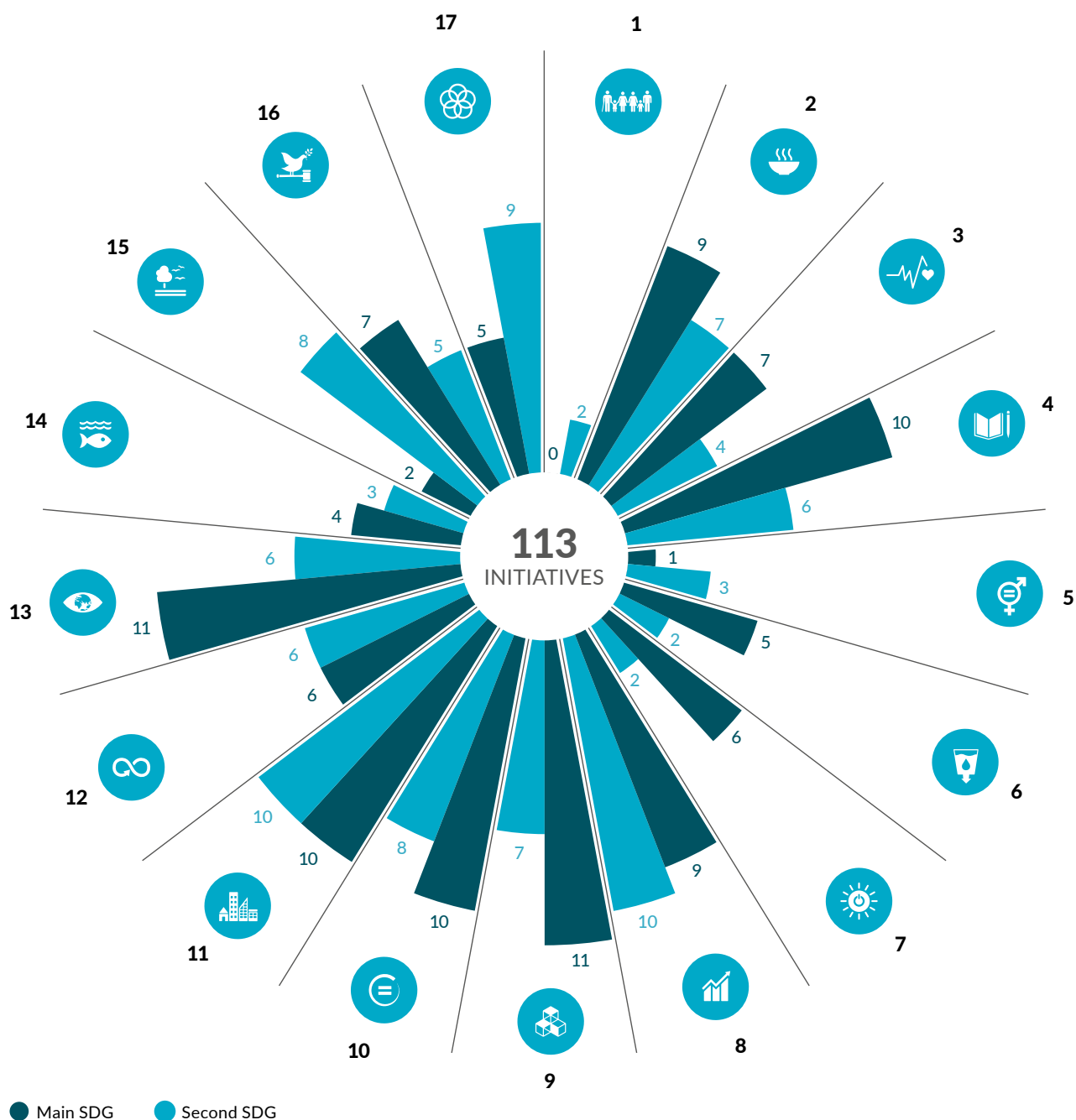
achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). In order to analyze this alignment, Graph 4.15 shows the number of initiatives associated with each of the Goals, differentiating between the main and the second SDG. Indeed, 100% of the initiatives respond to a main SDG; and, according to the countries, half of them are also aligned with at least a second SDG (44% with one; and 6% with two).

Specifically, as the graph portrays, 7 Goals were particularly significant as main SDGs, since approximately 10 initiatives (which aggregately accounted for more than 60% of the total), were aligned with each of these.

→ GRAPH 4.15

Distribution of Regional SSC initiatives in Ibero-America, by their alignment with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). 2020-2021

In units



Source: SEGIB based on Agencies and Directorates-General for Cooperation

According to the United Nations' categorization³ - and although the 17 SDGs have a strong multidimensional approach - during the 2020-2021 period, SDG 8 (Decent work and economic growth), SDG 9 (Industry, innovation and infrastructure), SDG 10 (Reduced inequalities) and SDG 11 (Sustainable cities and communities) stood out, which shared purpose was to advance Prosperity. On the other hand, SDG 2 (Zero hunger) and SDG 4 (Quality education), as well as SDG 13 (Climate action) were the most significant in terms of People and Planet, respectively.

In turn, 30% of the Regional SSC initiatives implemented in Ibero-America during the 2020-2021 period were also diversified around 6 other Sustainable Development Goals. Initiatives that focused on SDG 6 (Clean water and sanitation), SDG 7 (Affordable and clean energy) and

SDG 12 (Responsible consumption and production), as well as those dedicated to the other 5Ps defined by the UN, Peace (SDG 16) and Partnerships (SDG 17), should also be highlighted. Given the pandemic context of the last two years, the 7 initiatives associated with SDG 3 (Good health and well-being) also deserve a special mention. Case 4.4, regarding the initiative approved at the Ibero-American Summit in Andorra in 2021, which seeks to eliminate mother-to-child transmission of Chagas disease, was prepared in order to illustrate the importance of this SDG and its different approaches.

→ CASE 4.4

Ibero-American Initiative on congenital Chagas disease

Ibero-American System

About 6 to 7 million people worldwide, mostly in Latin-America, are estimated to be infected with *Trypanosoma cruzi*, the parasite that causes Chagas disease (WHO, 2021). In the Americas, Chagas disease shows an annual average incidence of 30,000 new cases and registers 12,000 deaths per year. It is also estimated that around 70 million people in this continent live in areas of exposure and are at risk of contracting this disease (PAHO, 2021). Historically, the main route of transmission has been vector-borne; however, other routes include mother-to-child (congenital) transmission, oral (food-borne) transmission, and that derived from blood and organ donation (WHO, 2021).

It is estimated that between 8,000 and 15,000 newborns become infected during gestation, making the congenital route currently one of the main ways of transmission in many countries. Early detection and treatment in pregnant women and women of child-bearing

age is essential to reduce it. This requires proactive actions since the disease is often asymptomatic both in women and newborns (Sosa-Estani *et al*, 2021).

The Ibero-American Initiative *No baby with Chagas, the road to new generations free of Chagas* was approved at the Andorra Summit in 2021, as part of the regional response to this shared problem, and held its first Intergovernmental Council in November of the same year. Its purpose is to contribute to the elimination of mother-to-child transmission of the disease from a multidimensional approach, considering control and prevention strategies of other routes of transmission.

The strengthening of health systems for prevention, timely diagnosis, treatment and follow-up of Chagas disease, with emphasis on women of child-bearing age, pregnant women and newborns are among its specific

objectives. These will be implemented through different instruments such as technical assistance among participating countries, training, exchange of experiences and resources, among others. The initiative currently counts with four member countries (Argentina, Brazil, Colombia and Spain) and other four guest members (El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras and Paraguay). Its Presidency is held by Brazil and the Technical Unit is hosted by Argentina's Mundo Sano Foundation which, together with PAHO and ISGlobal, have provided technical support throughout the design process.

Source: SEGIB based on Agencies and Directorates-General for Cooperation, PAHO (2021), WHO (2021) and Sosa-Estani *et al* (2021)

³ According to the United Nations, the 17 SDGs can be categorized into the 5Ps to better assess them: Planet (SDG 6, 12, 13, 14 and 15), People (SDG 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5), Prosperity (SDG 7, 8, 9, 10 and 11), Peace (SDG 16) and Partnerships (SDG 17).

The analysis is completed by 10% of the Regional SSC programs and projects that during 2020-2021 were aligned, specifically, with SDG 14 (Life below water) and, to a less extent, with SDG 15 (Life on land) and SDG 5 (Gender equality). All the above sheds light on the areas where progress is being made while it also provides information on those where the region must continue improving and, consequently, reveals where part of

the new efforts should be focused. Case 4.5, which summarizes another of the initiatives approved at the Ibero-American Summit in Andorra in 2021, is an example of this as it is dedicated to one of the most pressing issues where progress still needs to be made: the eradication of all forms of violence against women.

→ CASE 4.5

Eradicating violence against women: a global and Ibero-American commitment

Ibero-American System

Violence against women is one of the most widespread and persistent human rights violations worldwide (UN, 2022) and it represents a global public health problem (WHO, 2021). It is both a cause and a consequence of gender inequality, and it manifests itself in multiple forms. It includes, among others, physical, sexual and psychological violence within the family or community, as well as violence perpetrated or tolerated by the State. The COVID-19 pandemic has further exposed women to violent behavior due to measures such as confinement and the interruption of essential support services.

After several decades of mobilizations carried out by women's organizations, the eradication of gender-based violence is now on national and international agendas. At the global level, two of the major milestones were

the United Nations Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women in 1993 and the Beijing Platform for Action in 1995. These commitments were reinforced the following years with the signing of various agreements, among which, the inclusion in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development through specific goals (5.2 and 5.3) stands out, setting a strong mandate for progress.

In order to regionally address this problem, Ibero-American Heads of State and Government approved the *Ibero-American Initiative to Prevent and Eliminate Violence against Women* at the 27th Summit in Andorra, which was supported by 10 countries. The Initiative, which is taking its first steps, will be the region's first permanent cooperation platform in this matter and will seek to consolidate a common reference framework (SEGIB, 2021).

It has three main lines of action: (1) promoting the development and strengthening of comprehensive public policies and laws; (2) improving comprehensive care, protection and reparation of women victims/survivors of violence; and (3) strengthening the scope of programs and plans to prevent of violence against women in Ibero-America.

These goals will be achieved from a human rights and intersectionality approach, aiming to respond to women's needs and to their diversity, particularly focusing on those who suffer multiple forms of discrimination, such as indigenous and Afro-descendant women, migrant women, adolescent women, older women, women in rural areas or women with disabilities, among others.

Source: SEGIB based on Agencies and Directorates-General for Cooperation, WHO (2021), UN (2022) and SEGIB (2021)

Finally, it is also important to review those Goals that were classified as second SDGs. As Graph 4.15 illustrates, most of these have a "cross-cutting nature", which explains their association with very diverse sectors and, consequently, their importance as second SDGs rather than as main SDGs. Specifically, this would be the case of SDG 8 (Decent work and economic growth), SDG 15 (Life on land) and SDG 17 (Partnerships for the goals).

On the other hand, some situations favor a repeated link between main and second SDGs. These connections are generated by initiatives that, while addressing *Disaster management*, contribute to achieve SDG 13 (Climate action) and are aligned with SDG 11 (Sustainable cities

and communities) as second SDG which, in target 11.b, makes explicit reference to climate change mitigation and adaptation, resilience and, in short, to the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030. Other examples are the programs and projects that, by promoting *Education* and SDG 4, also support the reduction of inequalities (SDG 10); or those initiatives that, in the *Agriculture and livestock* sector, seek to support the achievement, first, of SDG 2 (Zero hunger) and, second, of SDG 8 (Decent work and economic growth).



Photo: Patricia Olivares is a computer engineer and participates in the Program to strengthen women's skills in entrepreneurship and innovation strategies, contributing to their economic independence, through SSC between Chile and Peru. Image bank on South-South and Triangular Cooperation in Ibero-America. SEGIB-PIFCSS. 2021.

CHAPTER 5

Ibero-America and South-South and Triangular Cooperation with other regions

In 2020-2021, Ibero-American South-South and Triangular Cooperation with other regions' developing countries was a reflection of the way in which the global fight against COVID-19 was coordinated

The COVID-19 crisis had opposite effects on development cooperation: on the one hand and in this context, it became one of the most useful instruments to face this global challenge. However, the management of this crisis, especially in terms of mobility and during the 2020-2021 period, has made its implementation more difficult. In this sense, the enormous geographic distance between Ibero-American developing countries and among these and those of other regions makes this paradox especially relevant for the exchanges in which they participate.

This fifth chapter analyzes South-South and Triangular Cooperation Ibero-American countries carried out together with those of other developing regions, focusing on the two most critical years of the pandemic. First, it contextualizes the evolution of this cooperation since 2007 and then characterizes its dynamism in the 2020-2021 period. Second, it identifies its main stakeholders and, from a sectoral perspective and based on the SDGs, reveals how the association between the different regions aimed to combine the response to the COVID-19 crisis with the commitment to continue advancing the achievement of the 2030 Agenda.

5.1 Evolution of Ibero-American South-South and Triangular Cooperation together with other developing regions

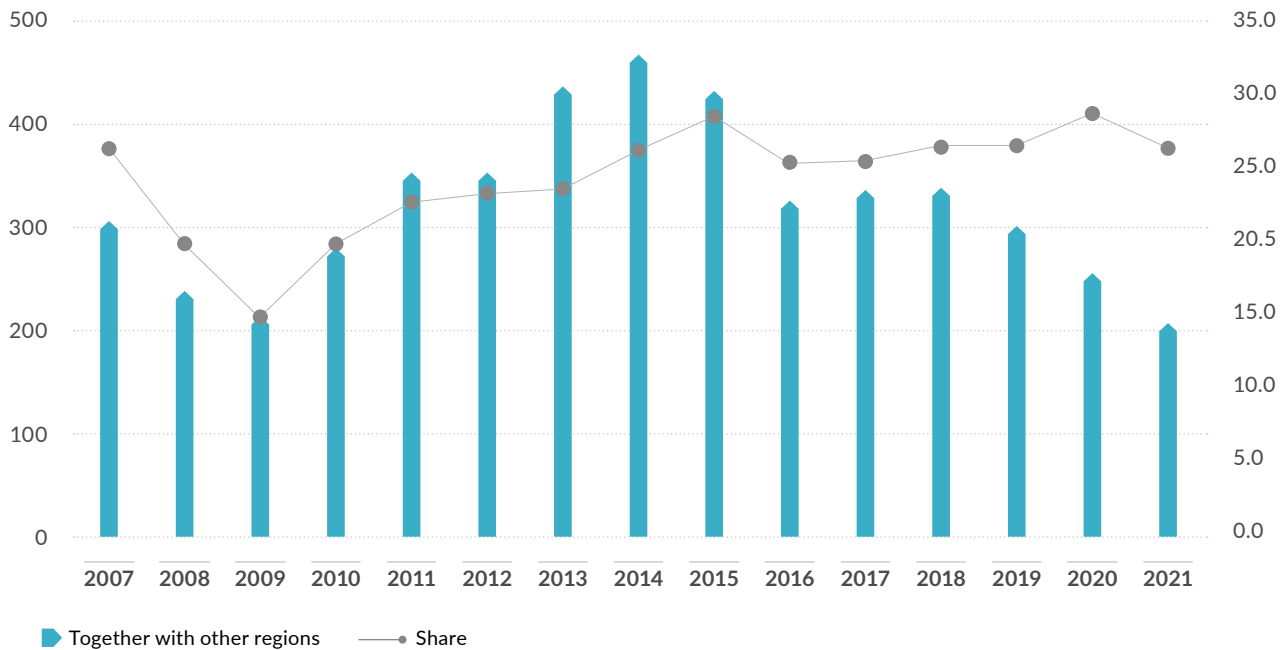
Over the last 15 years, South-South and Triangular Cooperation Ibero-America has promoted with other regions' developing countries has had a similar evolution to that implemented with all partners: it has increased between 2007 and 2014 and decreased thereafter - this reduction being more intense in the years of the pandemic - until 2021. However, the evolution of Ibero-American cooperation with other regions (in both stages) has some features that differentiate it from the trajectory of the region's South-South and Triangular Cooperation as a whole. This is explained by the specific changes that have affected the registration process of this type of cooperation in recent years.

Indeed, between 2007 and 2015, South-South and Triangular Cooperation with other developing regions was concentrated on non-Ibero-American Caribbean countries and mainly on Haiti, especially since 2010, after it suffered a devastating earthquake. Thus, it was not until 2016, in response to a new mandate from Ibero-American countries themselves, that the information regarding cooperation with other developing regions began to be registered. After that year, countries began the process of progressively registering all the initiatives that had been carried out together with other regions during previous years. For this reason, and although it may lead to a

→ GRAPH 5.1

Evolution of Ibero-American South-South and Triangular Cooperation initiatives together with other regions' developing countries and of their share overall cooperation with all partners 2007-2021

In units and percentage



Source: SEGIB based on Agencies and Directorates-General for Cooperation

possible under-registration, resulting in lower final figures, this type of cooperation is analyzed throughout the entire period (2007-2021). In addition, considering not all countries participate in this registration process, which is not mandatory, information may be partial and values may be underestimated.

This methodological note is important to understand the evolution of South-South and Triangular Cooperation initiatives implemented by Ibero-America together with other regions, which is illustrated in Graph 5.1. Specifically, between 2007 and 2009, it is possible to identify a significant reduction in the number of actions, projects and programs, the figure in 2009 (214) being one third lower than the initial figure (307). After 2010, coinciding with the significant support provided by Ibero-American countries to Haiti - both in times of the most severe emergency and during the reconstruction process - the number of initiatives began to rise, reaching a maximum record of 467 in 2014, which more than doubled the previous one.

Since 2015, however, and despite records begin to consider cooperation with all regions (in addition to the non-Ibero-American Caribbean), initiatives begin to fall once again, in line with the reduction of South-South and Triangular Cooperation initiatives in general: first, with a very high intensity (2015-2016); then (until 2019) stabilizing around 300; and finally having a sharp drop again in 2020 and 2021, coinciding with the most pressing moments of the COVID-19 crisis.

On the other hand, the trajectory of the share of Ibero-American cooperation with other regions is different than the evolution of South-South and Triangular Cooperation as a whole: in fact, the former shows an upward trend in Graph 5.1, apparently being more resilient. Indeed, Ibero-American countries' support to other developing regions to address the pandemic (especially Cuba, as it will detailed below) precisely explains why the reduction of the number of initiatives is, in relative terms, slightly less severe for this type of cooperation. Consequently, and as the Graph portrays, after overcoming an initial significant decline, since 2010, the share of South-South and Triangular Cooperation with other regions over the total, has an ascending trajectory over time, stabilizing at around 25%, with a historical maximum of 28.8% in 2020.

5.2 Narrowing the analysis: other regions, all modalities and the 2020-2021 period

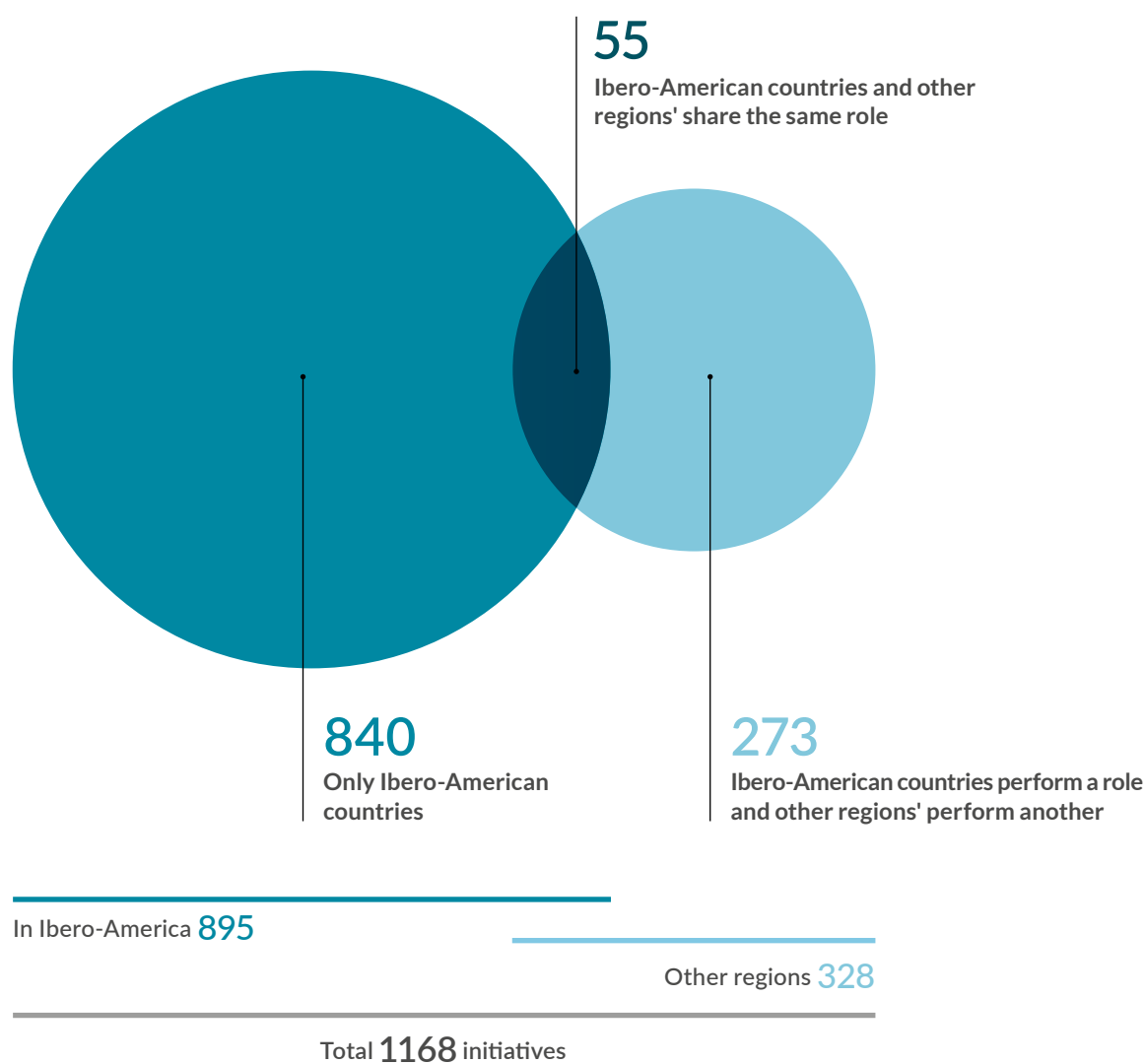
As it has been pointed out throughout this Report and consistent with the biennial nature of this publication, this 2022 edition takes the 2020-2021 period as a reference for the analysis. This also allows to compare data associated with different time frames and to better identify the possible impact the pandemic has had on South-South and Triangular Cooperation finally executed.

On the other hand, as in previous chapters, initiatives can be classified in three different groups according to the different partners that have participated, in any of the modalities recognized in this space, and to the roles they have exercised: 1) exchanges that only involve Ibero-American countries; 2) those in which Ibero-American countries and countries from other regions coincide, executing different roles; and 3) initiatives in which Ibero-American countries and other regions' developing countries coincide and share at least one of the same roles (usually recipient).

→ GRAPH 5.2

Distribution of South-South and Triangular Cooperation initiatives according to the participation of Ibero-American countries and other regions' developing countries and the combination of roles. 2020-2021

In units



Graph 5.2 shows the number of initiatives that meet each of these three criteria during the 2020-2021 period and it is used as a reference to narrow the framework of analysis on which this chapter is based. In fact, this chapter focuses on the 328 South-South and Triangular Cooperation initiatives in which Ibero-American countries participated together with other regions' developing nations in the aforementioned period. In 55 of these, countries from different regions also coincided in the exercise of the same role. If the 840 exchanges in which only Ibero-American countries participated are added to these 328, the total number of exchanges in which the region participated with partners from all over the world in those two years reaches a total of 1,168.

