

REPORT ON SOUTH-SOUTH COOPERATION IN IBERO-AMERICA 2017

The Report on South-South Cooperation in Ibero-America 2017 has proved itself as an essential tool for giving visibility and managing the South-South Cooperation in which the region engages. Furthermore, it has increasingly underpinned its international leadership in this form of development cooperation.

Indeed, the report provides a forum for the Regional Heads of Cooperation to reflect and voice their opinion in building a common Ibero-American position on South-South Cooperation and in the international development cooperation agenda.

The report has given countries an innovative, useful and essential management tool, which has contributed to strengthening institutional and methodological capacities in Ibero-American countries.

Main findings

According to the 2017 Report on South-South Cooperation in Ibero-America, Ibero-American countries were involved in 1,475 SSC initiatives. Moreover, these include the 378 initiatives that Ibero-American countries implemented with countries from other developing regions (especially the non-Ibero-American Caribbean, Africa and Asia).

More specifically, Ibero-American countries exchanged 1,136 initiatives among themselves. The bulk of these initiatives, almost 900, were implemented under Bilateral SSC. The rest (159 and 101, respectively) were developed under Triangular SSC and Regional SSC. In this regard, it should be noted that:

- 1) 721 projects and 155 actions were exchanged under Bilateral South-South Cooperation. Six countries provided for 84% of the projects: Argentina (top bidder in 2015), followed by Mexico, Brazil, Chile, Cuba and Uruguay. Furthermore, 6 countries were recipients of about 52% of projects. In descending order: El Salvador (top recipient in 2015), Bolivia, Argentina, Mexico, Uruguay and Costa Rica.
- 2) As for Triangular South-South Cooperation, Ibero-American countries engaged in 94 projects and 65 actions. Chile (the top first provider of Triangular SSC) played a prominent role, followed by Brazil and Mexico. Germany, along with Spain and Japan, were the traditional donors that supported a larger number of Triangular SSC projects (1 in 5).

- 3) Finally, in aligning this Report's conclusions with the new Development Agenda (Agenda 2030), it is safe to say that the South-South Cooperation driven by Ibero-America sought to strengthen capacities related to the achievement of several Sustainable Development Goals. Worthy of note are those related to Health (SDG 3), Agriculture and Food Security (SDG 2), Institutional Improvements (SDG 16), Industry and Innovation (SDG 9) and Economic Growth and Decent Employment (SDG 8).

What are the advantages of South-South Cooperation?

- The countries involved in this form of cooperation have an opportunity to play a dual role, as providers and recipients of cooperation, based on the common needs and development goals identified.
- The Report addresses the need to systematize and enable a better understanding of the South-South Cooperation in which the countries are