When these figures, associated with 2020 and 2021, are compared with those of the immediately previous period (2018-2019), it is possible to confirm that the impact of the pandemic was more severe within Ibero-America than on South-South and Triangular Cooperation which also involved other regions. This is suggested by Graph 5.3, which shows a drop in all South-South and Triangular Cooperation of more than 28.5% (from 1,634 initiatives 1,168); a reduction which is 10 percentage points more intense when compared to cooperation with other developing regions (a negative 18.4%, from 402 to 328). The difference between the two rates also leads

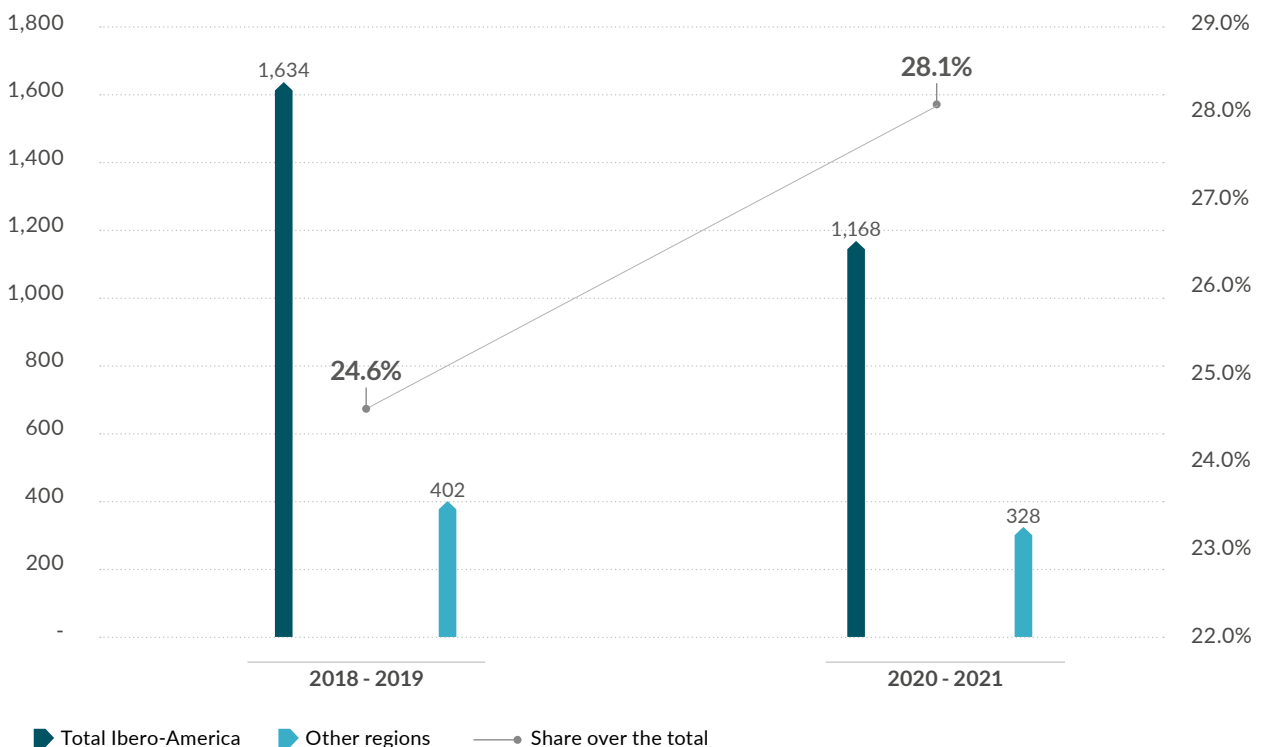
to an increase in the relative share of Ibero-American cooperation with extra-regional developing countries, from 24.6% in the years prior to the COVID-19 crisis to 28.1% in 2020-2021.

Comparing 2020-2021 figures with those of 2018-2019 confirms that the impact of the pandemic was more severe within Ibero-America than for South-South and Triangular Cooperation which involved other regions

→ GRAPH 5.3

Variation of Ibero-American South-South and Triangular Cooperation initiatives and of their share over the total with all partners, by the region with which they were exchanged. 2018-2019 and 2020-2021

In units and percentage



Source: SEGIB based on Agencies and Directorates-General for Cooperation



Photo: Children visit and play with otters protected in the framework of the Bilateral SSC project between Brazil and Colombia. This initiative also strengthens the social role of zoos as a key element for environmental preservation. Image bank on South-South and Triangular Cooperation in Ibero-America. SEGIB-PIFCSS. 2022.

5.3 Ibero-American South-South and Triangular Cooperation during the 2020-2021 period: countries and regions

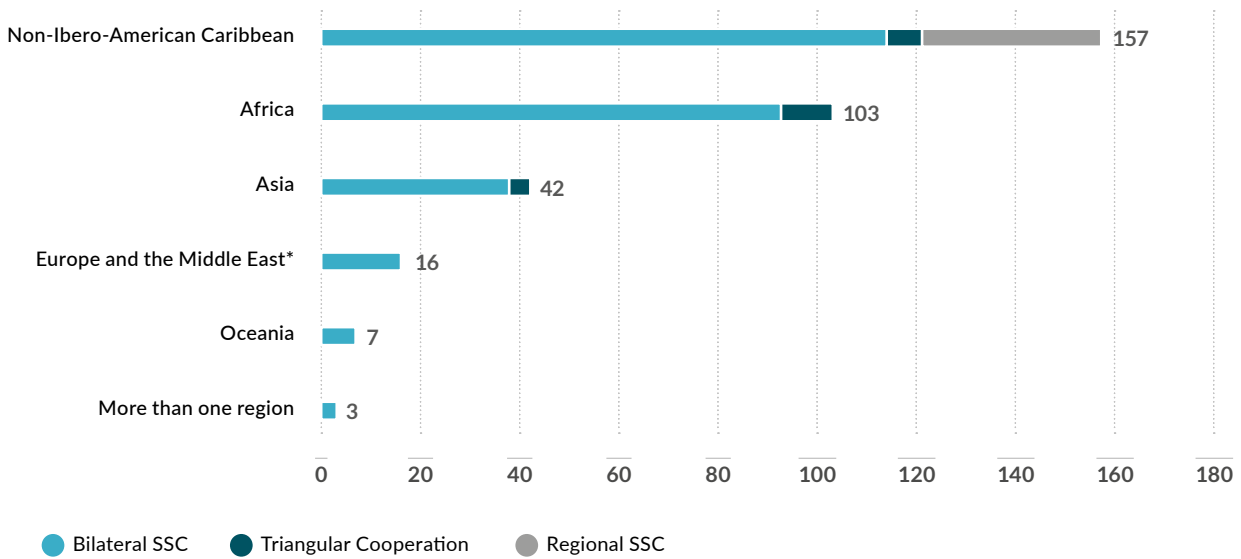
In order to characterize Ibero-American South-South and Triangular Cooperation with the rest of the world, it is important to identify its main stakeholders, i.e. mostly, but not only, developing countries and the regions to which they belong. Graph 5.4, precisely prepared to this end, distributes the 328 initiatives carried out by Ibero-America in 2020-2021 together with other developing countries, according to the different regions.

In this sense, as Graph 5.4 shows, Ibero-American countries associated with non-Ibero-American Caribbean nations in almost one half of the initiatives (157, 48% of the total). Indeed, the emphasis Ibero-America has placed on this region remained during the whole period. Despite the risk of this record being over-dimensioned due to the methodological aspects that have been already explained, between 2007 and 2015 and thereafter, the non-Ibero-American Caribbean has accounted, on average, for 12% of the total number of initiatives Ibero-America exchanges with the whole world, and for one half of those carried out with other developing regions. Box 5.1 was prepared to confirm this, as it details the main characteristics of the collaboration between Ibero-American and non-Ibero-American Caribbean countries, at least from 2015 to 2021.

→ GRAPH 5.4

Distribution of Ibero-American South-South and Triangular Cooperation initiatives with other regions' developing countries, by the region with which they were exchanged and the modality. 2020-2021

In units



Note: (*) Turkey is added to the 8 countries of the Middle East (United Arab Emirates, Iran, Kuwait, Lebanon, Palestine, Qatar, Syria and Yemen).

Source: SEGIB based on Agencies and Directorates-General for Cooperation

→ BOX 5.1

The non-Ibero-American Caribbean region: a strategic partner for Ibero-American South-South and Triangular Cooperation

Given its geographic proximity, the non-Ibero-American Caribbean has historically been the region on which Ibero-American countries have focused their South-South and Triangular Cooperation. This is confirmed by the different editions of the *Report on South-South and Triangular Cooperation in Ibero-America* prepared by SEGIB which, since its first publication in 2007, makes explicit references to cooperation with the Caribbean and also includes, since 2016, information regarding all developing regions.

Between 2015 and 2021, Ibero-American countries participated in 438 South-South and Triangular Cooperation initiatives together with non-Ibero-American Caribbean nations, exercising different roles. These correspond to 33 programs, 254 projects and 151 actions. Seventy percent of these are Bilateral exchanges, 19% are Regional and 11% are Triangular. In this sense, the

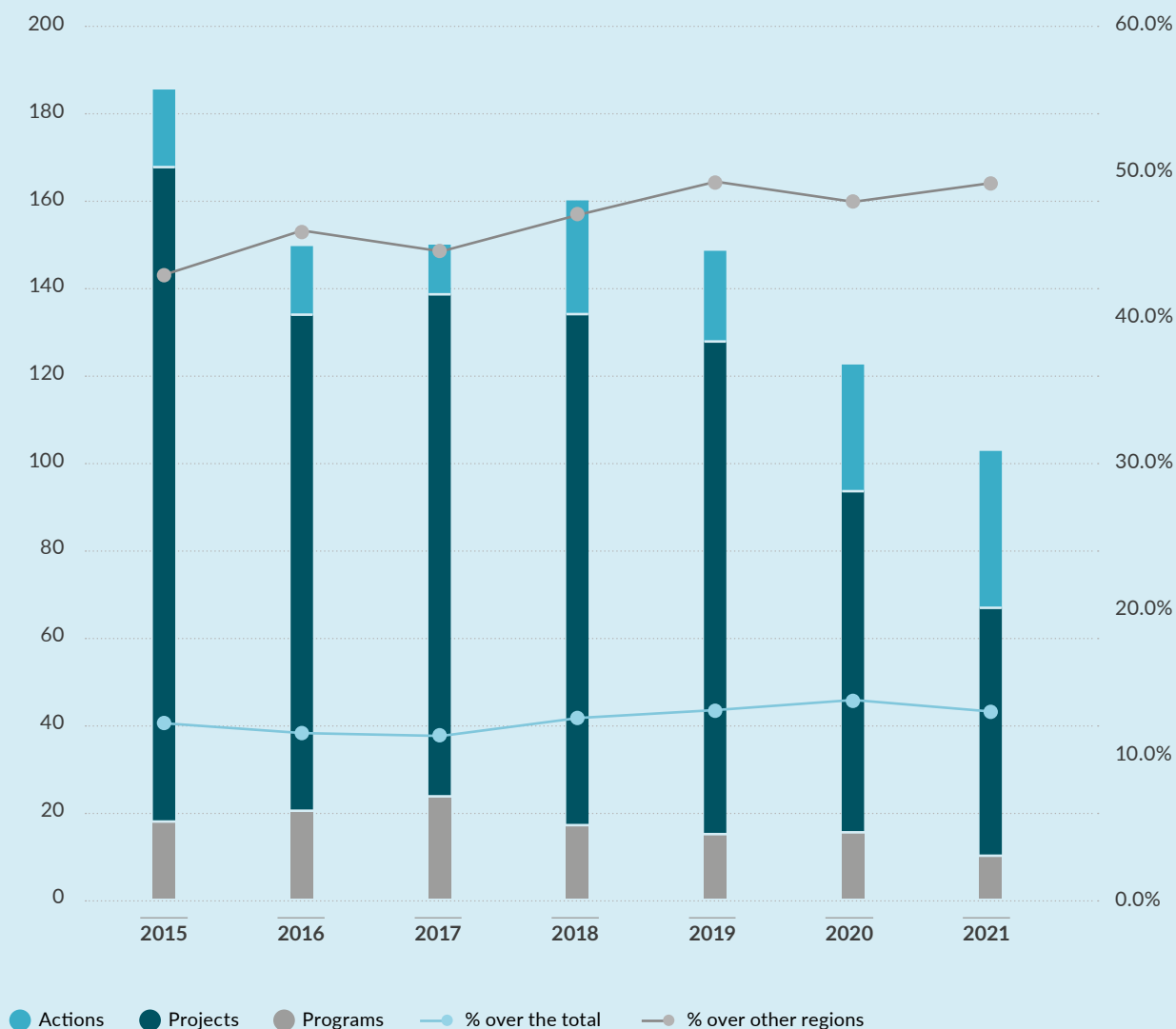
proportion of Regional initiatives with the non-Ibero-American Caribbean is higher than Regional SSC's share in Ibero-American cooperation as a whole (6% for the same period). This seems to be explained by the geographic proximity and by the fact that countries share some regional problems that require shared solutions, which search is often supported by the different multilateral organizations to which they belong (for example: ACS, CARICOM or SICA).

The first of the graphs below shows that, since 2018, the total number of initiatives with the non-Ibero-American Caribbean has fallen. However, this was also the case of all Ibero-American South-South and Triangular Cooperation. As a result, the percentage over the total has remained stable (around 10%). Despite the above, the proportion of initiatives with non-Ibero-American Caribbean countries over the total with other regions has slightly increased since

2015 and, in 2021, reached 49.3%. Likewise, the distribution by type of instrument has varied over time and, in 2020-2021, the proportion of actions is higher than that of projects and programs, which seems consistent with the response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Evolution of Ibero-American South-South and Triangular Cooperation initiatives with the non-Ibero-American Caribbean by type of instrument, percentage overall South-South and Triangular Cooperation with other regions' developing countries and percentage overall Ibero-American cooperation. 2015-2021

In units and percentage



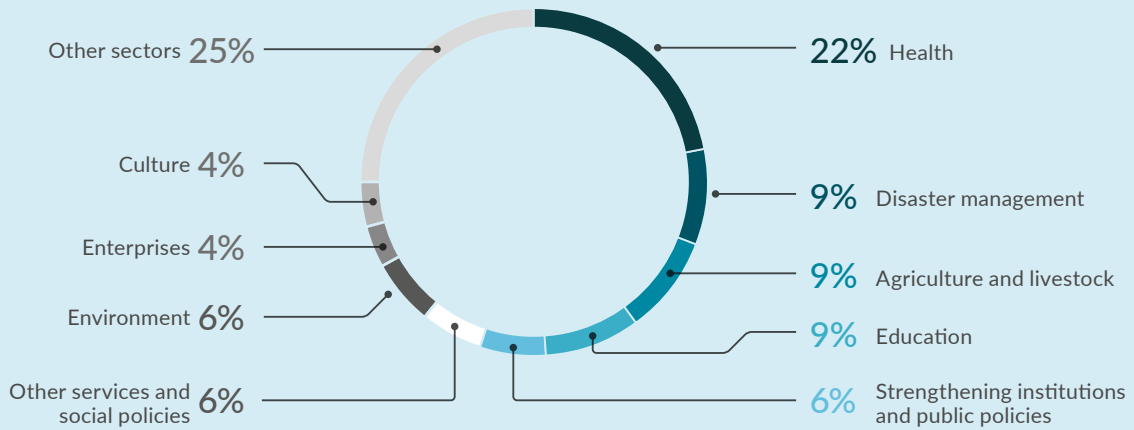
Source: SEGIB based on Agencies and Directorates-General for Cooperation

In sectoral terms (see the second graph), cooperation with the non-Ibero-American Caribbean mainly focused on *Health* (22%), a sector that has a higher importance than in South-South and Triangular Cooperation as a whole during this same period. This is also the case of *Disaster management* and *Education*, which rank second, together with *Agriculture and livestock* (9%), while their incidence is 3.6% and 6.1% in overall cooperation, respectively. This reveals health, integrated natural disaster risk management and the

attention to training needs have been of special interest in the relationship with the non-Ibero-American Caribbean. In contrast, although *Agriculture and livestock* and *Strengthening institutions and public policies* concentrate a large number of initiatives (9% and 6% respectively), they have had a lower share than in Ibero-American South-South and Triangular Cooperation as a whole between 2015 and 2021 (12% and 8%).

Sectoral distribution of Ibero-American South-South and Triangular Cooperation initiatives with non-Ibero-American Caribbean countries. 2015-2021

In percentage



Source: SEGIB based on Agencies and Directorates-General for Cooperation

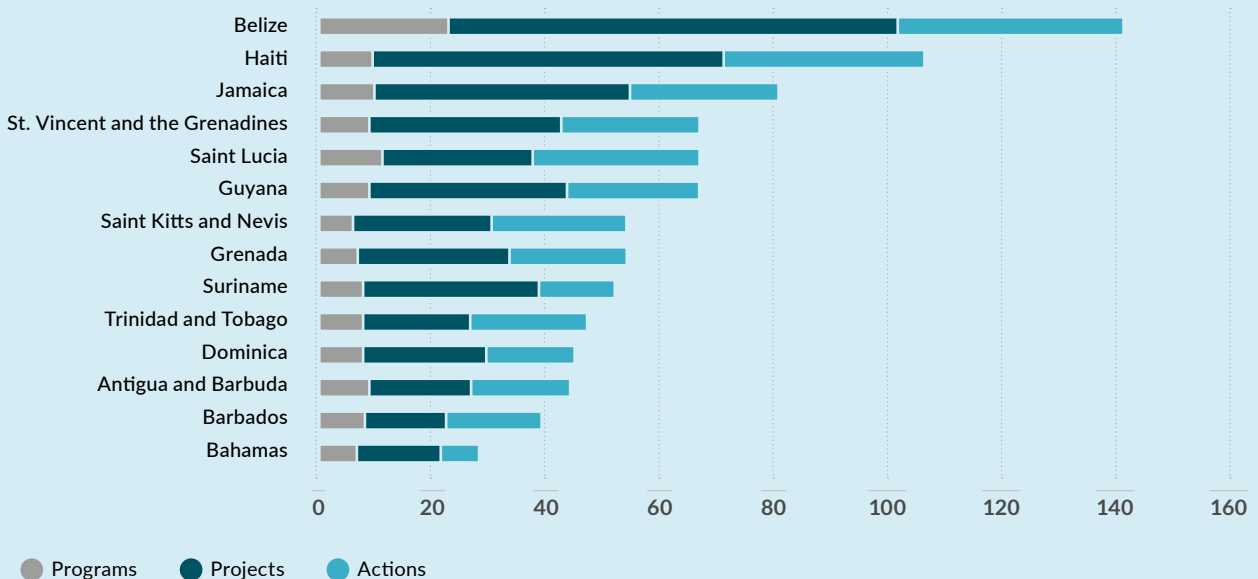
The third graph portrays non-Ibero-American Caribbean countries' participation in the cooperation between the two regions. As shown, Belize has been, by far, the most important non-Ibero-American Caribbean country, participating in 32% of the initiatives executed in the period. In fact, Belize has

been involved in almost 70% of the regional programs that include the non-Ibero-American Caribbean. This can certainly be explained by its membership in SICA, which is very active in terms of Regional SSC and also includes Central-American countries and the Dominican Republic. Belize is followed by Haiti, which

has participated in a quarter of the initiatives. In addition, cooperation has been implemented during the analyzed period with other 14 Caribbean countries and, even the least active (Bahamas), has participated in 28 initiatives, which also reveals the dynamism of this relationship.

Participation of non-Ibero-American Caribbean countries in South-South and Triangular Cooperation initiatives with Ibero-America, by role. 2015-2021

In units

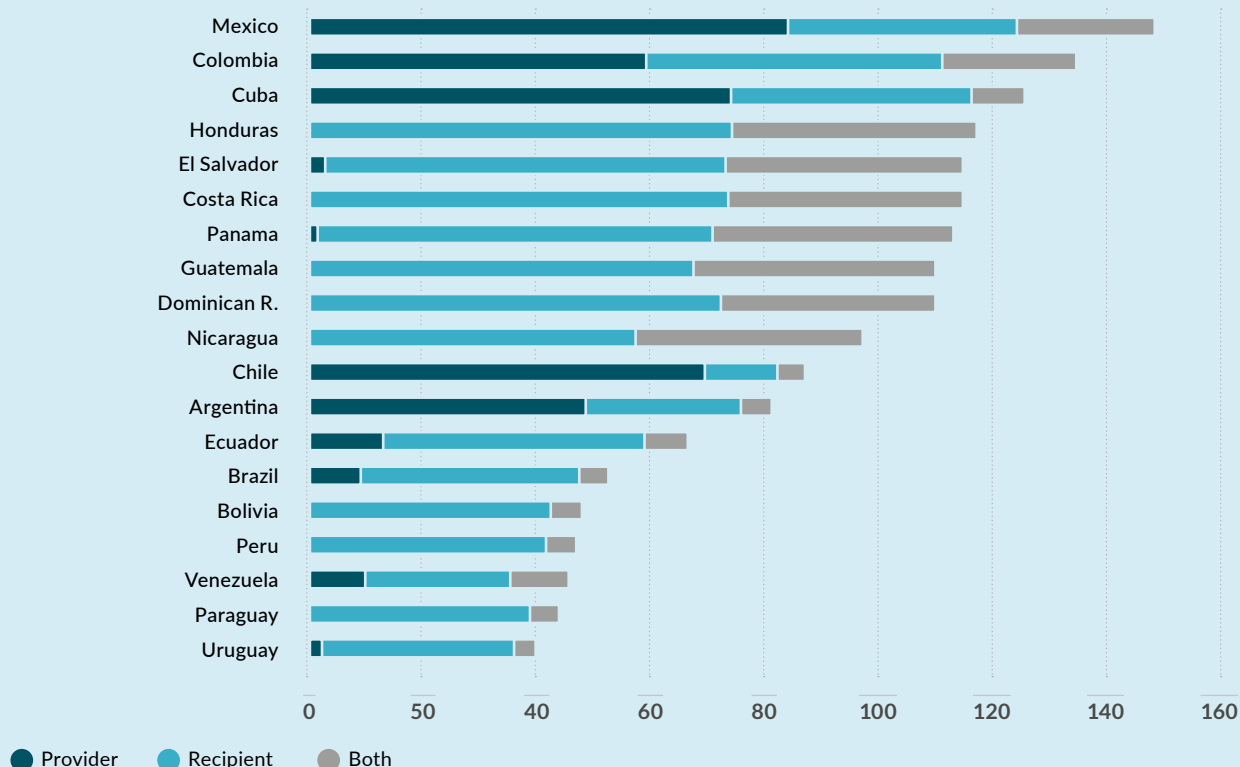


Source: SEGIB based on Agencies and Directorates-General for Cooperation.

Continue →

Participation of Ibero-American countries in South-South and Triangular Cooperation initiatives with the non-Ibero-American Caribbean, by type of instrument. 2015-2021

In units



Source: SEGIB based on Agencies and Directorates-General for Cooperation.

Finally, the fourth graph shows the participation of developing countries in Ibero-America. Three of these stand out for their geographic proximity and clear interest in South-South and Triangular Cooperation with

the non-Ibero-American Caribbean: Mexico, Colombia and Cuba; not only as providers but also in other roles. These are followed by all the Central-American countries in addition to the Dominican Republic, which, as

already mentioned, is also a member of SICA together with Belize. Chile and Argentina should also be highlighted as providers.

Source: SEGIB based on Agencies and Directorates-General for Cooperation

As Graph 5.4 shows, South-South and Triangular Cooperation Ibero-American countries carried out in 2020-2021 with other regions' developing nations also suggests the importance of the relationship with Africa (more than 100 initiatives, corresponding to almost 1 out of 3 of those exchanged with other regions), as well as with Asia (43 initiatives, accounting for 12.8% of the total). Initiatives with the Middle East and Europe (5% of those with other regions) and with Oceania (a smaller 2.1%) were more occasional.

The same graph also portrays some differences regarding the modality chosen for the partnership with these other regions. In this sense, and as Box 5.1 detailed, the relative importance of Regional SSC with the non-Ibero-American Caribbean, the only region that also registers initiatives under this modality, is especially noteworthy. Indeed, in the case of the non-Ibero-American Caribbean,

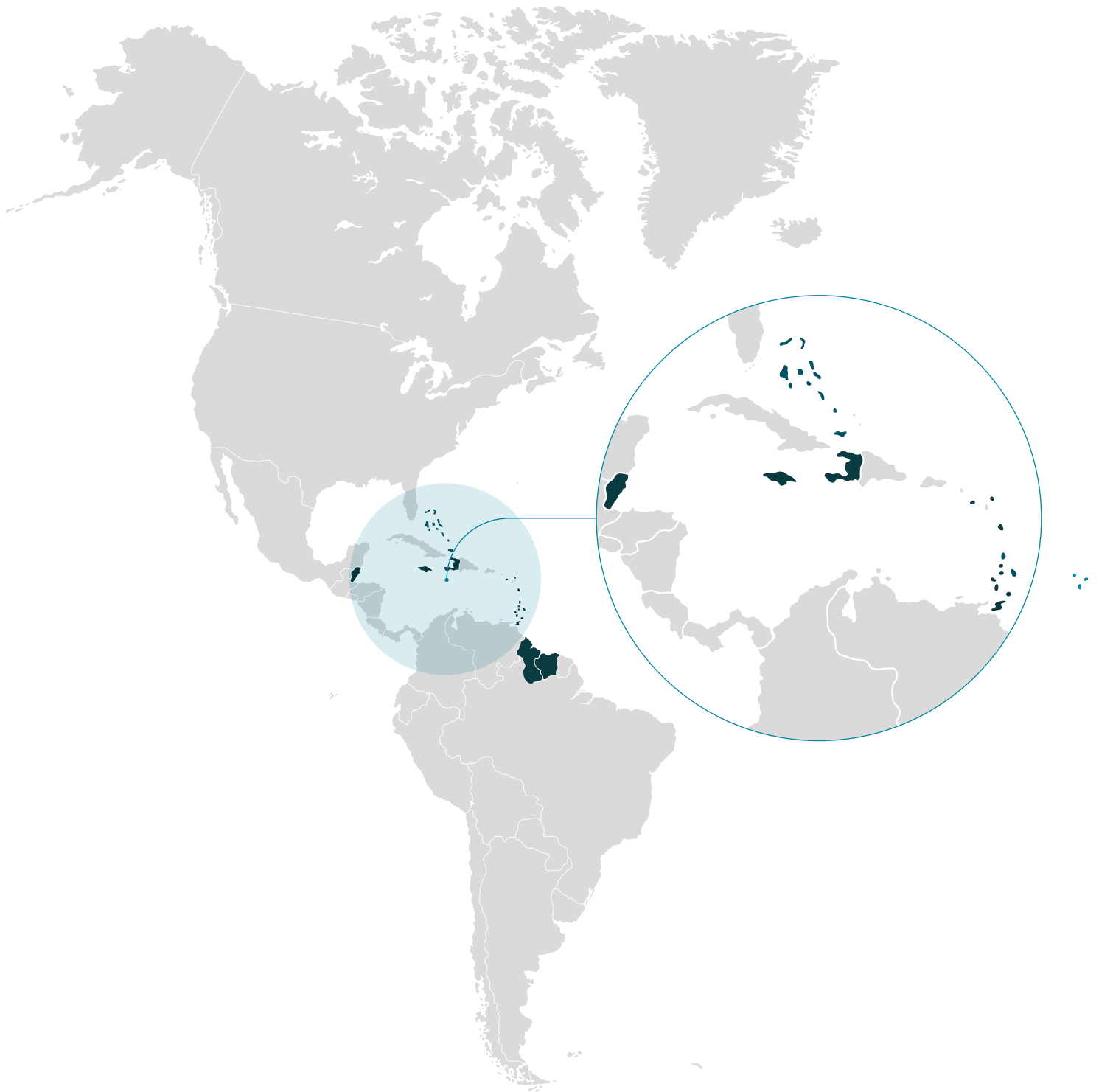
Bilateral SSC accounts for more than 70% of initiatives, but Regional SSC explains 23% of these; a remarkably high share and, in any case, higher than that of total South-South and Triangular Cooperation (10%).

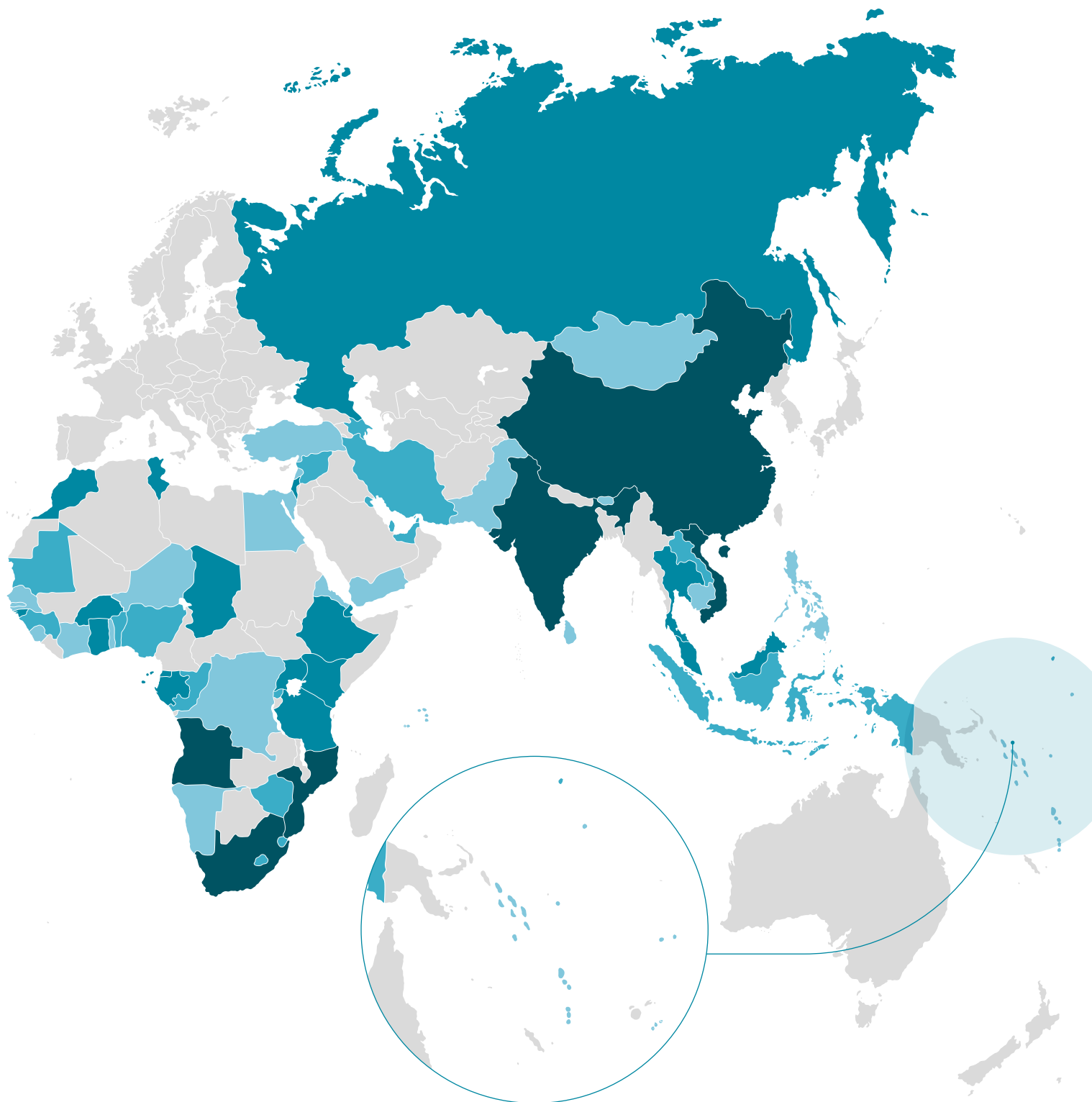
Graph 5.4 also confirms Bilateral SSC is the modality through which most exchanges with other developing regions were carried out, accounting for 8 out of 10 of the initiatives in the 2020-2021 period. Meanwhile, Triangular Cooperation had a more specific and complementary role in the association with the non-Ibero-American Caribbean, Africa and Asia, with a 6.4% share, a lower figure than that of Regional SSC (11%).

→ GRAPH 5.5

Participation of other regions' developing countries in South-South and Triangular Cooperation initiatives carried out with Ibero-American countries. 2020-2021

In units





Number of initiatives in which each country participated in 2020-2021, regardless of role and modality

- More than 15
- 6 to 15
- 3 to 5
- 2
- 1
- No initiatives registered

Source: SEGIB based on Agencies and Directorates-General for Cooperation

An analysis of all the aforementioned from a country perspective adds a new dimension to the efforts made. Indeed, Graph 5.5 shows, on a map, the distribution of the 328 South-South and Triangular Cooperation initiatives Ibero-America executed together with other developing regions during the 2020-2021 period. This collaboration involves (excluding Ibero-American countries) 83 countries throughout the world, a certainly remarkable figure in the context of the current crisis.

In fact, and paradoxically, it is the COVID-19 crisis itself and the response given by Ibero-American countries, especially by Cuba, that explains the above. Indeed, since

the beginning of the pandemic, this small Caribbean nation made its recognized expertise in health and also in disaster and emergency management available upon any request. Thus, and under different formulas of bilateral interventions (sending medical brigades, donating vaccines and treatments, or reorienting the action of healthcare professionals already active in the field), Cuba managed to support more than half of these 83 countries. Box 5.2 specifically details the solidarity of Cuba's SSC.

→ BOX 5.2

Cuba: a benchmark of solidarity in the global fight against COVID-19

In March 2020, only ten days after the World Health Organization (WHO) declared COVID-19 a pandemic, the first Henry Reeve Cuban medical brigade, which mission was to support the fight against this disease, arrived in Lombardy (Italy), one of the most affected regions at that time. Only a few days later, another contingent of Cuban doctors arrived to assist another European country, in this case, Andorra (Álvarez, 2020) (Guerra, 2020) (*Somos Iberoamérica*, 2020). This exercise of assistance and solidarity, paved the way for an innovative cooperation characterized by an unprecedented South-North pattern (Brown, 2021).

As representatives of WHO noted, by sending these brigades, Cuba responded to two of the many requests this Caribbean nation received. In fact, by the end of 2020, Cuba had mobilized a total of 3,800 healthcare professionals organized in 52 brigades to 39 countries and territories affected by the COVID-19 around the world (Guerra, 2020).

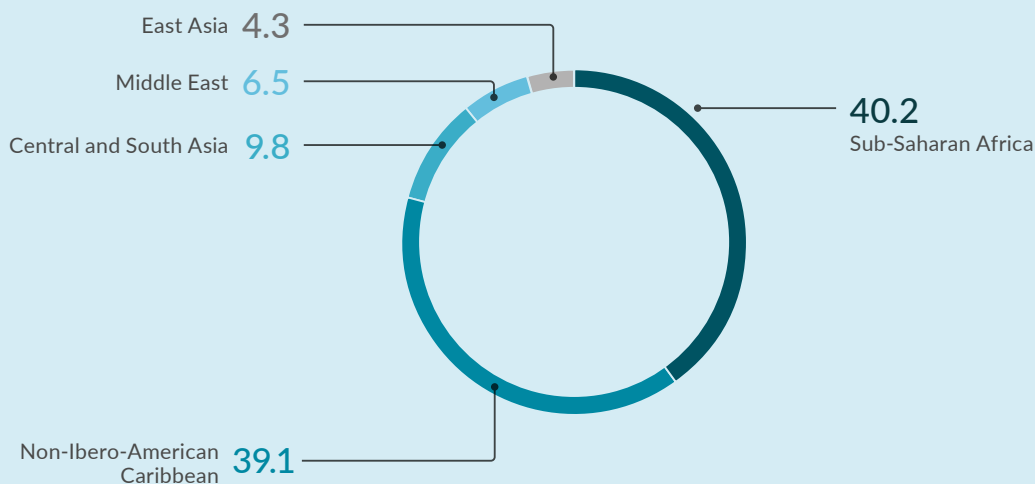
As data suggests, this small Caribbean nation of just 11 million people played a key role in the world's response to an extraordinary challenge. This was not random, as it is part of a trajectory that began in the 1960s - shortly after the

Revolution - when Cuba decided to commit to SSC, especially in the field of public health, by sending medical missions, becoming an international benchmark for development cooperation.

The above is confirmed by the information included in the Ibero-American Integrated Data System on South-South and Triangular Cooperation (SIDICSS by its Spanish acronym). According to these records, throughout 2020 and 2021, Cuba carried out 205 South-South and Triangular Cooperation initiatives in other regions' developing countries

Regions supported by Cuba to address the COVID-19, by SSC initiatives. 2020-2021

In percentage



(excluding Ibero-America). More than half (107) were related to the fight against COVID-19, involving 45 developing countries in these exchanges. Almost 90% were the result of Cuba's support to these other nations.

The first graph distributes the 92 initiatives implemented by Cuba throughout the world during the most severe moments of the COVID-19 crisis, according to the region to which the developing countries that received such support belong. As the graph portrays, almost 80% of these exchanges were carried out in sub-Saharan African and non-Ibero-American Caribbean countries. In this sense, it is important to especially mention the support received by Cape Verde, Equatorial Guinea, Mozambique and South Africa, as well as by Angola, Chad, Gabon, Ghana and Zimbabwe, to name a few of the nearly 20 countries that benefited from this aid in this region. In the Caribbean, Cuba's cooperation was destined to Antigua and Barbuda, Grenada, Jamaica, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, St. Lucia and Trinidad and Tobago, among others.

Another 10% of the initiatives promoted by Cuba to support the fight against COVID-19 aimed to support countries in Central and South Asia, such as Azerbaijan, Kyrgyzstan, India and Timor-Leste. The remaining 10% involved countries in the Middle East and in East Asia (United Arab Emirates, Kuwait and Qatar, together with China and Vietnam, respectively).

This cooperation was executed through initiatives that combined several elements: on the one hand, emergency aid and the donation of Cuban treatments and vaccines, especially designed for the fight against COVID-19; on the other hand, the exchange of experiences, for example, regarding the Cuban treatment protocol for patients; and, third, the medical assistance provided by Cuban experts in the field.

Two key aspects explain these support modalities: first, the role played by the Henry Reeve International Medical Brigade, specialized in disaster

management and severe epidemics, as well as by the many Cuban health professionals who were already in the field as part of other missions (the "Comprehensive Health Program" and "Operation Miracle", among others); and, second, the undeniable development and leadership of the biotechnology industry in Cuba, highly aimed to support the health system, which has enabled Cuba to be one of the few countries in the world - and the only country in Latin-America - capable of producing vaccines against COVID-19.

In fact, the Henry Reeve Brigade is made up of a highly trained group of 1,500 Cuban professionals who provide medical care in emergency situations. Promoted in 2005 to support the population affected by Hurricane Katrina in New Orleans (United States) - and although it was rejected (Guerra, 2020) - this brigade has been assisting emergencies around the world for almost two decades. Three important milestones should be highlighted among its most significant actions: the assistance provided to Pakistan after the earthquake that hit that country in 2005; the support to Haiti in 2010 in order to face the impact of the earthquake and the cholera epidemic that devastated this nation; and its undeniable contribution to the fight against Ebola in 2014, which severely affected numerous West African countries (Álvarez, 2020).

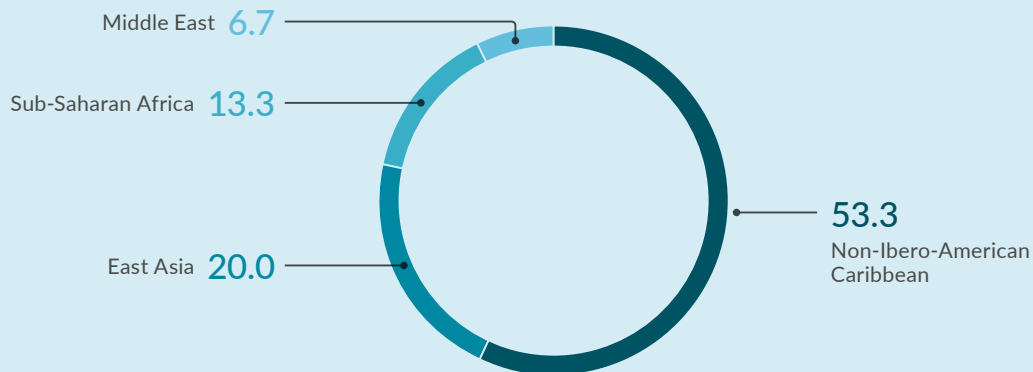
The work of the Henry Reeve Brigade and the contribution of Cuba's medical collaboration abroad has been widely recognized by WHO and various United Nations bodies - including the Secretary-General itself (Álvarez, 2020) - through awards and successive declarations. Its biotechnology industry has also been widely acknowledged, as suggested by the uninterrupted awards that, over more than 25 years, Cuban professionals in this industry have received from the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) (Yaffe, 2020).

This broad experience certainly explains how a country with limited material resources has achieved, after the outbreak of the pandemic

and in record time, two major biotechnological milestones: the development of specific medical treatments for the fight against COVID-19 (antivirals which use is recommended by WHO and the Johns Hopkins Medical Center and that are based on previous and successful experiences in the effective fight against dengue fever and meningitis); as well as the development of 2 (and other 3 underway) of the only 23 coronavirus vaccines that, worldwide and by the end of 2021, had started phase 3 clinical trials (Yaffe, 2020 and 2021). In fact, Cuba's great success is not only related to having achieved this, but also to having made this progress available for all the countries that requested its assistance (Yaffe, 2021).

Regions from which Cuba received donations to address COVID-19. 2020-2021

In percentage



Source: SEGIB based on Agencies and Directorates-General for Cooperation

The aforementioned scarcity of material resources - part of it explained by the COVID crisis itself, as well as by the consequences of the US blockade on the island since the 1960s - explains, on the other hand, the fact that Cuba also needed the solidarity of other peoples to fight against this pandemic.

In fact, and according information available in SIDICSS, in the 2020-2021 period, Cuba received 15 donations of medical supplies from more than 10 countries. As the second graph illustrates, its main partners were non-Ibero-American Caribbean

countries (more than half), as well as nations from East Asia (20%), sub-Saharan Africa (13.3%) and, to a less extent, the Middle East (6.7%). The role played by Vietnam and Zambia, as well as by Barbados, Belize, Guyana, Jamaica, St. Kitts and Nevis, St. Lucia and St. Vincent and the Grenadines, also stood out.

The material received mainly consisted of mechanical ventilators, masks, diagnostic kits, protective goggles, suits, gloves, reagents and other supplies necessary for the management of this disease (Álvarez, 2020). They were all aimed for the

Cuban population and for healthcare professionals who treated patients, both inside the island and/or on missions abroad, which were key in the global fight against COVID-19.

Source: SEGIB based on Agencies and Directorates-General for Cooperation, Álvarez (2020), Brown (2021), Guerra (2020), *Somos Iberoamérica* (2020) and Yaffe (2020 and 2021).

However, the same map suggests some differences in terms of countries' participation. In fact, in Graph 5.5, each country is associated with a color that increases its intensity as the number of exchanges in which it participates in the 2020-2021 period rises, according to the ranges detailed in the corresponding legend. As shown, more than 60 countries had specific interventions (participating in 2-3 initiatives in each case, up to a maximum of 5). In contrast, around 20 countries accounted for most exchanges. Consistent with what was previously described, the importance of the non-Ibero-American Caribbean (between 10 and 51 initiatives), sub-Saharan Africa (Mozambique, South Africa and Angola) and Asia (China, Vietnam and India) deserves a special mention.

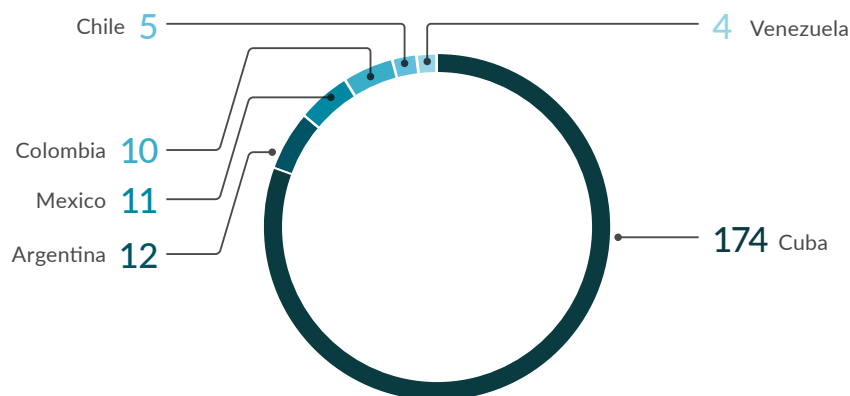
As it was explained, it should be noted that the above data refers to countries' participation but it does not consider modalities and roles. However, if the analysis adds these two variables, it is possible to confirm what the map reveals. At least that is suggested by the combined interpretation of this same map together with Graphs 5.6 and 5.7, which provide information on the main stakeholders that participated in bilateral and triangular exchanges between Ibero-America and other regions in the 2020-2021 period.

→ GRAPH 5.6

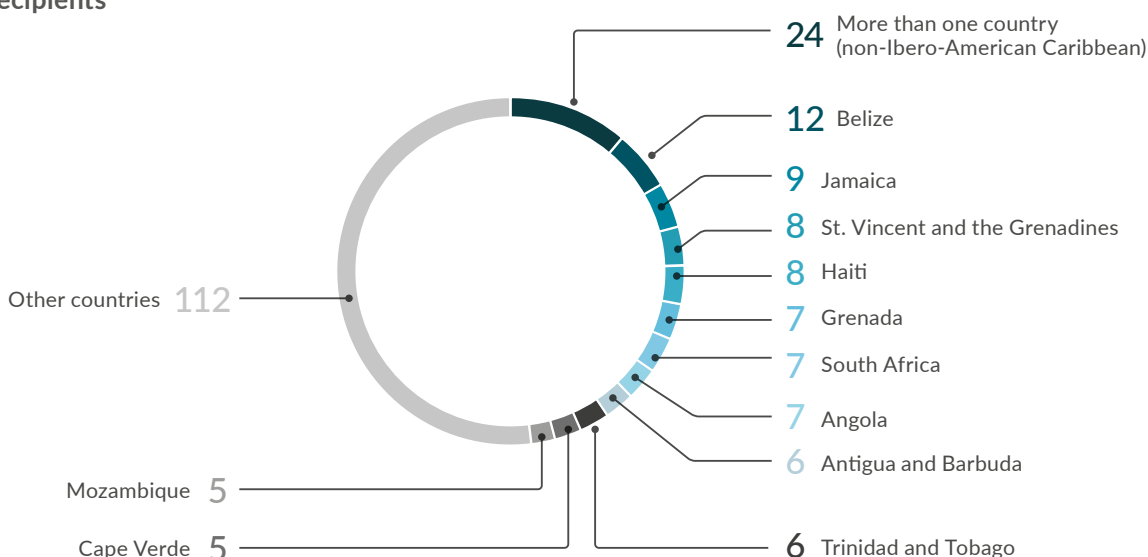
Distribution of Bilateral SSC initiatives exchanged between Ibero-America (as provider) and other regions' developing countries (as recipients), by country. 2020-2021

In units

A. Main providers



B. Main recipients



Source: SEGIB based on Agencies and Directorates-General for Cooperation

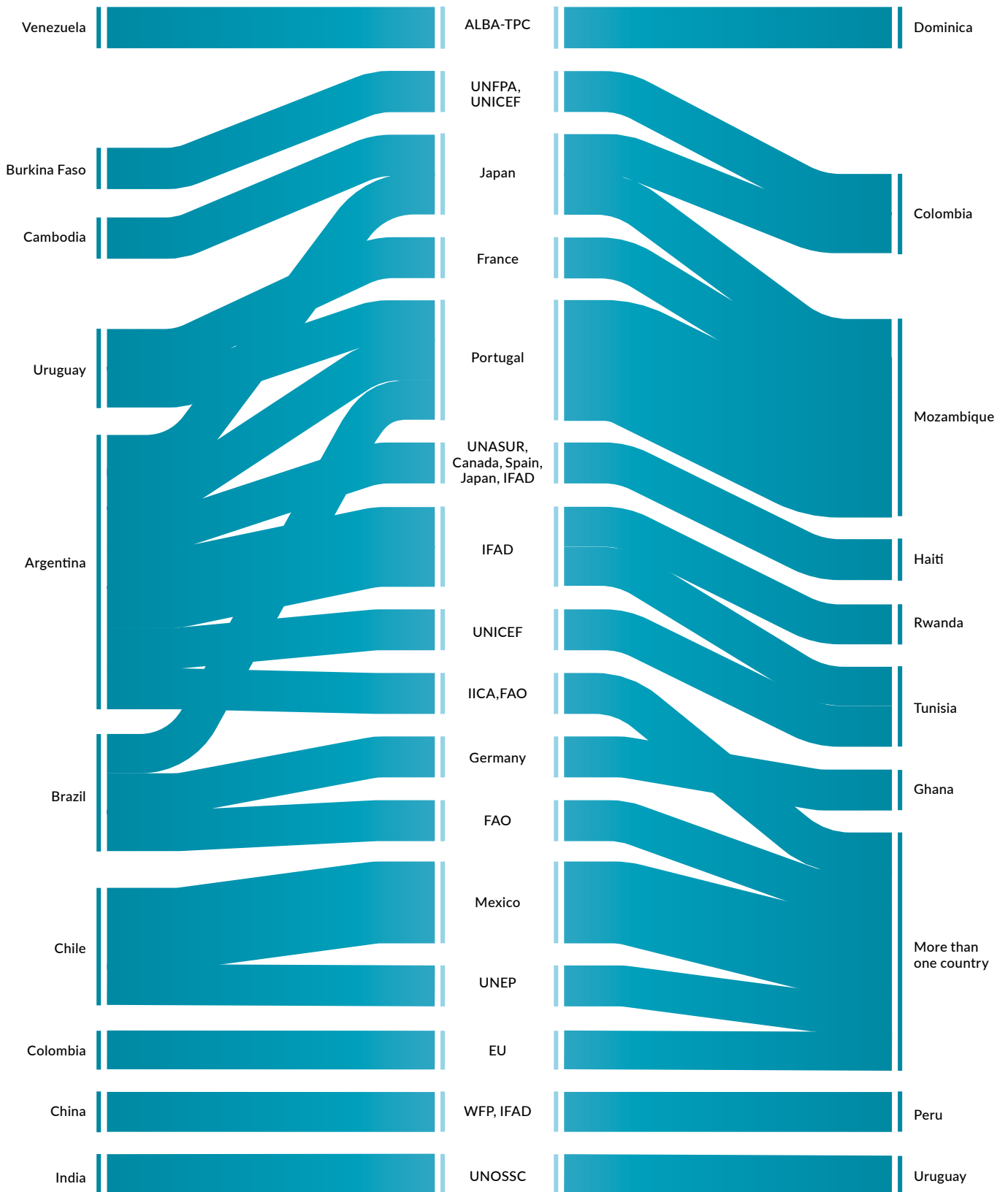
Indeed, Graph 5.6, which is specifically focused on the 216 Bilateral SSC initiatives in which Ibero-America participated as provider (80% of the total), confirms the dynamism of Caribbean nations (especially of Belize and Jamaica, also very active in Regional SSC, as it was already mentioned), as well as of 4 sub-Saharan African countries (Mozambique, South Africa, Angola and Cape Verde). However, the cases in which "more than one country" (usually also from the non-Ibero-American Caribbean) simultaneously coincide in the exercise of the recipient role (in around 10% of the occasions) stands out due to their greater frequency, and the huge dispersion (112 initiatives involving more than 60 countries) is ratified.

— More than half of the 205 initiatives that Cuba carried out together with 45 developing countries worldwide aimed to fight the COVID-19 crisis

→ GRAPH 5.7

Distribution of Triangular Cooperation initiatives exchanged between Ibero-America and other regions, by participants and roles. 2020-2021

In units



Source: SEGIB based on Agencies and Directorates-General for Cooperation

On the other hand, the flow chart in Graph 5.7 shows the different stakeholders that were involved in the 21 Triangular Cooperation initiatives carried out between Ibero-America and other developing regions during the 2020-2021 period. Specifically, the label “more than one country” stands out in the right flow (associated with recipients), which is common in this modality. Additionally, the importance of African countries such as Mozambique (5 initiatives) and, more occasionally, Tunisia, Ghana and Rwanda, in addition to Dominica and Haiti in the non-Ibero-American Caribbean, is also worthy of mention. Meanwhile, Cambodia, China and India; and Burkina Faso, are the leading providers in Asia and in Africa, respectively.

The various multilateral organizations involved as second providers also deserve a special reference, especially those that are part of the UN System and/or those which have sectoral mandates (IFAD, IICA and FAO, among many others). Spain and Portugal also participated, together with other Ibero-American partners, in TC with Haiti and Mozambique.

Finally, Ibero-American countries' role should also be highlighted. In this regard, the combined analysis of Graphs 5.6 and 5.7 once again confirms the importance of Cuba, which acted as provider in 80% of the Bilateral SSC initiatives in which the region participated in this role. Argentina, Mexico, Colombia, Chile and Venezuela also stand out in both bilateral and triangular exchanges. The analysis is completed by Brazil, Peru and Uruguay, which are involved in several Triangular Cooperation initiatives, combining the roles of first provider and recipient.

5.4 Sectoral analysis and the alignment with the SDGs in the context of the COVID-19 crisis

As it has been mentioned throughout this Report and in this chapter in particular, the response to the COVID-19 crisis has been decisive to understand part of South-South and Triangular Cooperation's dynamic over the last two years and, especially, of the cooperation Ibero-America has carried out together with other regions' developing countries. In this sense, a review of the type of capacities that were strengthened during the worst moments of the pandemic only reaffirms this pattern.

Indeed, Graph 5.8, which distributes the 328 initiatives of the 2020-2021 period according to the area of action and the activity sector they addressed, shows that two thirds of South-South and Triangular Cooperation initiatives carried out with other developing regions mainly aimed at strengthening Social capacities. Its relative importance is explained by *Health*, a sector that accounts for 85% of the actions, projects and programs implemented in the Social area and for almost 60% of the total.

Two thirds of South-South and Triangular Cooperation carried out with other regions' developing countries focused on strengthening capacities in the social area

As it was already stated, this cooperation is closely linked to SSC promoted by Cuba to support countries around the world in the fight against COVID-19, but also to that carried out by Chile, Venezuela and Colombia, as suggested, for example, by the international courses for third countries dedicated to the management of acute respiratory failure or the transfer of telemedicine-related capacities. Initiatives to address other health issues that are important for the region also continued (the treatment of diabetes or the common flu, AIDS relief, ophthalmological surgeries for low-income people or permanent training of professionals).



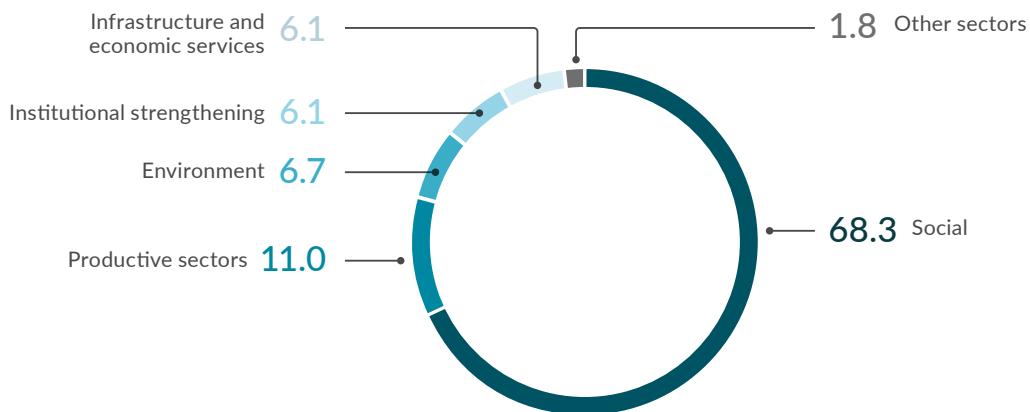
Photo: Improvements in the management of water resources and the transfer of technology for their efficient use can contribute to mitigating the effects of climate change on agriculture. Bilateral SSC project between Mexico and Chile. Image bank on South-South and Triangular Cooperation in Ibero-America. SEGIB-PIFCSS. 2021.

→ GRAPH 5.8

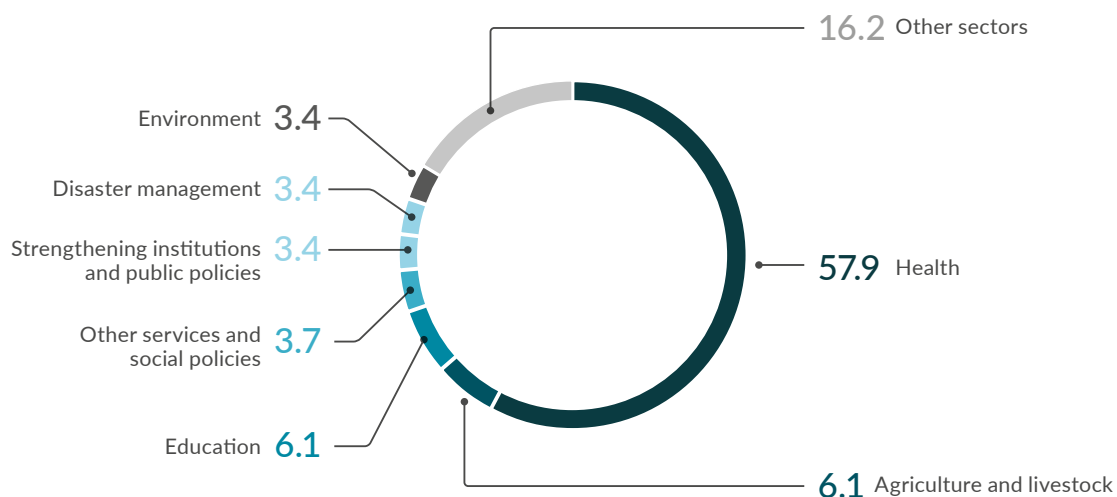
Distribution of South-South and Triangular Cooperation initiatives exchanged between Ibero-America and other regions' developing countries, by areas of action and main activity sectors. 2020-2021

In percentage

A. Areas of action



B. Activity sectors



Source: SEGIB based on Agencies and Directorates-General for Cooperation

The rest of the exchanges in the Social area mainly focused on *Education* (second sector in relative importance together with *Agriculture and livestock*, with 20 initiatives in each case, corresponding to 6.1% of the total) and on *Other services and social policies* (3.7%). An important part of these was implemented to encourage a process of continuous teacher training (often through various scholarship programs), as well as to support literacy and foster inclusive education. Others were dedicated to strengthen public policies for child protection and development (school canteens and universal child allowance models); to improve access to decent housing; as well as to promote sports as an instrument for social inclusion.

On the other hand, and according to the same Graph, the Productive sectors area ranked second in terms of relative importance (36 initiatives, corresponding to 11% of the total), although at a remarkable distance from the Social area. In this case, the most significant sector was *Agriculture and livestock*, which, as it was already mentioned, was the second most important in South-South and Triangular Cooperation with other regions, together with *Education* and *Health*.

The topics specifically addressed in the *Agriculture and livestock* sector were quite diverse although they had some common aspects. In this sense, several interventions were dedicated to livestock farming (technification, yield) and, part of these, in particular, to the production of milk and dairy products. Initiatives also shared the purpose of focusing on traditional products (coffee, wheat and cashew nuts), as well as on small-scale producers; on exchanging experiences to strengthen value chains; or on

working to promote greater sustainability. Case 5.1, which describes a triangular project in cashew nut production involving Brazil and Ghana, supported by Germany, is precisely an example of the above.

The second area in terms of relative importance was Productive sectors (36 initiatives)

→ CASE 5.1

Germany and Brazil join efforts to improve cashew nut production in Ghana



Cashew nuts are becoming increasingly popular around the world. In 2019-2020, they accounted for 17% of tree nut production and ranked third after almonds and walnuts (UNCTAD, 2021). Cashew (also known as cashew nut) is a tropical evergreen tree that originated in North-eastern Brazil and it has a great capacity to adapt to low fertility soils, high temperatures and water stress (EMBRAPA, 2016). It is currently produced in 46 countries in Africa, Asia and Latin-America and the Caribbean (UNCTAD, 2021).

The main product of this tree is the kernel inside the seed, but other by-products are also extracted from other parts (cashew shell, pseudofruit, leaves, etc.). The commercialization of cashew by-products, which are often discarded as agricultural waste, can help diversify revenue sources and generate more value (UNCTAD, 2021).

Africa produced more than half of the global raw cashew nut output in the 2014-2018 period (UNCTAD, 2021). However, its production chain faces several challenges such as limited access to information, technology and financing options (UNOSSC/UNDP, 2022).

Brazil and Ghana are two of the major producers - in 2014-2018 Brazil was the world's tenth largest producer and Ghana the third largest exporter of raw cashew nuts (UNCTAD, 2021) - and they both have similar natural production conditions. This has led to the implementation of a Triangular Cooperation project between these two countries and Germany, dedicated to *Improving cashew planting material and by-product processing technologies in Ghana*.

Its objective was to improve the efficiency and quality of cashew production and processing by developing disease-tolerant, high-yielding varieties adapted to local conditions and by introducing new processing technologies. This way, the initiative aimed to contribute to the reduction of poverty among families, food security, climate change mitigation and the empowerment of rural women.

As a result of the project, about 20 experts and 200 farmers benefited from training sessions, 7 hectares of plant nurseries were established and more than 400,000 cashew seedlings were distributed in Ghana. The adaptation of 5 Brazilian cashew

varieties to local conditions in Ghana - high-yielding and disease-tolerant - and the improvement of fruit processing techniques, were among this project's main outcomes (UNOSSC/UNDP, 2022).

The initiative was implemented between 2017 and 2020 and it was carried out by the Brazilian Agricultural Research Corporation (EMBRAPA by its Portuguese acronym) and the Ministry of Food and Agriculture of Ghana (MOFA), as recipient. It was supported by the Brazilian and German international cooperation agencies (ABC and GIZ, respectively).

Source: SEGIB based on Agencies and Directorates-General for Cooperation, EMBRAPA (2016), UNOSSC/UNDP (2022) and UNCTAD (2021).

As for the rest of the productive activities, cooperation dedicated to *Tourism and Industry*, two sectors that aggregately explain more than 10 initiatives, stood out. In this sense, the former is undoubtedly a source of income for many countries and this support has contributed to the increasing integration of this activity into their national development strategies. For this reason, most of the exchanges that involve Ibero-America and other regions share the purpose of strengthening the tourism offer, taking advantage of a wide range of resources: culture, health and wellness, historical memory and, of course, nature itself, to name a few. In fact, the initiatives promoted tend to address two of the major challenges of the sector: to develop activities while guaranteeing sustainability; and to generate benefits for

the communities involved while ensuring the minimum environmental and socio-cultural impact. Case 5.2, focused on a bilateral exchange between Peru and Thailand, describes an example that combines several of these elements.

→ CASE 5.2

Community-based tourism: the experience of Peru and Thailand



Peru and Thailand are carrying out a Bilateral SSC project on sustainable tourism development with community participation, seeking to strengthen capacities and promote innovation in the management of this sector through the exchange of experiences. This initiative, which has already implemented several phases, focuses on tourism in rural areas and tackles aspects such as the strengthening of the tourism offer, business coordination, the experience of micro-enterprises and gastronomy (CENFOTUR, 2022).

Thus, for example, in mid-2022, delegates from the Tourism Training Center of Peru (CENFOTUR by its Spanish acronym) - through its Peruvian and International Gastronomy

Studies Program - and the Ministry of Foreign Trade and Tourism of Peru, participated in an activity in Thailand (in Bangkok, Phuket, Chiang Mai and other zones) through which, among other things, they shared the main features of Peruvian gastronomy and learned about the fusion of Thai cuisine with different culinary traditions (CENFOTUR, 2022; Embassy of Peru in Thailand, 2022).

Peru and Thailand have been exchanging their knowledge, best practices and experiences for more than 15 years and this project is part of the 4th Thailand-Peru Development Cooperation Program (2021-2023), coordinated by the Peruvian Agency for International Cooperation (APCI by its Spanish acronym) and the Thailand

International Cooperation Agency (TICA). The Program also includes cooperation initiatives in alternative development programs to prevent the production of illicit crops; space and satellite technologies; public health and the fight against the COVID-19 pandemic; as well as human resources training (Embassy of Peru in Thailand, 2020).

Source: SEGIB based on Agencies and Directorates-General for Cooperation and websites of the Embassy of Peru in Thailand and CENFOTUR.

As for *Industry*, South-South and Triangular Cooperation executed together with other developing regions focused on the transformation of commodities, but also on all aspects related to the strengthening of innovation and industrial property systems. Other initiatives in the Productive sectors area were dedicated, in a more specific way, to support *Construction, Transportation and storage* and *Fisheries*.

On the other hand, the remaining 20% of the 328 South-South and Triangular Cooperation initiatives that in the 2020-2021 period involved developing countries in Ibero-America and other regions, addressed (in very similar proportions, with 20 exchanges in each case) purposes associated with the preservation of the Environment, Institutional strengthening and the generation of Infrastructure and economic services. The contribution to Other areas was rather occasional, although 2 initiatives to promote *Gender* equality stood out.

Indeed, up to 22 initiatives have been promoted to provide countries with innovative environmental and *Disaster management* instruments and best practices. This includes, first, topics related to the management of different types of waste (solid, plastic, or Persistent Organic Pollutants - POP -, among others) and to the protection, preservation and recovery of biodiversity,

as well as of marine and terrestrial ecosystems. Other interventions focused on the different phases of disaster management (earthquakes, droughts or floods, to name a few), supporting the exchange of experiences for prevention (safe urban development, resilient construction and information and early warning systems), as well as to reinforce emergency aid and subsequent reconstruction. This was mainly Regional SSC which involved developing countries in the non-Ibero-American Caribbean and in Central and Mesoamerica.

— **Tourism is certainly a source of income for many countries; this has contributed to the increasing integration of this activity into their national development strategies**

Meanwhile, other 20 initiatives exchanged in the 2020-2021 period between Ibero-America and other regions' developing countries resulted from a combination of interventions aimed at *Strengthening institutions and public policies*, promoting *Legal and judicial development and Human Rights*, and supporting *Peace, public and national security and defense*.

The topics that were addressed were diverse, with special emphasis on those that focused on providing States with better management tools, such as the exchange of best practices on electronic transactions, models of proximity and transparency, as well as the systematization and generation of data and information. The latter are key to guide governments in the appropriate decision making process to design, implement and even evaluate any public policy. A remarkable example of this is reviewed in Case 5.3, a Triangular initiative through which Chile and Mexico share their experience with non-Ibero-American Caribbean countries in their respective geospatial information platforms.

In the framework of this same area (Institutional strengthening) it is important to also make reference to experiences in forensic anthropology, the protection of minors through the elimination of the worst forms of child labor, as well as to those dedicated to support national institutions specifically dedicated to the promotion and defense of Human Rights. In this regard, another interesting initiative is described in Case 5.4, through which Colombia and Cambodia, supported by Japan, share their experience in demining in post-conflict stages.

→ CASE 5.3

Geospatial information platforms as an input for decision making



Since 2018, the Mexico-Chile Mixed Fund has been financing the project *Strengthening geospatial information platforms*, which also benefits 14 non-Ibero-American Caribbean countries. The initiative is led by the Ministry of National Assets of Chile and the National Institute of Statistics and Geography (INEGI by its Spanish acronym) of Mexico and it aims to strengthen geospatial data infrastructures for the use of territorial information in decision making. Specifically, this involves the strengthening of two instruments (GEONODO of Chile and Mx-SIG of Mexico) and transferring the platforms,

through a pilot experience, to some countries in Latin-America and the Caribbean (IDE Chile, 2019).

GEONODO was launched in 2010 - and improved in subsequent versions - by the Executive Secretariat of the National System for the Coordination of Territorial Information of Chile (SNIT by its Spanish acronym) as a means to create, publish, share, analyze and use territorial information, especially aimed at public institutions (IDE Chile, 2022). The SNIT leads Chile's Geospatial Data Infrastructure (SDI by its Spanish acronym), a network of public institutions that collaboratively work to

make up-to-date and reliable geospatial information available to the community (Ministry of National Assets, 2022).

Mx-SIG, in turn, is an open source software platform provided by INEGI to generate online geographic information systems. Its capacity to easily develop visualization tools and its accessibility, scalability and interoperability are among its main advantages.

→ CASE 5.4

Colombia strengthens its capacities for demining based on the experience of Cambodia and Japan



Colombia is the second country in the world after Afghanistan in number of victims of antipersonnel mines and explosive remnants of war (National Center of Historical Memory and *Prologar* Foundation, 2017). This problem has not had much visibility, either because the number of victims is small compared to that of other events associated with armed conflict, or because they are usually isolated cases far from urban centers (National Center of Historical Memory and *Prologar* Foundation, 2017). However, this affects the daily lives of many people, such as children and adolescents, specifically in rural areas.

Physical injuries caused by these explosives "profoundly modify the work and social life of the victims and their families" (National Center of Historical Memory and *Prologar* Foundation, 2017). In addition, their presence triggers "processes of confinement, school drop out, forced displacement and changes

in rural activities" (National Center of Historical Memory and *Prologar* Foundation, 2017).

As of November 2022, Colombia had registered 12,273 victims of antipersonnel mines and unexploded ordnance, 19% of which died as a result of the accident. Sixty percent of the victims were members of the security forces. Fortunately, in the last decade, the annual number of victims has been falling (107 in 2022) (Presidency of the Republic of Colombia, 2022).

Since 2016, Colombia has been strengthening its capacities in integrated mine action based on the experience of the Cambodian Mine Action Center (CMAC), through a Triangular Cooperation project supported by the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA). In this context, 7 courses and 2 seminars were held for people working in this area, such as members of the military forces and officials from the Office

of the High Commissioner for Peace and the Ministry of National Defense of Colombia. Topics such as best practices in demining techniques, quality management, information management and senior management for the coordination of interventions are addressed.

This initiative contributes to strengthening peace in Colombia and to building social fabric in the post-conflict stage. Cambodia's experience is of great importance "not only in terms of technology, but also regarding the impact it can have on poverty reduction and on economic growth in the country" (ApcColombia, n/d). It also contributes to comply with the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on Their Destruction.

Source: SEGIB based on Agencies and Directorates-General for Cooperation, National Center of Historical Memory and *Prologar* Foundation (2017) and websites of the Presidency of the Republic of Colombia and ApcColombia.

The last third group of initiatives (another 20) supported the generation of Infrastructure and economic services. Among these, it is important to highlight those that focused on three main lines of action: the development of *Enterprises*; the efficient and sustainable use of *Energy*; and the promotion of *Science and technology* with results applied to the economy.

Specifically, several South-South and Triangular Cooperation interventions aimed to strengthen national productive fabrics, with special emphasis on entrepreneurship and micro, small and medium-sized enterprises. Other exchanges were implemented to provide these economic agents with greater technical and productive capacities, as well as - and partly in line with the context of COVID-19 pandemic - to exchange experiences that will result in a greater digitalization of the economy, for example, through business and marketing models based on online tools.

In addition, other initiatives exchanged by Ibero-America with other regions' developing countries addressed issues related to energy infrastructure and services. In this framework, it is possible to identify South-South and Triangular Cooperation dedicated to guaranteeing electrical interconnection between sub-regions (in Central-America and the Caribbean) and to develop planning instruments that promote more efficient and environmentally friendly energy use, also including plans to evaluate the risk that climate change generates on the supply and access to this basic good. This analysis would be completed by cooperation aimed at strengthening systems and institutions that support science, technology and innovation.

On the other hand, the profile of the capacities that were strengthened through South-South and Triangular Cooperation promoted by Ibero-American countries together with those of other developing regions during the 2020-2021 period can be analyzed in terms of their alignment with the 2030 Agenda.

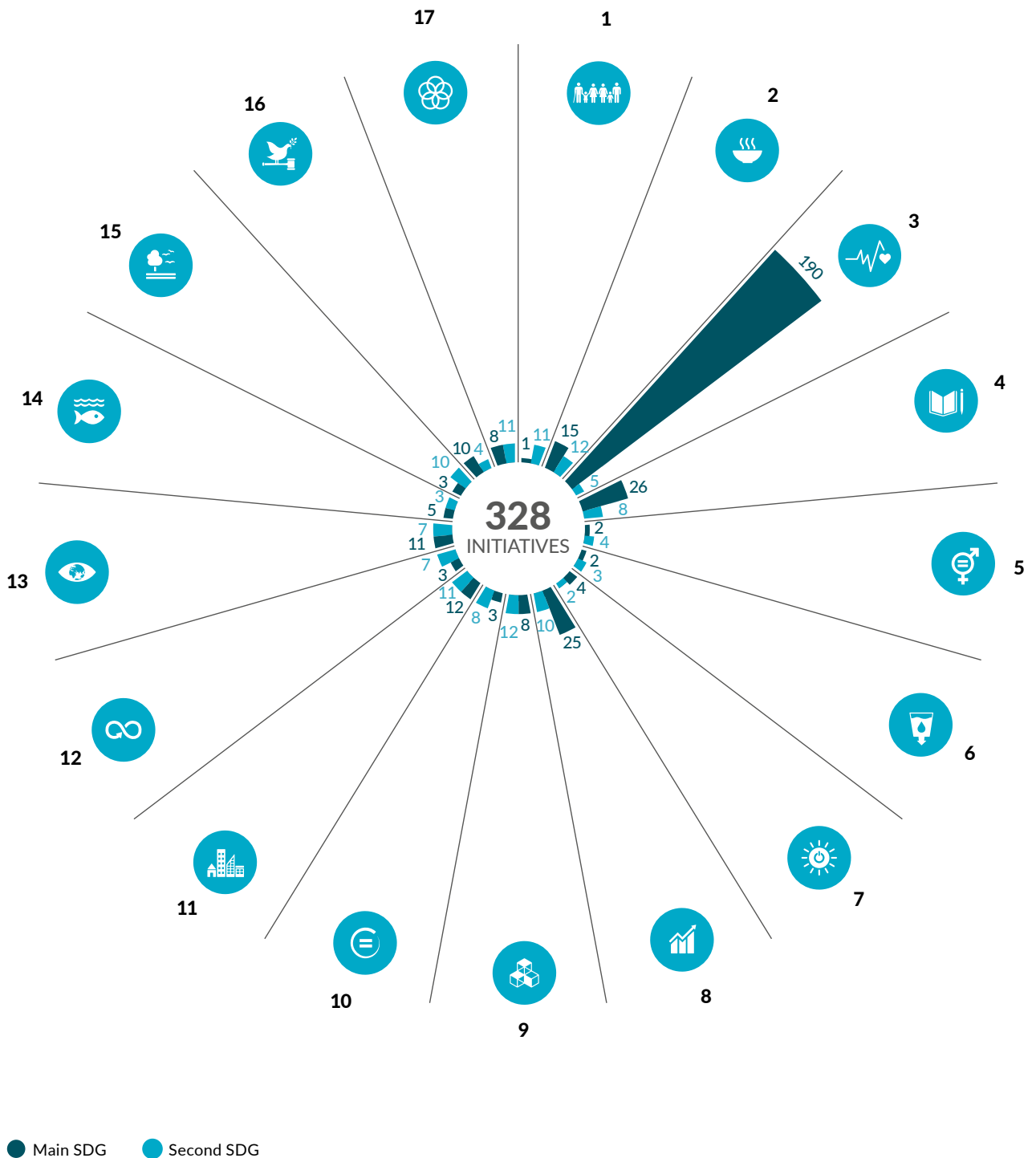
Indeed, Graph 5.9 distributes the 328 initiatives implemented in those years according to the main and second SDG with which they were potentially aligned.

It should be recalled that 100% of the initiatives are associated with a main SDG, but only some (in this case, 46.6%) address up to two second SDGs.

→ GRAPH 5.9

Distribution of South-South and Triangular Cooperation initiatives exchanged between Ibero-America and other regions' developing countries, by their alignment with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). 2020-2021

In units



Consistent with the above and, as expected, almost 200 initiatives - corresponding to nearly 6 out of 10 - aimed to achieve SDG 3 (Good health and well-being). These were followed, at a remarkable distance, by around 25 that addressed SDG 4 (Quality education) and SDG 8 (Decent work and economic growth), respectively.

Meanwhile, around 50 initiatives were aligned with 4 Development Goals of very different dimensions, in line with the 5Ps defined by the United Nations System¹: SDG2 (Zero hunger), focused on People; SDG 11 (Sustainable cities and communities), associated with Prosperity; SDG 13 (Climate action), which makes emphasis on the Planet; and SDG 16 (Peace, justice and strong institutions), related to Peace. The remaining exchanges were dispersed in up to 10 different SDGs, SDG 9 (Industry, innovation and infrastructure) and SDG 17 (Partnerships for the goals) standing out with 8 initiatives each.

As usual, some Sustainable Development Goals gain importance when they are identified as second SDGs. This often occurs with Objectives that have a more cross-cutting nature and/or which affect a specific population group. In this sense and as Graph 5.9 shows, this was the case of SDG 15 (Life on land) and SDG 1 (No poverty).

Finally, some of the Goals tend to be frequently identified as main and as second SDGs. This was very common, for example in the case of SDG 10, which is usually identified as second SDG in initiatives that are mainly associated with SDG 3 (Good health and well-being) and SDG 4 (Quality education), due to the impacts these interventions have in terms of closing gaps and reducing inequality. Another recurrent association - generally connected to South-South and Triangular Cooperation initiatives that focus on small-scale producers and/or on family farming - is related to SDG 2 (Zero hunger) and SDG 8 (Decent work and economic growth), as main and second SDGs respectively, and to their alignment with People and Prosperity.



Photo: Experts from different institutions in Colombia and Cambodia share experiences in integrated mine action, supported by the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA). Photo of the last course held in the Asian country. Image credit: JICA. 2022.

¹ As it was detailed in previous chapters, according to the United Nations, the 17 SDGs can be categorized into the 5Ps to better assess them: Planet (SDG 6, 12, 13, 14 and 15), People (SDG 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5), Prosperity (SDG 7, 8, 9, 10 and 11), Peace (SDG 16) and Partnerships (SDG 17).



Photo: The Bilateral SSC project *Digital design and manufacturing for the development of vulnerable populations in Paraguay and Uruguay* strengthens human and territorial capacities in education centers located in vulnerable communities. Image bank on South-South and Triangular Cooperation in Ibero-America. SEGIB-PIFCSS. 2021.

Methodological note

This section details the methodological considerations for the analysis of Ibero-American countries' SSC in 2020 and/or 2021, in each of the modalities recognized in this space, as well as for the final factsheets that summarize and combine each country's most important information

Cooperation Modalities

Bilateral South-South Cooperation

Cooperation modality in which two developing countries exchange resources or experiences. This exchange is exempt from conditionality and dialogue is developed on an equal footing. Costs are shared, although not necessarily evenly. Countries share the so-called roles of provider (the one that contributes with the main financial, technical and human resources) and recipient. Sometimes, all participating countries simultaneously act as providers and recipients, role which is referred as *Both*.

Triangular Cooperation

South-South Cooperation modality in which a group of stakeholders participate, all of which may provide various types of contributions (technical, financial or other), sharing the exercise of three roles: the so-called first provider and recipient role (one or two developing countries, in each case), and the second provider role (developing country, developed country, regional or multilateral organization, or any association among these). The distinguishing feature is determined by the role of the first provider, which acts as the main party responsible for capacity strengthening.

Regional South-South Cooperation

South-South Cooperation modality aimed at the development and/or integration of a region, considering participating countries (a minimum of three developing countries) share and agree on that objective. The regional nature of this cooperation is determined by a formal institutional mechanism. Its implementation is based on the execution of programs and projects.

Type of initiatives

Program

Group of projects aimed at a same objective. It occasionally implies - additionally and simultaneously - several recipients. It is only applicable to Regional SSC.

Project

Group of interrelated actions aimed to achieve a common objective in the framework of one or more sectors and/or topics. It has the following characteristics: a defined execution period; a budget; expected results; and follow-up and evaluation mechanisms. It is approved within a cooperation framework (bilateral meeting, interinstitutional agreement, general cooperation agreements, or similar) and it is applicable to all cooperation modalities.

Action

It is executed only once through technical assistance, internships, joint research, diagnoses missions, seminars, among others. It is only applicable to Bilateral SSC and TC.

Sectoral classification

A sectoral classification has been agreed within the Ibero-American space for the analysis of South-South and Triangular Cooperation. As a result of this effort, 30 activity sectors were defined and grouped in 7 areas of action. The table below describes each sector and arranges them according to their association with each of the areas. Specifically:

- a) Sectors such as *Education, Health, Population and reproductive health, Water supply and sanitation and Other services and social policies*, refer to the strengthening and improvement of Social areas, and they are grouped in this category.
- b) On the other hand, *Extractive, Agriculture and livestock, Forestry, Fisheries, Construction, Industry, Tourism, and Trade*, are dedicated to the strengthening of Productive sectors. *Energy, Transportation and storage, Communications, Science and technology, Banking and finance, Employment and Enterprises*, complement the support to national economies from more operative perspectives and are all grouped in the Infrastructure and economic services area.
- c) Meanwhile, sectors such as *Strengthening institutions and public policies, Management of public finances, Legal and judicial development and Human Rights and Political participation and civil society*, are considered to be destined to Institutional strengthening, as well as *Peace, public and national security and defense*.
- d) Additionally, two sectors are associated with Environment issues: the first includes all matters relative to the preservation and care of the *Environment*; and the second one focuses on all interventions relative to *Disaster management* considering, in this case, any of the phases they affect (prevention, preparation, mitigation, emergency assistance, rehabilitation and reconstruction).
- e) Finally, given their particular characteristics and difficult categorization, sectors such as *Culture, Gender, and Other* (dedicated to alternative development models), are treated differently and grouped in Other areas of action.

Activity sectors recognized in the Ibero-American space, by area of action

Area of action	Activity sector	Description
SOCIAL	Education	Strengthening Education at all levels, from basic to university, as well as professional training. It covers educational plans and policies, curricular programs, construction and renovation of schools and other related infrastructures, training and education of teachers and other professionals in the sector, among others.
	Health	Strengthening general and basic health through actions related to health policy, medical services, basic health care, medical research, fight against communicable and non-communicable diseases, development, quality and monitoring of medicines and vaccines, post-reproductive health, basic nutrition, sanitary infrastructure, health education, and training of health officials, among others.
	Population and reproductive health	Programs and policies on population, migration and migrants, reproductive health care, family planning, STD prevention, specific training, among others.
	Water supply and sanitation	Policy and management of water resources and waste, access to water, supply and treatment, sanitation, sewage, development of river basins and specific training, among others.
	Other services and social policies	Strengthening social services and policies in general, housing policy, policies dedicated to non-discrimination, social care and social inclusion of the most vulnerable groups, especially people with disabilities, indigenous people, Afro-descendants, children, young people and older adults, just to mention some.
ECONOMIC Infrastructure and economic services	Energy	Strengthening policies, infrastructure, services, research and institutions involved in energy generation and supply, from both renewable and non-renewable sources, as well those related to these resources' sustainability (gas and hydrocarbons, water, sun, wind and biofuels, among others).
	Transportation and storage	Strengthening policies, infrastructures, services, research and institutions involved in transport and storage policy, as well as in the improvement and sustainability of transport in general or of any means of transport (road, rail, maritime, river and air).
	Communications	Support to policies, infrastructure, services, research and institutions involved in communication, by any means and formats (telecommunications, radio, television, press, and information and communication technology, among others).
	Science and technology	Development of policies, infrastructure, services, research and institutions which promote Science and Technology that produces results that have general application (non-sectoral) in the economy. It also includes all matters related to the resulting knowledge transfer, to the strengthening of the scientific system and to enhance socialization and universal access to technology, among others.
	Banking and finance	Support to improve companies' financial resources management, organizations and small-scale producers, preferably when this strengthens the local economy. It includes training and education in financial services, development and implementation of microcredit programs, as well as support to banks when their activity is connected with these aims.
	Employment	Support to policies, infrastructure, services, research and institutions that facilitate and promote creation and access to employment, as well as more specific professional training and education actions that contribute to that purpose.
	Enterprises	Support to policies, infrastructure, services, research and institutions that promote companies, especially micro, small and medium-sized enterprises, as well as the strengthening of competitiveness processes.

ECONOMIC Productive sectors	Extractive	Strengthening exploration and extraction of mineral and energy resources (coal, oil, gas), as well as waste treatment, especially through mining legislation and mine planning and management instruments.
	Agriculture and livestock	Policy development and support to institutions involved in agriculture and livestock. It includes all matters relative to land use, arable land, seed management, land reform, food sovereignty, plant and animal health, fostering family farming and support to agriculture cooperatives, just to mention some.
	Forestry	Policy development and support to institutions involved in forestry and forest management, as well as matters related to the commercial use of wood.
	Fisheries	Policy development and support to institutions involved in aquaculture and fisheries. It includes support to small-scale fisheries production, plant health, and nutritional and food security, among others.
	Construction	Policy development and support to the construction and infrastructure sector.
	Industry	Policy development and support to institutions involved in the promotion of industry in general and by sectors. It includes the strengthening of all the phases of the transformation process, from processing to final distribution.
	Tourism	Policy development and support to institutions involved in the tourism sector.
	Trade	Policy development and support to institutions which foster trade and the final distribution of products at a local, national and international level. It also includes regional and multilateral trade agreements and negotiations.
	INSTITUTIONAL STRENGTHENING	Strengthening institutions and public policies
Management of public finances		Budget and public expenditure management, revenue management (especially for taxes systems), and support to the improvement of financial management systems, fiscal policies, public audits, public debt, control and management of public companies, measuring their performance, among others.
Legal and judicial development and Human Rights		Strengthening legal frameworks, constitutions, laws and regulations, as well as justice institutions, systems and procedures and practices (traditional, indigenous, etc.) out of the formal legal system; and support to the defense and extension of human rights, especially civil and political rights. It includes the fight against impunity and the protection of minorities of any kind (ethnic, religious, linguistic, sexual, migrants, children, victims of traffic and torture, ...).
Political participation and civil society		Strengthening political participation, electoral processes and democracy, civil society, as well as actions to improve citizens' control over their representatives.
Peace, public and national security and defense		Peace processes and conflict resolution, disarmament, demobilization and reintegration into civilian life. Support to public security (aimed at preventing, investigating and prosecuting crimes against people - criminal codes, law enforcement agencies, police, prisons, etc.) and national security and defense (fight against corruption, money laundering and drug trafficking, military training, fire arms control,...).
ENVIRONMENT	Environment	Policy development and support to institutions involved in environmental protection, sustainable management of natural resources, waste treatment, pollution reduction, fight against climate change and biodiversity conservation, among others.
	Disaster management	Support to all operational interventions carried out throughout the disaster management process, including prevention, preparation, mitigation, emergency assistance, rehabilitation and reconstruction.

OTHER AREAS

Culture	Policy development and support to institutions involved in all forms of culture (also traditional and oral), as well as performing arts, in any of its disciplines (architecture, dance, scene, sculpture, music, painting and literature), as well as to popular crafts, libraries, museums, and others.
Gender	Policy development and support to institutions which foster programs and projects that connect women and development, promote their economic empowerment and the fight against violence towards women, among others.
Other	Promotion of alternative development models, rural, urban, social and community economy, among others.

Source: SEGIB based on Agencies and Directorates-General for Cooperation

Country factsheets

Information systematized in these factsheets corresponds to South-South Cooperation in which Ibero-American countries participated throughout 2020 and/or 2021. Each factsheet details the following information: initiatives in which the country participated; cooperation modalities; roles; main partners; activity sectors; and the SDGs with which exchanges are potentially aligned. It is important to highlight that values are not disaggregated by type (actions, projects and programs), but they refer to all SSC initiatives.

The way in which values were calculated is the following:

Total number of initiatives (in units)

It refers to the sum of actions, projects and programs in which the country participated under the three modalities recognized in the Ibero-American space (Bilateral SSC, TC and Regional SSC). It considers cooperation initiatives within Ibero-America and with other regions. Given its nature, the analysis of Bilateral SSC is not applicable to the countries of the Iberian Peninsula.

Participation by modality and roles (in units)

The analysis of each country shows the number of initiatives and the role in which it participated in 2020 and/or 2021 in each SSC modality, considering cooperation initiatives between Ibero-America and other regions. Possible roles vary according to the cooperation modality:

- Bilateral SSC: Provider, Recipient, Both.
- Triangular: First provider, Second provider, Recipient.
- Regional SSC: Provider, Recipient, Both.

Strengthened capacities (in units)

The analysis of each country shows the number of initiatives associated with the 30 activity sectors recognized in the Ibero-American space, considering all the initiatives in which the country participated as provider and as recipient, regardless of the cooperation modality.

All three roles, Provider, First provider and Second provider are jointly considered for provided initiatives.

Initiatives in which the country performs the role Both are not considered in this analysis.

Those activity sectors which most stood out are shown in the resulting pie chart, and the others are grouped in a general category "Others".

The sectoral analysis of the three countries of the Iberian Peninsula is carried out considering only the modality through which cooperation was executed, not the role.

Alignment with the SDGs

It refers to the SDGs with which the initiatives in which the country participated could be aligned, regardless of the cooperation modality through which they were executed and the role. Only the main SDG with which each initiative is associated is taken into account (the analysis does not consider second SDGs).

Main partners

It refers to those partners with which the country shared a higher number of exchanges in 2020 and/or 2021, regardless of the SSC modality (bilateral, triangular, regional) and the role.

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ARGENTINA

185

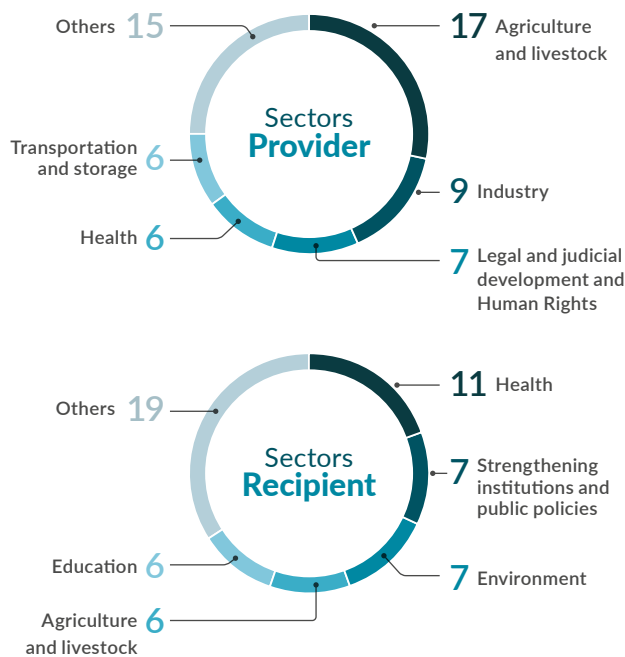
Participation by modalities and roles

In units



Strengthened capacities

In units



Alignment with SDGs

Initiatives are mainly aligned with SDG 8, 11, 3 and 2



Main partners



Between 2020 and 2021, Argentina had 185 cooperation actions, projects and programs under execution. Nearly 51% of this total corresponded to Bilateral SSC initiatives, while the remaining percentage was respectively implemented through Regional SSC (36%) and Triangular Cooperation (13%). In terms of roles, this South-American country combined, almost equally, the provider and recipient role in Bilateral Cooperation, while it mainly acted as first provider in Triangular Cooperation.

As a result of its experience and accumulated knowledge, Argentina strengthened its partners' capacities in key sectors such as *Agriculture and livestock*, *Legal and judicial development and Human Rights* and *Transportation and storage* while, based on other Ibero-American

countries' expertise, improved its abilities in *Strengthening institutions and public policies*, *Environment*, *Agriculture and livestock* and *Education*, among others.

Argentina's neighbor countries - Chile, Uruguay and Brazil - were its main partners in this period and, overall, this country's cooperation contributed to the achievement of the 2030 Agenda, mainly through its alignment with SDG 8 (Decent work and economic growth), SDG 11 (Sustainable cities and communities), SDG 3 (Good health and well-being) and SDG 2 (Zero hunger).

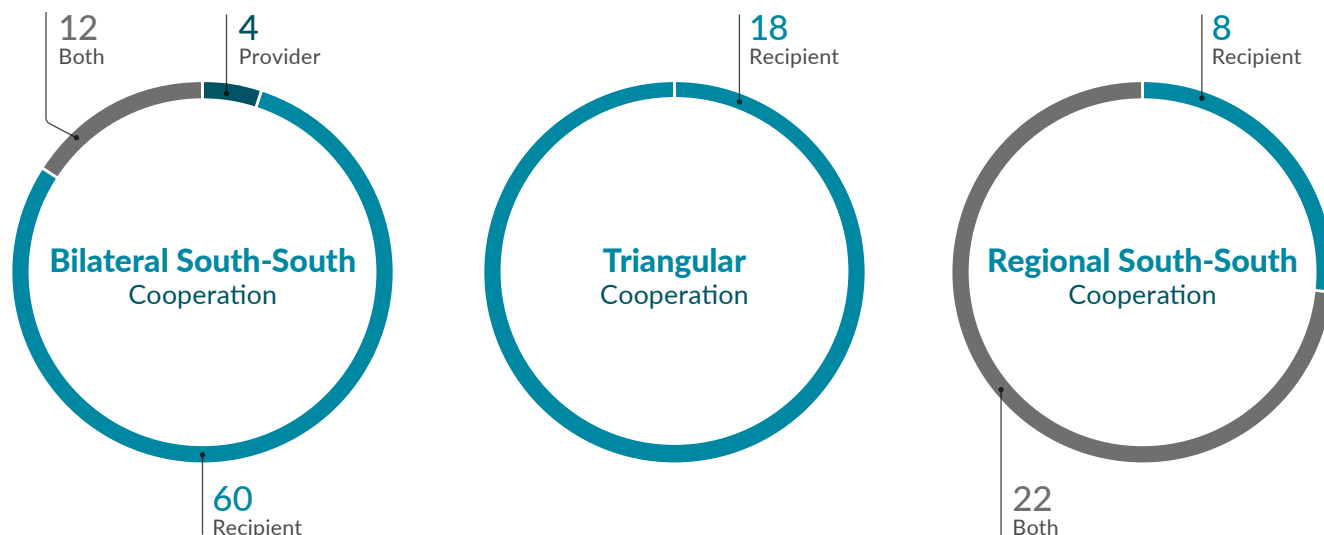
Source: SEGIB based on Agencies and Directorates-General for Cooperation

BOLIVIA

124

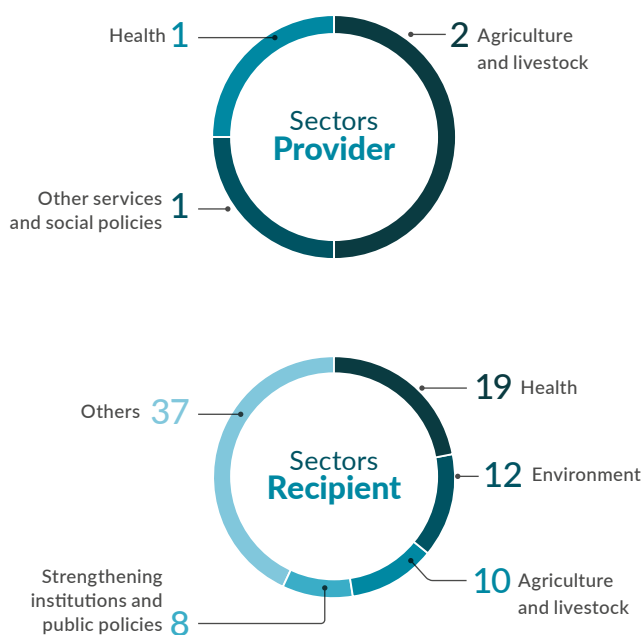
Participation by modalities and roles

In units



Strengthened capacities

In units



Alignment with SDGs

Initiatives are mainly aligned with SDG 3, 8, 2 and 11



Main partners



Around 61% of the 124 initiatives in which Bolivia participated between 2020 and 2021 were implemented through Bilateral SSC, followed by those carried out through Regional SSC programs (24%) and Triangular Cooperation actions and/or projects (15%). Peru, Chile and Ecuador were Bolivia's main Ibero-American partners.

Bolivia acted as recipient in the framework of the 3 modalities recognized in the Ibero-American space, especially in Bilateral SSC and in Triangular Cooperation actions and projects. This mainly strengthen its capacities and knowledge in the following sectors: *Health, Environment, Agriculture and livestock and Strengthening institutions and*

public policies, among others. In turn, Bolivia supported other partners' experience in areas related to *Agriculture and livestock, Other services and social policies and Health*.

This Andean country's Bilateral, Triangular and Regional SSC predominantly supported the achievement of SDG 3 (Good health and well-being), SDG 8 (Decent work and economic growth), SDG 2 (Zero hunger) and SDG 11 (Sustainable cities and communities), thus contributing to the alignment of Ibero-American cooperation with the 2030 Agenda.

BRAZIL

162

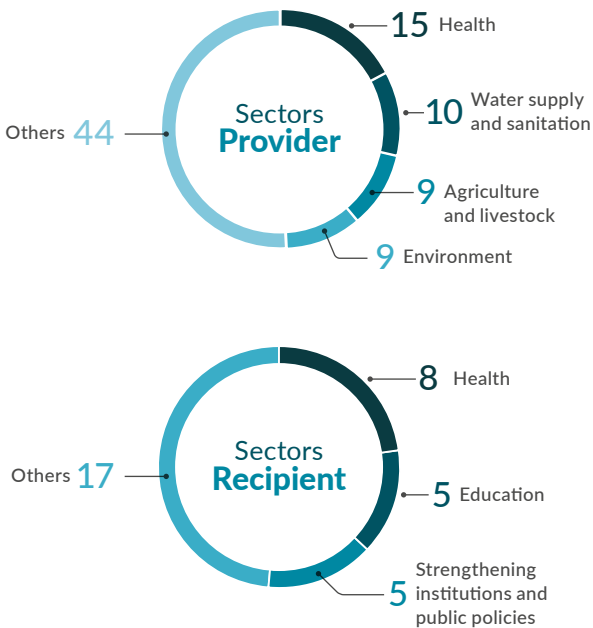
Participation by modalities and roles

In units



Strengthened capacities

In units



Alignment with SDGs

Initiatives are mainly aligned with SDG 3, 4 and 6



Main partners



Between 2020 and 2021, Brazil participated in 162 cooperation initiatives, of which almost 60% were implemented through Bilateral SSC, while the remaining 40% was distributed in Regional SSC programs (29%) and Triangular Cooperation actions and/or projects (11%).

Brazil mainly acted as provider in the framework of Bilateral SSC and as first provider in Triangular Cooperation initiatives. In addition, and to a greater extent, it played the role *both* in Regional SSC. Different Ibero-American partners strengthened their experience based on Brazil's accumulated knowledge in various sectors such as *Health, Water supply and sanitation, Agriculture and livestock and Environment*, among others. On the other hand, this South-American country was

able to improve its own capacities mainly in the *Health, Education and Strengthening institutions and public policies* sectors.

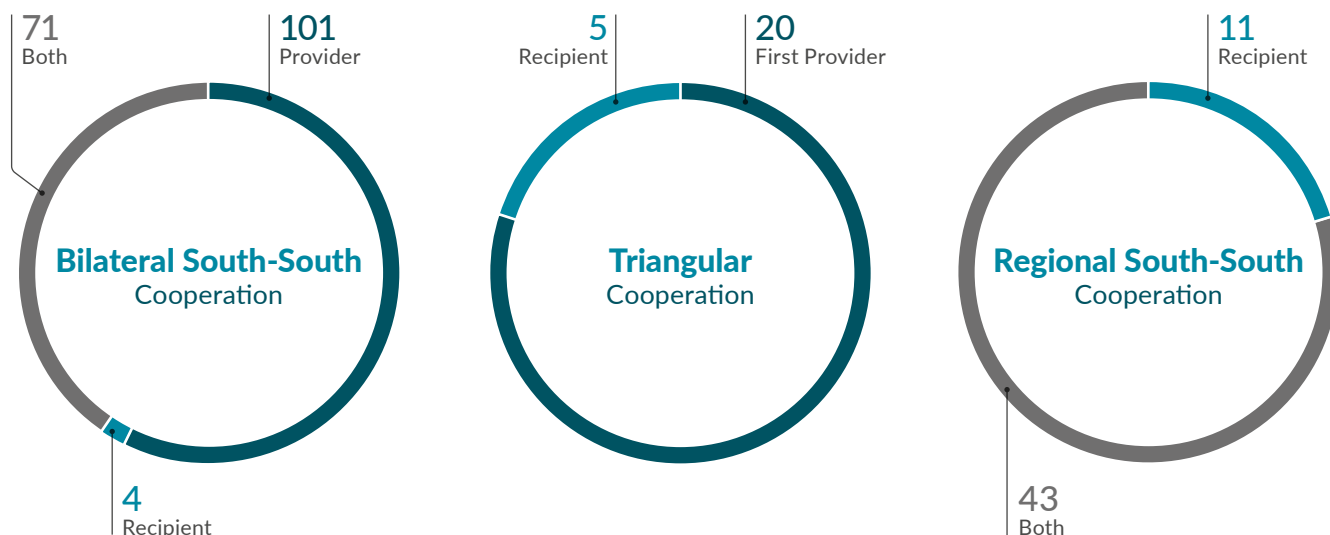
Brazil associated with several partners including Argentina, Paraguay and Uruguay in order to implement these 162 initiatives. Through these exchanges, the country contributed to the achievement of SDG 3 (Good health and well-being), SDG 4 (Quality education) and SDG 6 (Clean water and sanitation), thus contributing to the alignment of Ibero-American cooperation with the 2030 Agenda.

CHILE

255

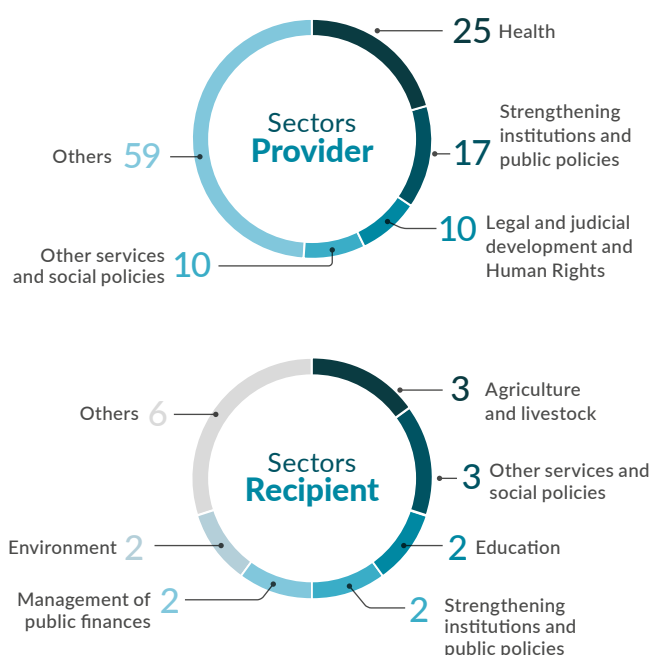
Participation by modalities and roles

In units



Strengthened capacities

In units



Alignment with SDGs

Initiatives are mainly aligned with SDG 3, 16, 11 and 8



Main partners



Around 69% of the 255 initiatives in which Chile participated between 2020 and 2021 were implemented through Bilateral SSC, followed by Regional SSC programs (21%) and Triangular Cooperation actions and/or projects (10%). Chile acted as provider in almost 60% of its Bilateral SSC and in 80% of the Triangular Cooperation carried out with other partners, while it mainly played the role *both* in Regional SSC programs.

This country was able to share its experience in *Health, Strengthening institutions and public policies, Legal and judicial development and Human Rights* and *Other services and social policies*, among others. Exchanges with other countries, in turn, contributed to strengthen Chilean knowledge and capacities in the following sectors: *Agriculture and livestock, Other services and social policies, Education, Strengthening*

institutions and public policies, Management of public finances and Environment.

Chile's main Ibero-American partners were Peru, Argentina and Mexico. Through these initiatives, this South-American country mainly contributed to the achievement of SDG 3 (Good health and well-being), SDG 16 (Peace, justice and strong institutions), SDG 11 (Sustainable cities and communities) and SDG 8 (Decent work and economic growth).

COLOMBIA

267

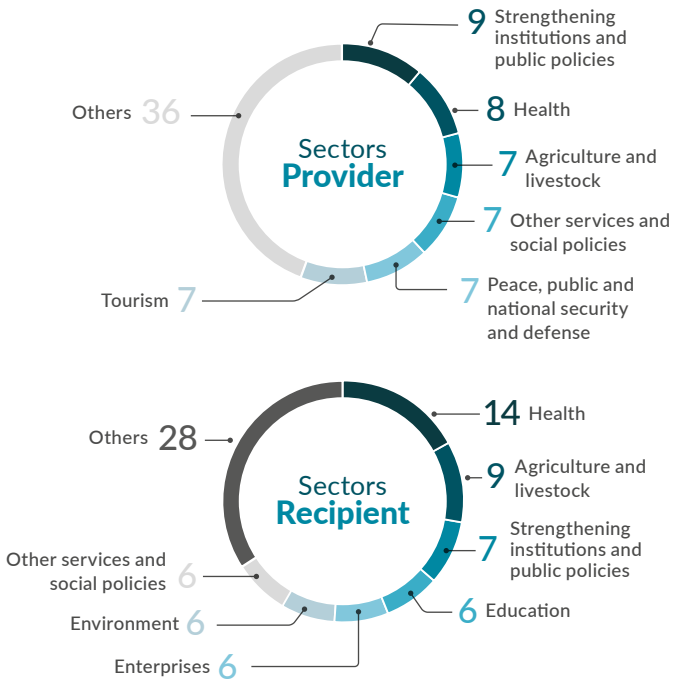
Participation by modalities and roles

In units



Strengthened capacities

In units



Alignment with SDGs

Initiatives are mainly aligned with SDG 8, 11, 3 and 16



Main partners



Between 2020 and 2021, Colombia had 267 cooperation actions, projects and programs under execution. In 71% of the cases, initiatives were implemented through Bilateral SSC, 22% were executed through Regional SSC programs and the remaining 7% were carried out through Triangular Cooperation actions and/or projects.

In the framework of Bilateral SSC, Colombia acted as provider (69 initiatives), recipient and both (60 in each case), in almost equal shares. However, it mainly played the recipient role in Regional SSC and in Triangular Cooperation. Given its accumulated knowledge and experience, Colombia was able to strengthen partners' capacities in sectors such as *Strengthening institutions and public policies, Health, Agriculture and livestock, Other services and social policies, Peace, public*

and national security and defense and Tourism, among others. Meanwhile, as recipient, its capacities related to the Health, Agriculture and livestock, Strengthening institutions and public policies, Education, Enterprises, Environment and Other services and social policies sectors were also strengthened.

This Andean country's main partners were Peru, Chile and Ecuador. As a result of these efforts, Colombia could contribute to advance the achievement of SDG 8 (Decent work and economic growth), SDG 11 (Sustainable cities and communities), SDG 3 (Good health and well-being) and SDG 16 (Peace, justice and strong institutions).

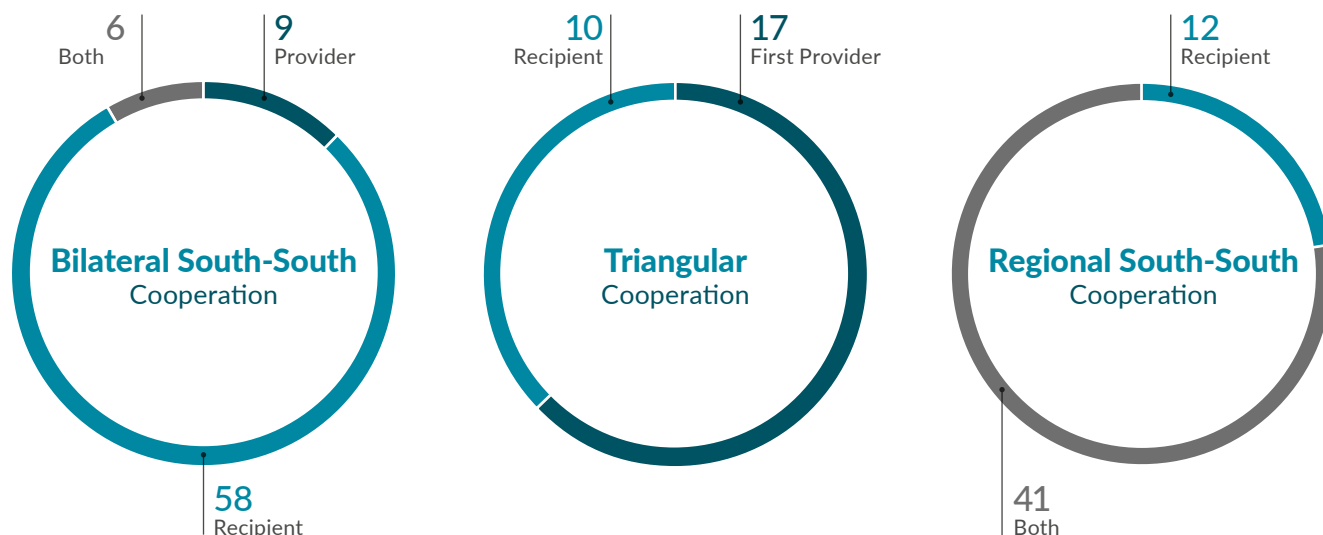
Source: SEGIB based on Agencies and Directorates-General for Cooperation

COSTA RICA

153

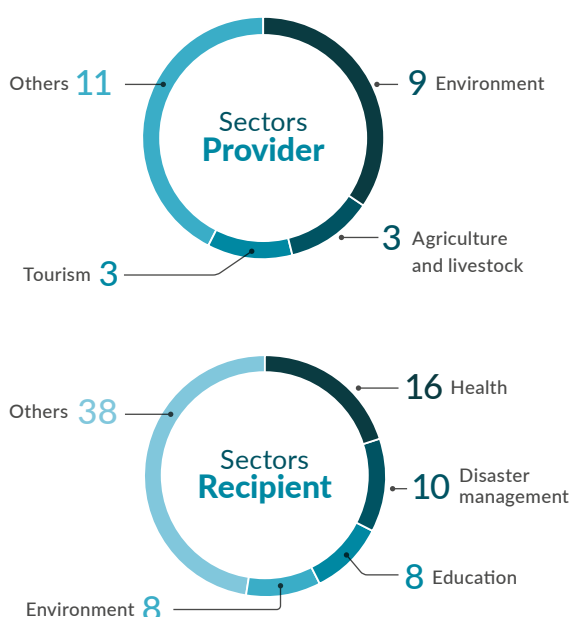
Participation by modalities and roles

In units



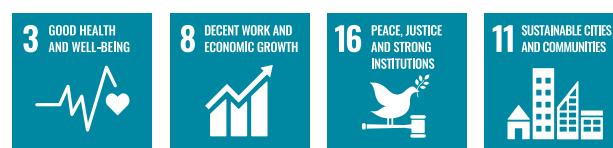
Strengthened capacities

In units



Alignment with SDGs

Initiatives are mainly aligned with SDG 3, 8, 16 and 11



Main partners



Almost 48% of the 153 initiatives implemented by Costa Rica between 2020 and 2021 were carried out under the Bilateral SSC modality and the remaining 52% were executed through Regional SSC programs (35%) and Triangular Cooperation actions and/or projects (17%). Its main Ibero-American partners were the Dominican Republic, El Salvador and Panama.

Although Costa Rica combined the exercise of all roles in the three cooperation modalities recognized in the Ibero-American space, its role as recipient in Bilateral SSC stands out (58 out of 73 initiatives were carried out under this modality), as well as its participation as first provider in Triangular Cooperation (17 out of 27 initiatives). Costa Rica shared its knowledge and experience in sectors such as

Environment, Agriculture and livestock and Tourism, among others, while it strengthened its own capacities in *Health, Disaster management, Environment and Others*.

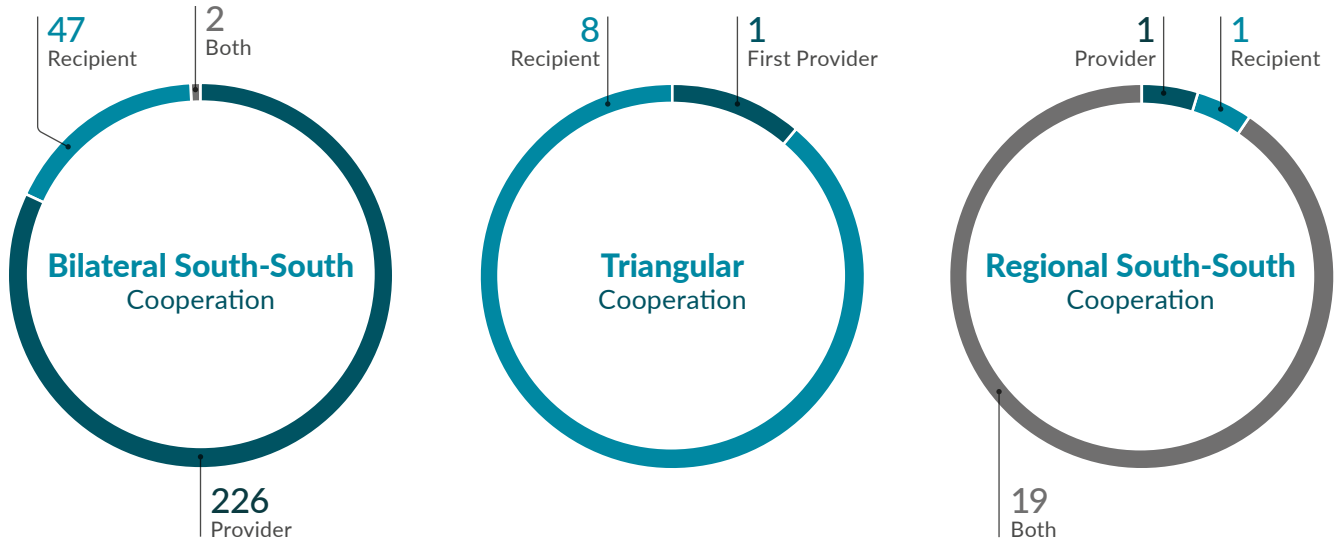
Costa Rica's overall participation in the cooperation implemented between 2020 and 2021 contributed to the region's achievement of SDG 3 (Good health and well-being), SDG 8 (Decent work and economic growth), SDG 16 (Peace, justice and strong institutions) and SDG 11 (Sustainable cities and communities).

CUBA

305

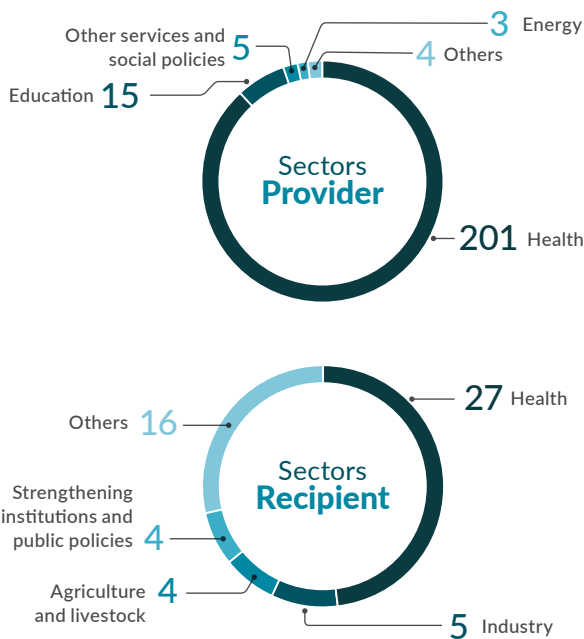
Participation by modalities and roles

In units



Strengthened capacities

In units



Alignment with SDGs

Initiatives are mainly aligned with SDG 3, 4 and 11



Main partners



Between 2020 and 2021, Cuba had 305 cooperation actions, projects and programs under execution. In 90% of the cases, initiatives were executed through Bilateral SSC, 7% were implemented through Regional SSC and the remaining 3% were carried out through Triangular Cooperation actions and/or projects. Cuba's main partners were Argentina, Mexico and Colombia.

Cuba's role as provider stands out in 82% of this country's Bilateral SSC initiatives while it mainly acted as recipient in the framework of Triangular Cooperation. As for the initiatives in which it transferred its knowledge and experience to other Ibero-American partners, the work carried out in *Health, Education, Other services and social policies*

and *Energy* is worthy of mention. In turn, Cuba strengthened its own capacities in different sectors such as *Health, Industry, Agriculture and livestock* and *Strengthening institutions and public policies*.

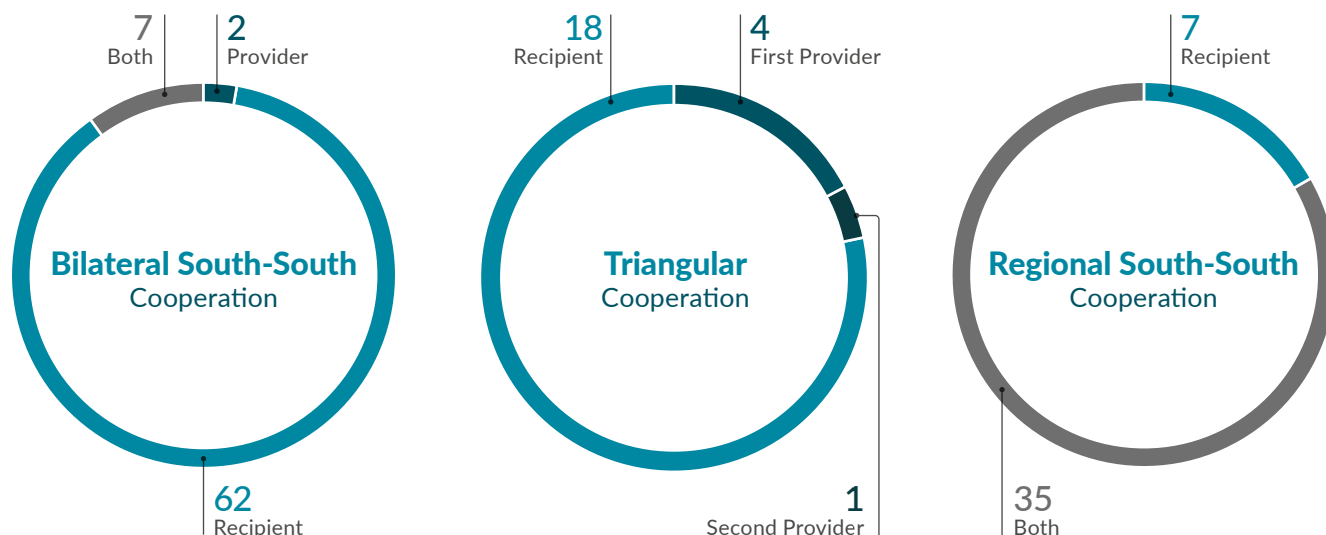
Overall, exchanges in which Cuba participated contributed to the achievement of the 2030 Agenda, mainly through the alignment with SDG 3 (Good health and well-being), SDG 4 (Quality education) and SDG 11 (Sustainable cities and communities).

DOMINICAN R.

136

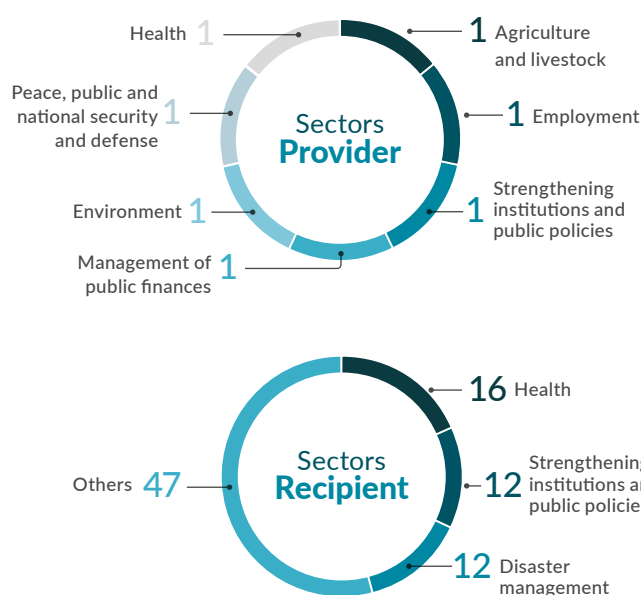
Participation by modalities and roles

In units



Strengthened capacities

In units



Alignment with SDGs

Initiatives are mainly aligned with SDG 16, 3, 8 and 11



Main partners



Between 2020 and 2021, the Dominican Republic participated in 136 cooperation initiatives. Of these, 52% were implemented through Bilateral SSC, while the remaining 48% were distributed in Regional SSC programs (31%) and Triangular Cooperation actions and/or projects (17%).

The Dominican Republic mainly acted as recipient in both Bilateral SSC and Triangular Cooperation, strengthening its capacities in the following sectors: *Health, Strengthening institutions and public policies and Disaster management*, among others. In turn, it was able to share its knowledge and experience as provider in *Agriculture and livestock, Employment, Strengthening institutions and public policies, Management of public finances, Environment and Peace, public and national security and defense*.

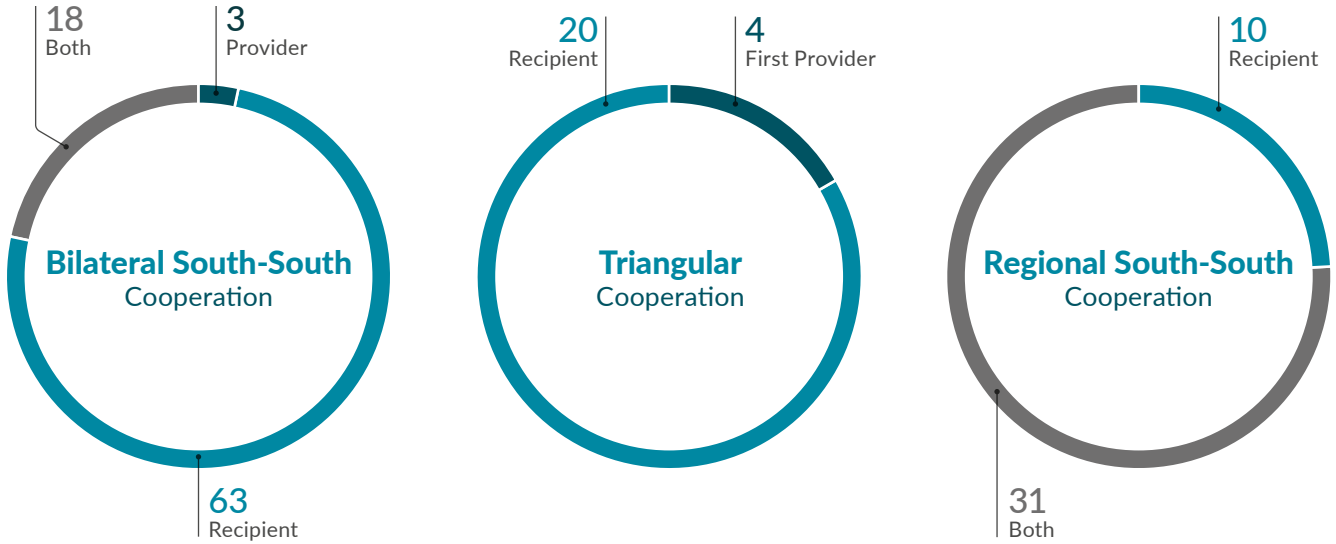
In order to implement these 136 initiatives, the Dominican Republic associated with several countries, among which Costa Rica, El Salvador and Guatemala stand out. Through these exchanges, this Ibero-American Caribbean country contributed to the achievement of the 2030 Agenda through SDG 16 (Peace, justice and strong institutions), SDG 3 (Good health and well-being), SDG 8 (Decent work and economic growth) and SDG 11 (Sustainable cities and communities).

ECUADOR

149

Participation by modalities and roles

In units



Strengthened capacities

In units



Alignment with SDGs

Initiatives are mainly aligned with SDG 8, 3, 16 and 11



Main partners



Ecuador participated in 149 initiatives between 2020 and 2021. Most of them were implemented through Bilateral SSC (56%), followed by Regional SSC programs (27%) and, finally, by Triangular Cooperation actions and/or projects (17%). Peru, Chile and Colombia were this Andean country's main Ibero-American partners.

Ecuador's leading role as recipient in the three modalities recognized in the Ibero-American space stands out. As a result, and based on its partners' accumulated knowledge, this country was able to strengthen its experience in such sectors as *Health, Environment, Strengthening institutions and public policies and Agriculture and livestock*. Ecuador, in

turn, could also support other countries in different topics, for example: *Strengthening institutions and public policies, Environment, Peace, public and national security and defense and Trade*.

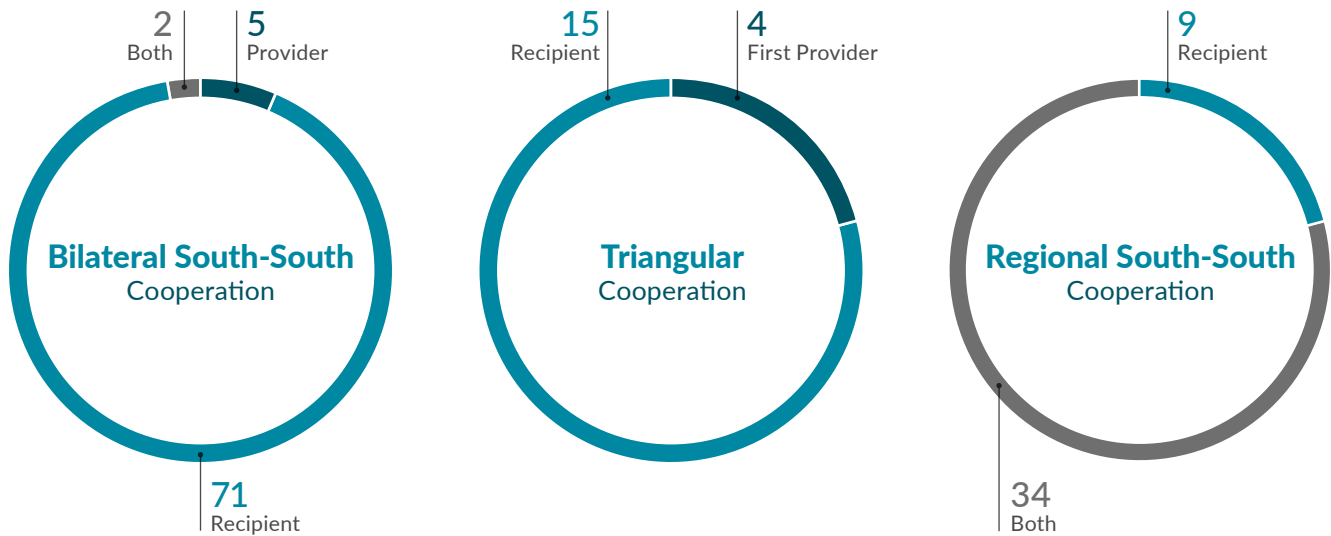
Through these exchanges, Ecuador mainly contributed to the achievement of SDG 8 (Decent work and economic growth), SDG 3 (Good health and well-being), SDG 16 (Peace, justice and strong institutions) and SDG 11 (Sustainable cities and communities), thus contributing to the alignment of Ibero-American cooperation with the 2030 Agenda.

EL SALVADOR

140

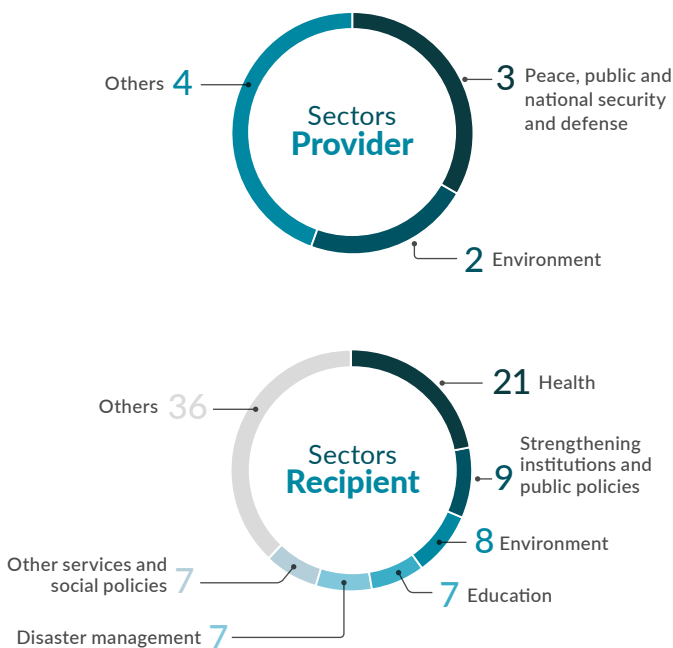
Participation by modalities and roles

In units



Strengthened capacities

In units



Alignment with SDGs

Initiatives are mainly aligned with SDG 3, 16, 4 and 13



Main partners



Around 56% of the 140 initiatives in which El Salvador participated between 2020 and 2021 were executed through Bilateral SSC. The remaining 44% were distributed in Regional SSC programs (30%) and in Triangular Cooperation actions and/or projects (14%).

El Salvador's role as recipient stands out in around 91% of the initiatives that were implemented. This enabled the country to strengthen its capacities in different sectors such as *Health, Strengthening institutions and public policies, Environment, Education, Disaster management* and *Other services and social policies*. In turn, it was also able to share its knowledge and experience with other Ibero-American partners mainly in *Peace, public and national security and defense* and *Environment*.

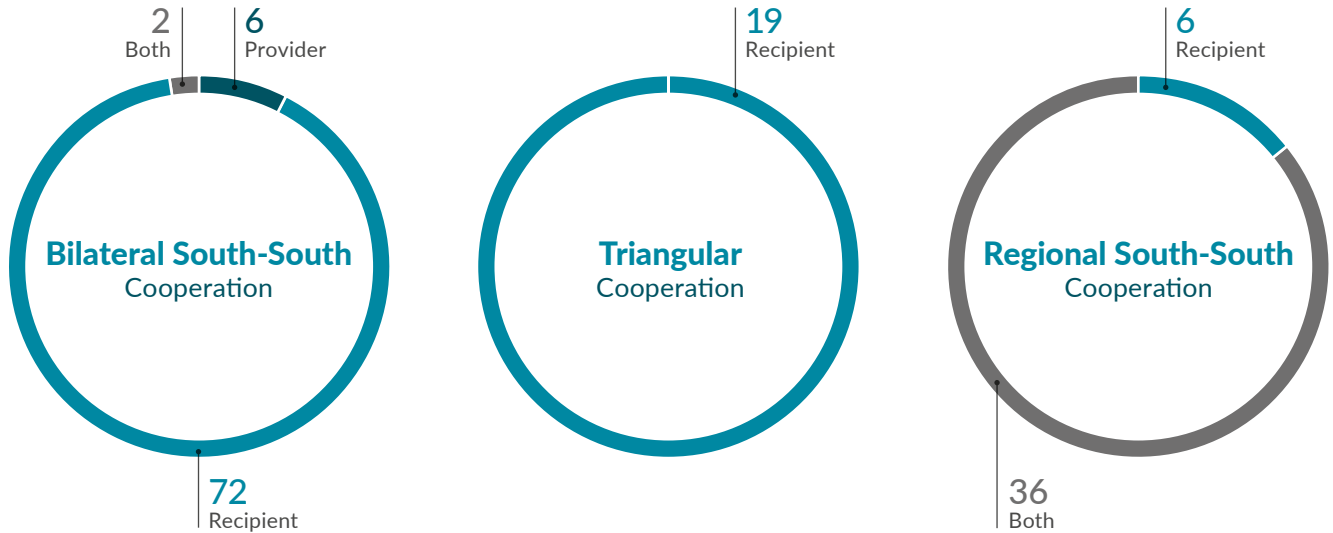
El Salvador's cooperation was particularly active with Honduras, Costa Rica and Guatemala and, overall, it potentially contributed to the achievement of SDG 3 (Good health and well-being), SDG 16 (Peace, justice and strong institutions), SDG 4 (Quality education) and SDG 13 (Climate action).

GUATEMALA

141

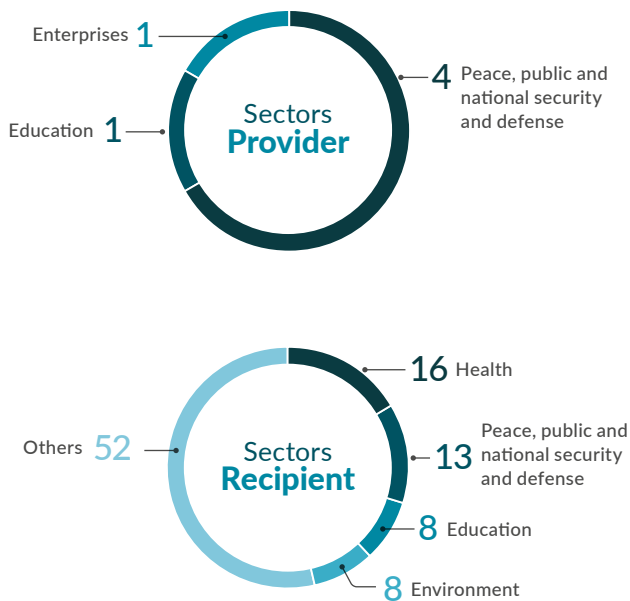
Participation by modalities and roles

In units



Strengthened capacities

In units



Alignment with SDGs

Initiatives are mainly aligned with SDG 16, 8 and 3



Main partners



Between 2020 and 2021, Guatemala participated in 141 cooperation actions, projects and programs. More than half of these initiatives were developed through Bilateral SSC (57%), while the other half were executed through Regional SSC programs (30%) and through Triangular Cooperation actions and/or projects (13%).

Guatemala acted as recipient in all three modalities, Bilateral SSC standing out with the largest number of initiatives (72 out of 80). Through these exchanges, and based on other partners' knowledge, the country strengthened its capacities in various sectors such as *Health, Peace, public and national security and defense, Education and Environment*. Meanwhile, in the framework of the 6 bilateral initiatives

in which it acted as provider, this Central-American country contributed to its partners' experience in *Peace, public and national security and defense, Education and Enterprises*.

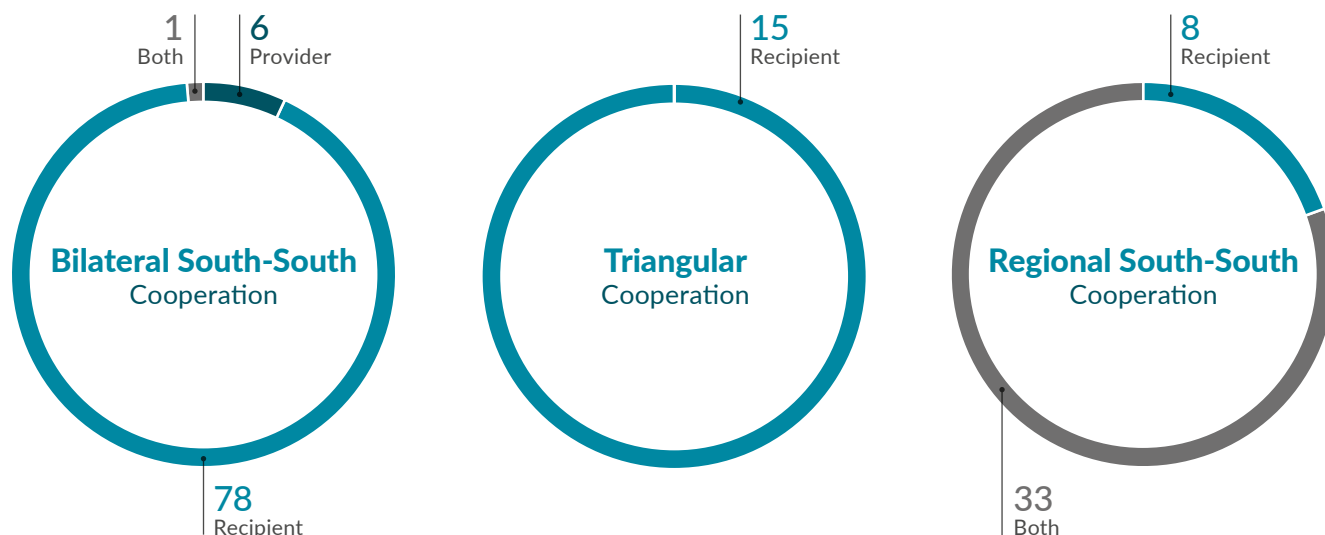
In order to implement these 141 initiatives, Guatemala associated with several countries, among which Honduras, El Salvador and the Dominican Republic stand out. Through these exchanges, this Central-American country contributed to the achievement of SDG 16 (Peace, justice and strong institutions), SDG 8 (Decent work and economic growth) and SDG 3 (Good health and well-being).

HONDURAS

141

Participation by modalities and roles

In units



Strengthened capacities

In units



Alignment with SDGs

Initiatives are mainly aligned with SDG 16, 3 and 8



Main partners



Around 60% of the 141 initiatives in which Honduras participated between 2020 and 2021 were implemented through Bilateral SSC. The remaining 40% was distributed between Regional SSC programs (29%) and Triangular Cooperation actions and/or projects (11%).

Honduras mainly participated in these exchanges as recipient, especially in Bilateral SSC initiatives (78 out of 85) and in all Triangular Cooperation initiatives. The exercise of this role resulted in capacity strengthening in topics related to *Health, Agriculture and livestock, Environment and Disaster management*. Meanwhile, as provider, it was able to support other countries' experience in diverse sectors such

as *Agriculture and livestock, Culture, Legal and judicial development and Human Rights, Enterprises, Environment and Peace, public and national security and defense*.

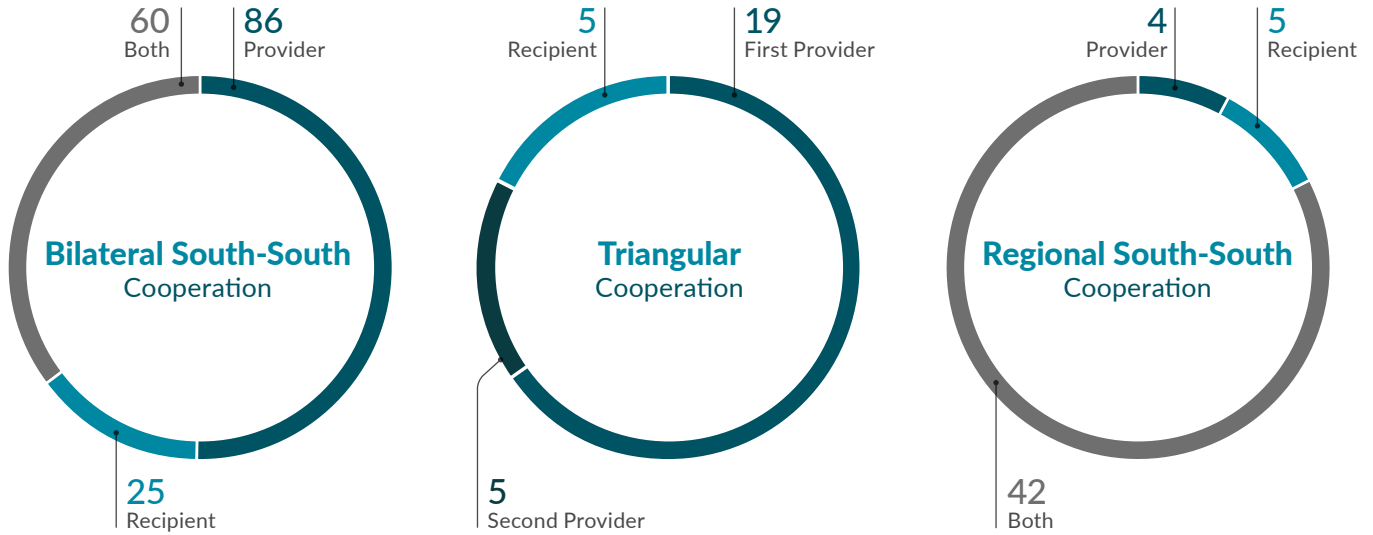
El Salvador, Guatemala and Costa Rica stand out among its main partners. As a result of the efforts made in the framework of this cooperation, Honduras was able to contribute to advance the achievement of SDG 16 (Peace, justice and strong institutions), SDG 3 (Good health and well-being) and SDG 8 (Decent work and economic growth), and to the alignment of Ibero-American cooperation with the 2030 Agenda.

MEXICO

251

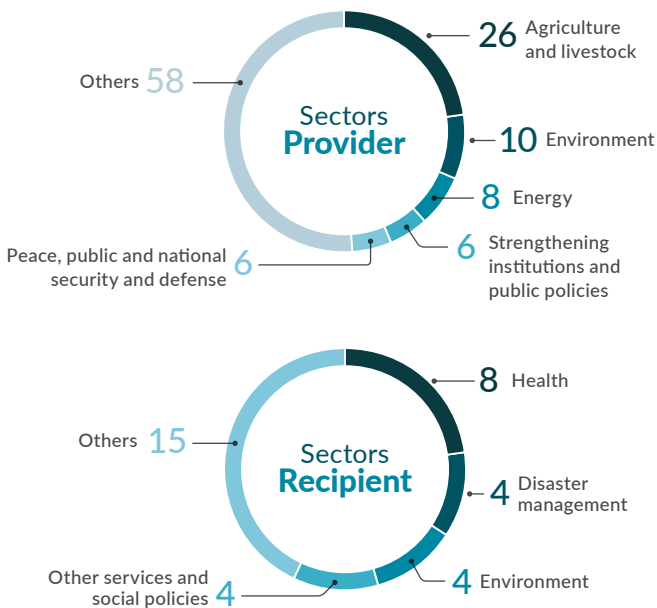
Participation by modalities and roles

In units



Strengthened capacities

In units



Alignment with SDGs

Initiatives are mainly aligned with SDG 8, 16 and 11



Main partners



About 68% of the 251 initiatives in which Mexico participated between 2020 and 2021 were implemented through Bilateral SSC actions and projects while, of the remaining 32%, 20% corresponded to Regional SSC programs and, the last 12%, to Triangular Cooperation with other countries and partners. Mexico's cooperation was particularly active with Chile, Colombia and Costa Rica.

Although Mexico combined the provider and recipient role in the three cooperation modalities recognized in the Ibero-American space, its leading role as provider in both Bilateral SSC and Triangular Cooperation stands out. In this framework, it shared its accumulated experience with different partners in various sectors such as *Agriculture and livestock, Environment, Energy, Strengthening institutions and public*

policies and Peace, public and national security and defense. As recipient, in turn, it was able to strengthen its capacities in *Health, Disaster management, Environment and Other services and social policies.*

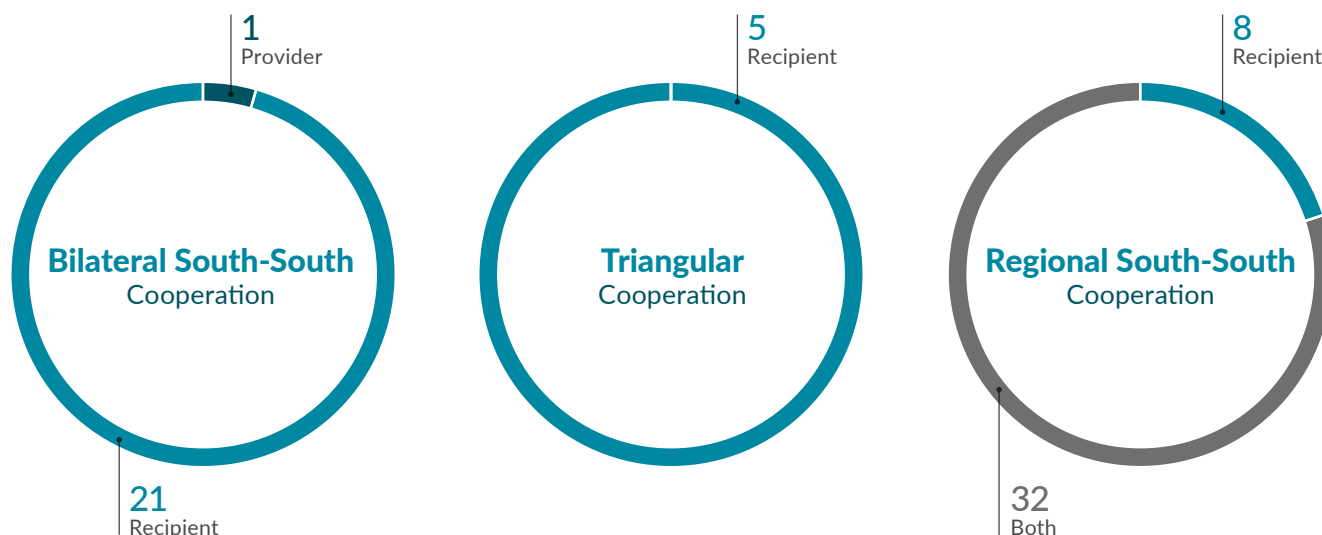
As a result of the efforts made through this cooperation, Mexico was able to contribute to advance the achievement of SDG 8 (Decent work and economic growth), SDG 16 (Peace, justice and strong institutions), and SDG 11 (Sustainable cities and communities), and therefore align Ibero-American cooperation with the 2030 Agenda.

NICARAGUA

67

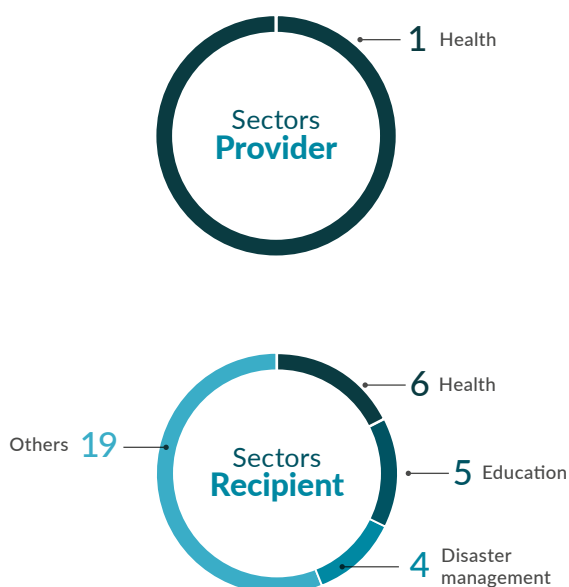
Participation by modalities and roles

In units



Strengthened capacities

In units



Alignment with SDGs

Initiatives are mainly aligned with SDG 3, 14 and 13



Main partners



Almost 60% of Nicaragua's cooperation between 2020 and 2021 was carried out through Regional SSC programs (40 out of 67 initiatives). The remaining percentage was distributed between Bilateral SSC initiatives (33%) and Triangular Cooperation actions and/or projects (7%). Its main Ibero-American partners were Honduras, Guatemala and El Salvador.

Nicaragua mainly acted as recipient in Bilateral SSC (in 21 out of 22 initiatives implemented under this modality). The country's behavior in Triangular Cooperation was similar, as it participated as recipient in all cases. These exchanges enabled the strengthening of its capacities

in sectors such as *Health*, *Education* and *Disaster management*, among others. *Health* was the only sector in which Nicaragua participated as provider, through 1 initiative.

As a result of the efforts made in the framework of these exchanges, Nicaragua was able to contribute to the alignment of Ibero-American cooperation with the 2030 Agenda through SDG 3 (Good health and well-being), SDG 14 (Life below water) and SDG 13 (Climate action).

PANAMA

118

Participation by modalities and roles

In units



Strengthened capacities

In units



Alignment with SDGs

Initiatives are mainly aligned with SDG 3, 8, 16 and 13



Main partners



Between 2020 and 2021, Panama participated in 118 cooperation initiatives. Most of them were implemented in the framework of Bilateral SSC (48%), followed by Regional SSC programs (41%) and Triangular Cooperation actions and/or projects with other stakeholders (11%). Costa Rica, Honduras and the Dominican Republic stand out among its main partners.

Panama mainly participated in these exchanges as recipient, especially in Bilateral SSC actions and projects (45 out of 57) and in most Triangular Cooperation initiatives (10 out of 13). The exercise of this role resulted in capacity strengthening in topics related to *Health*, *Disaster management* and *Strengthening institutions and public policies*.

Meanwhile, as provider, it was able to support other countries' experience in *Health* and *Peace, public and national security and defense*, among other sectors, through 10 initiatives.

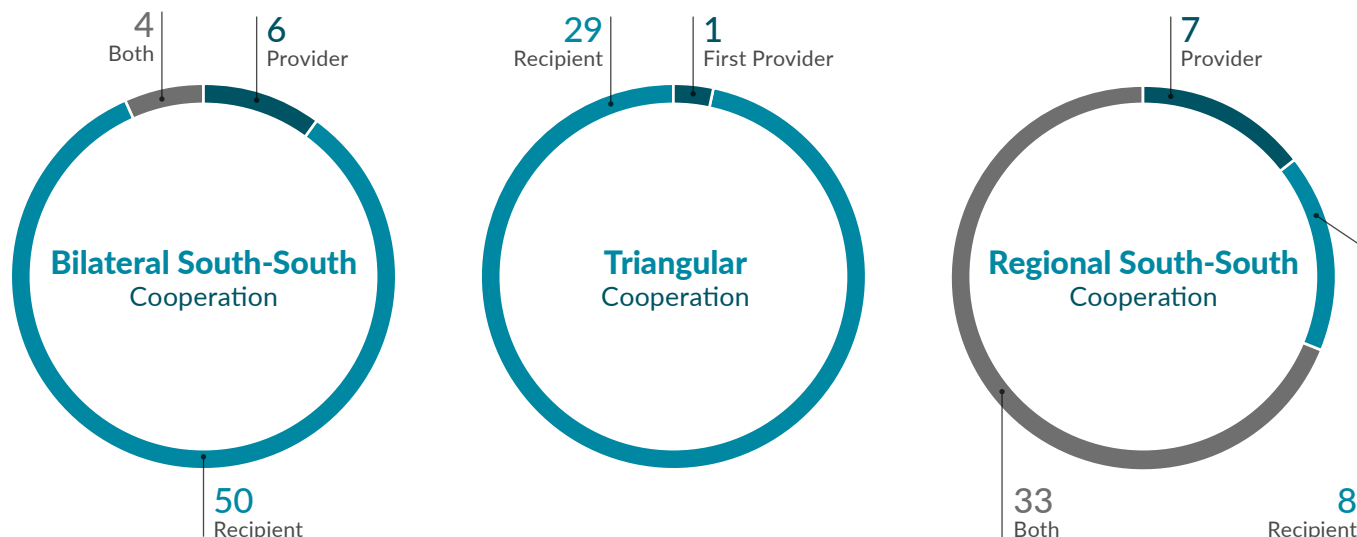
The overall participation of this Central-American country in the 2020-2021 period contributed to the region's achievement of SDG 3 (Good health and well-being), SDG 8 (Decent work and economic growth), SDG 16 (Peace, justice and strong institutions) and SDG 13 (Climate action).

PARAGUAY

138

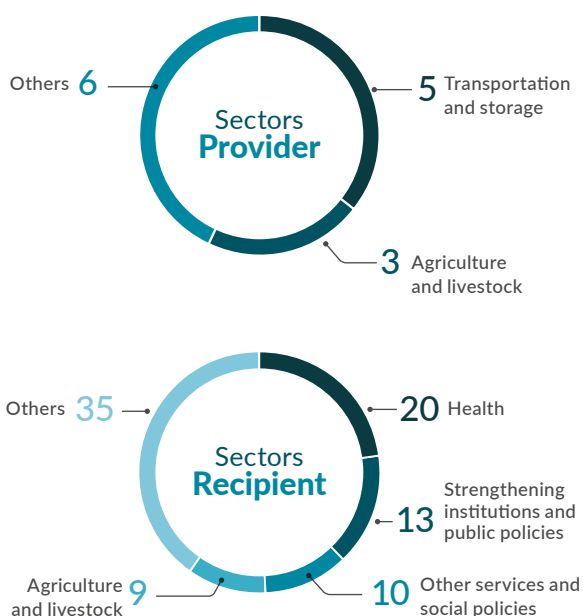
Participation by modalities and roles

In units



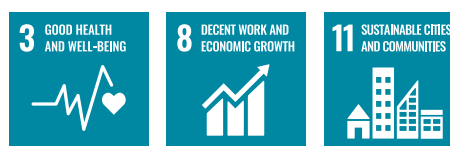
Strengthened capacities

In units



Alignment with SDGs

Initiatives are mainly aligned with SDG 3, 8 and 11



Main partners



Between 2020 and 2021, Paraguay participated in 138 cooperation initiatives. Most of them were developed through Bilateral SSC (43%), followed by Regional SSC programs (35%) and Triangular Cooperation actions and/or projects (22%). Uruguay, Argentina and Brazil stand out among main partners.

Paraguay mainly acted as recipient in all these exchanges, especially in Triangular Cooperation with other partners and stakeholders (29 out of 30 initiatives) and in Bilateral SSC initiatives (50 out of 60). Other countries have strengthened Paraguay's capacities and knowledge in diverse topics such as *Health*, *Strengthening institutions and public policies*, *Other services and social policies* and *Agriculture and livestock*, among others. In turn, as provider, this country could

share its experience with Ibero-American partners in sectors such as *Transportation and storage* and *Agriculture and livestock*, through 14 actions, projects and programs.

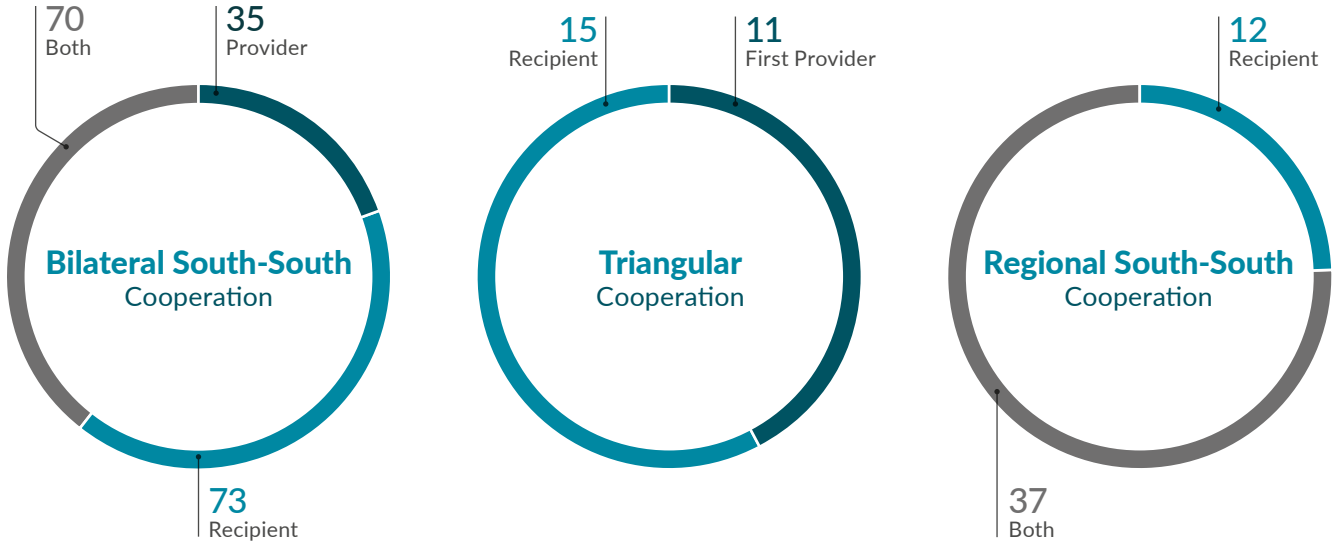
Initiatives in which Paraguay participated between 2020 and 2021 contributed to the region's achievement of the 2030 Agenda, through its alignment with SDG 3 (Good health and well-being), SDG 8 (Decent work and economic growth) and SDG 11 (Sustainable cities and communities).

PERU

253

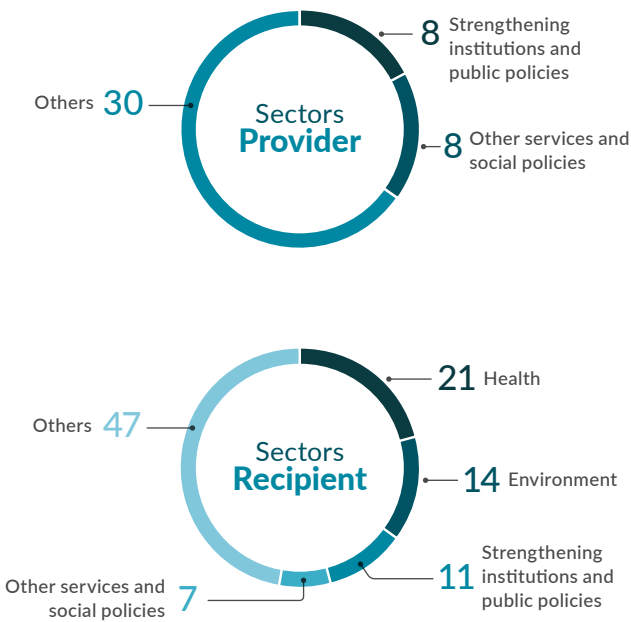
Participation by modalities and roles

In units



Strengthened capacities

In units



Alignment with SDGs

Initiatives are mainly aligned with SDG 8, 16 and 3



Main partners



Around 70% of the 253 initiatives in which Peru participated between 2020 and 2021 were developed through Bilateral SSC. The remaining 30% was distributed between Regional SSC programs (20%) and Triangular Cooperation actions and/or projects with other partners and stakeholders (10%). Peru's cooperation was particularly active with Chile, Colombia and Ecuador

Peru combined the provider and recipient role in the initiatives in which it participated. Given its accumulated experience in different areas, it was able to share its knowledge in a variety of sectors, among which *Strengthening institutions and public policies* and *Other services and social policies* stand out. On the other hand, as recipient, it was

able to strengthen its capacities in *Health*, *Environment*, *Strengthening institutions and public policies* and *Other services and social policies*, among others.

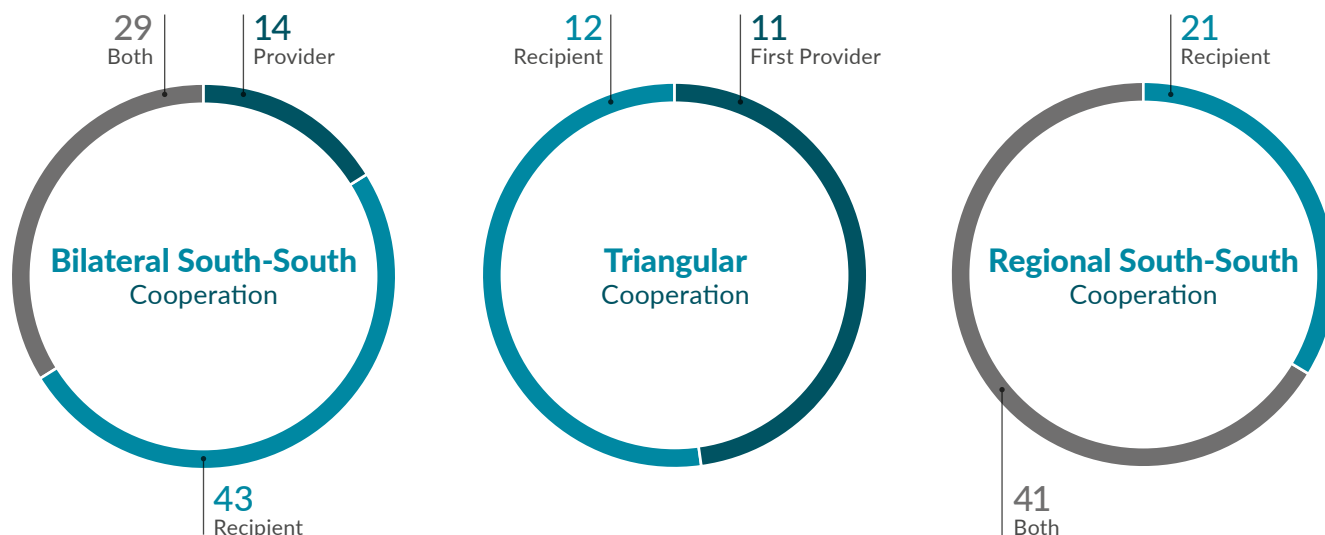
As a result of the efforts made in the framework of these 253 initiatives, Peru was able to contribute to the region's alignment with the 2030 Agenda, mainly through SDG 8 (Decent work and economic growth), SDG 16 (Peace, justice and strong institutions) and SDG 3 (Good health and well-being).

URUGUAY

171

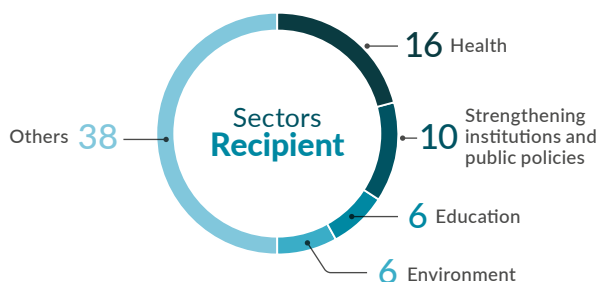
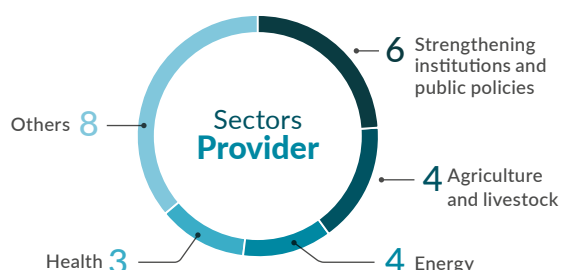
Participation by modalities and roles

In units



Strengthened capacities

In units



Alignment with SDGs

Initiatives are mainly aligned with SDG 3, 16, 4 and 8



Main partners



Around 50% of the 171 cooperation initiatives in which Uruguay participated between 2020 and 2021 were implemented under the Bilateral SSC modality. The other half of this South-American country's cooperation combined Regional SSC programs (36% of all initiatives) and Triangular Cooperation actions and projects (the remaining 14%). Uruguay's cooperation was particularly active with Paraguay, Argentina and Chile.

In terms of its role, Uruguay mainly acted as recipient in the three modalities recognized in the Ibero-American space, strengthening other countries' capacities in different sectors such as *Strengthening institutions and public policies*, *Agriculture and livestock*, *Energy* and

Health, among others. As recipient, Uruguay also strengthened its experience and knowledge in topics such as *Health*, *Strengthening institutions and public policies*, *Education*, *Environment* and *Others*.

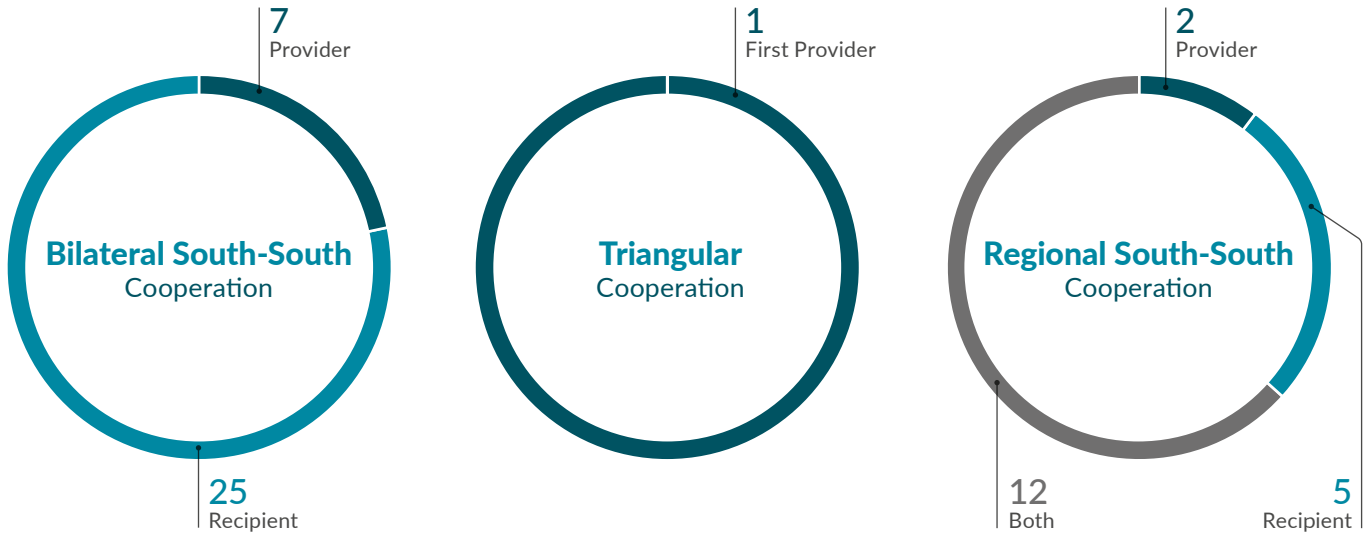
As a result of the efforts made in the framework of these exchanges, Uruguayan cooperation contributed to advance the achievement of the 2030 Agenda through the alignment with SDG 3 (Good health and well-being), SDG 16 (Peace, justice and strong institutions), SDG 4 (Quality education) and SDG 8 (Decent work and economic growth).

VENEZUELA

52

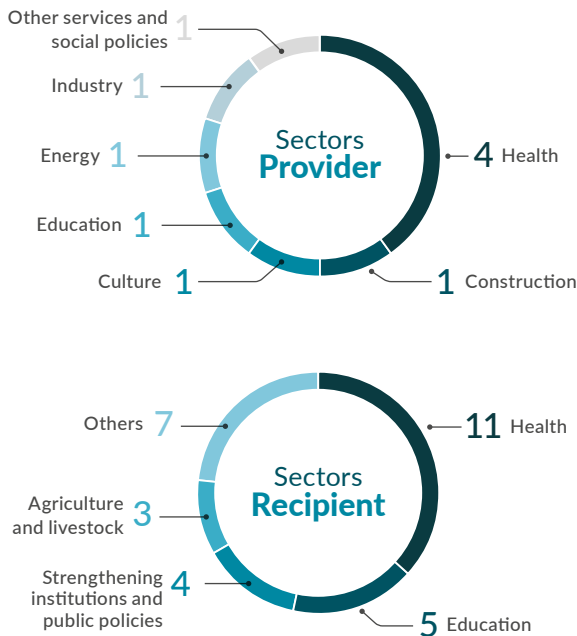
Participation by modalities and roles

In units



Strengthened capacities

In units



Alignment with SDGs

Initiatives are mainly aligned with SDG 3, 4 and 11



Main partners



Between 2020 and 2021, Venezuela participated in 52 cooperation initiatives. Of this total, 32 were implemented through Bilateral SSC, followed by 19 Regional SSC programs and 1 Triangular Cooperation project in the *Industry* sector, in which Venezuela was the first provider. This initiative was related to the start-up of a Coffee Roastery in the Commonwealth of Dominica, in association with the Bolivarian Alliance for the Peoples of Our America - Peoples' Trade Treaty (ALBA-TCP by its Spanish acronym).

Venezuela acted as recipient in both Bilateral and Regional SSC, which enabled it to strengthen its capacities in the *Health, Education, Strengthening institutions and public policies and Agriculture and livestock*

sectors, among others. In turn, as provider, it shared its knowledge in *Health, Construction, Culture, Education, Energy, Industry and Other services and social policies*.

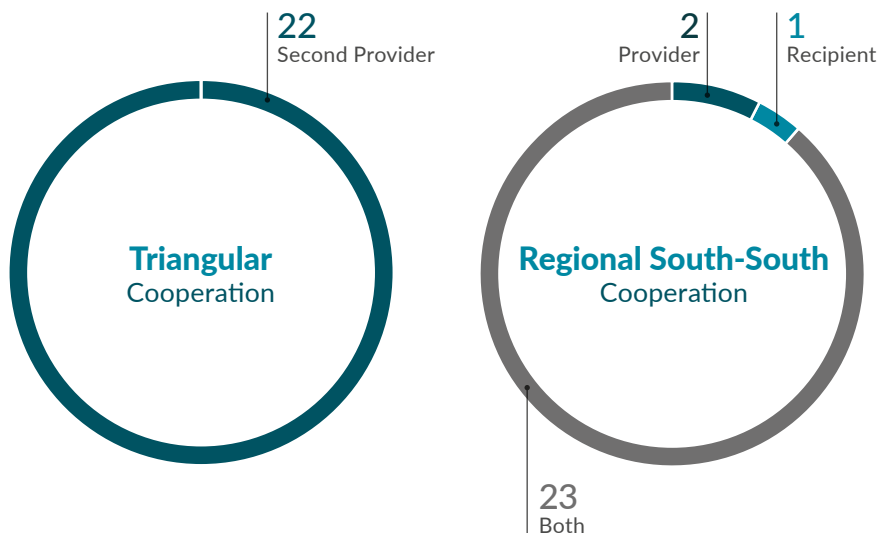
Venezuela associated with several stakeholders in order to implement these exchanges, among which Cuba, Ecuador and Colombia stand out. As a result of the cooperation in which this Andean country participated, Ibero-America was able to advance the achievement of SDG 3 (Good health and well-being), SDG 4 (Quality education) and SDG 11 (Sustainable cities and communities).

SPAIN

48

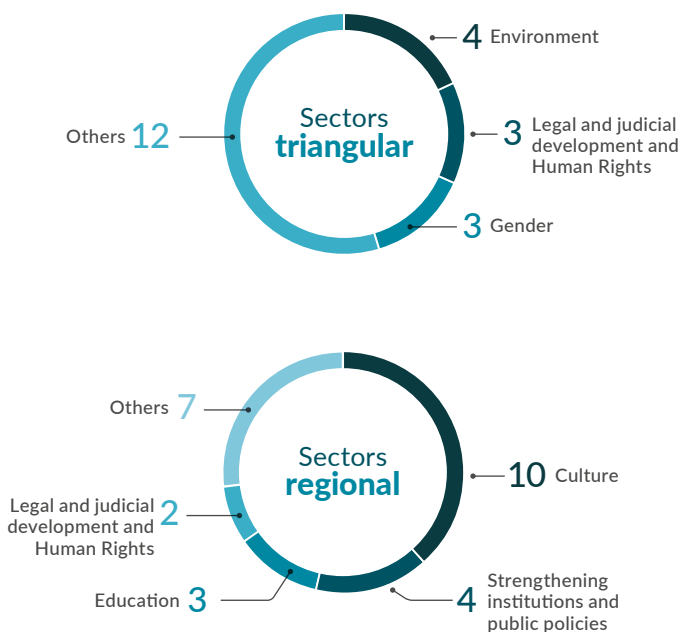
Participation by modalities and roles

In units



Strengthened capacities

In units



Alignment with SDGs

Initiatives are mainly aligned with SDG 11, 10 and 16



Main partners



Between 2020 and 2021, Spain had 48 initiatives under execution. Around 54% were developed through Triangular Cooperation projects in which this Ibero-American country acted as second provider, in all cases. The other almost half of the initiatives in which the country participated were Regional SSC programs in which Spain played the role *both*.

As a result of its efforts as second provider, its Ibero-American partners were able to strengthen their capacities in *Environment, Legal and judicial development and Human Rights and Gender*, among others. In addition, its participation in a varied set of Ibero-American Programs and Initiatives, as well as in other Regional SSC platforms, allowed

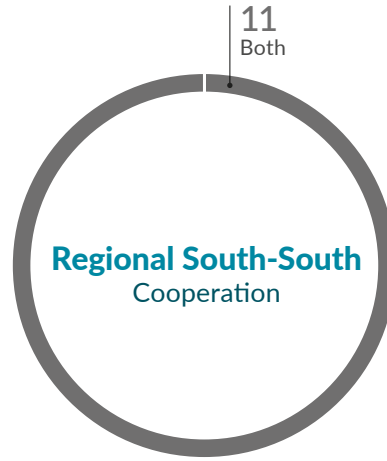
Spain to strengthen its capacities in different sectors such as *Culture, Strengthening institutions and public policies, Education and Legal and judicial development and Human Rights*.

Argentina, Costa Rica and Uruguay stand out as Spain's main partners. Overall, its cooperation contributed to advance the achievement of SDG 11 (Sustainable cities and communities), SDG 10 (Reduced inequalities) and SDG 16 (Peace, justice and strong institutions).

PORTUGAL

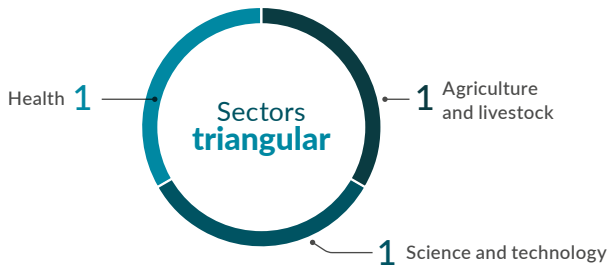
Participation by modalities and roles

In units



Strengthened capacities

In units



Alignment with SDGs

Initiatives are mainly aligned with SDG 11 and 17



Main partners



Between 2020 and 2021, Portugal participated in 14 cooperation initiatives, 11 of which corresponded to Regional SSC programs and 3 to Triangular Cooperation projects. Portugal carried out regional and triangular exchanges with most Ibero-American countries, among which those with Argentina and Uruguay stand out.

Through the 11 Regional SSC programs in which it participated, Portugal contributed to strengthen capacities in sectors such as *Culture*, *Strengthening institutions and public policies*, *Enterprises* and *Industry*. In the framework of the 3 Triangular Cooperation initiatives in which it participated, it supported, together with Argentina, Brazil and Uruguay, the strengthening of Mozambique's knowledge and experience in *Agriculture and livestock*, *Science and technology* and *Health*.

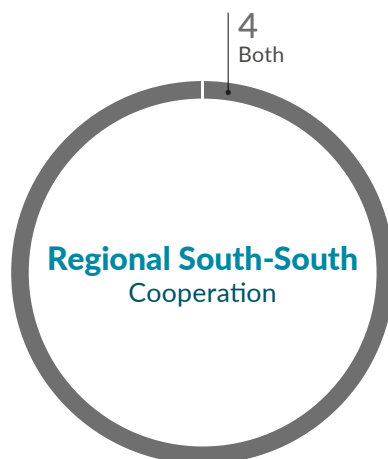
As a result of the efforts made in the framework of this cooperation, Portugal's Regional SSC and Triangular Cooperation was able to contribute to the region's progress towards the achievement of SDG 11 (Sustainable cities and communities) and SDG 17 (Partnerships for the goals).

ANDORRA

4

Participation by modalities and roles

In units



Strengthened capacities

In units



Between 2020 and 2021, Andorra participated in 4 Regional SSC initiatives. These correspond to 3 Ibero-American Programs and 1 Ascribed Project through which this country exchanged knowledge and experience and contributed, together with all Ibero-American partners, to strengthen the *Legal and judicial development and Human Rights*, *Transportation and storage*, *Strengthening institutions and public policies* and *Enterprises* sectors. The details of this 4 initiatives are the following:

- *Ibero-American Program on the Rights of People with Disabilities*, which objective is to contribute to the economic and social inclusion of people with disabilities, through policies that ensure the full enjoyment and exercise of their rights.
- *Ibero-American Road Safety Program*, which aims at promoting road users' safe movement, reducing injuries, disabilities and deaths related to traffic accidents in all member countries.
- *Ibero-American Program for the Strengthening of South-South Cooperation* (PIFCSS by its Spanish acronym), which aim is to strengthen and boost Ibero-American countries' cooperation so as to contribute to the quality and impact of its actions, as well as to promote the exchange of experiences that can be adapted to each country's public policies.

Alignment with SDGs

Initiatives are mainly aligned with SDG 3, 8, 10 and 17



Main partners



- *Ascribed Project on Quality (IBERQUALITAS)*, which intends to improve Ibero-American countries' social and economic fabric and its productivity, through quality and excellence, so that Ibero-America is perceived as a high-quality environment to live and invest.

Regional SSC in which Andorra participated between 2020 and 2021 contributed to the region's progress towards the achievement of SDG 3 (Good health and well-being), SDG 8 (Decent work and economic growth), SDG 10 (Reduced inequalities) and SDG 17 (Partnerships for the goals).

The *Report on South-South and Triangular Cooperation in Ibero-America 2022* analyzes those cooperation initiatives in which the region participated in 2020-2021, a period that was marked by the outbreak of COVID-19. This has made the importance of strengthening multilateralism and cooperation to collaboratively and more efficiently address global challenges more evident than ever. South-South and Triangular Cooperation in Ibero-America during this period has been able to adapt to the restrictions imposed by the pandemic and has tried to respond to the impacts of the multidimensional crisis it triggered, without neglecting other matters that are essential for sustainable development such as climate change and biodiversity.

The 2022 Report focuses on the importance of capacity building and the exchange of experiences in the search for shared solutions to development problems, in line with the 2030 Agenda and the principle to leave no one behind. This edition presents a series of cases and photographs on SSC initiatives developed by the region on various topics, such as the conservation of marine ecosystems, traditional gastronomy or the efficient use of water, among others, revealing the richness of these projects and the human face of this cooperation.

Argentina · Bolivia · Brazil · Chile · Colombia · Costa Rica · Cuba · Dominican Republic · Ecuador · El Salvador · Guatemala · Honduras · Mexico · Nicaragua · Panama · Paraguay · Peru · Uruguay · Venezuela · Spain · Portugal · Andorra

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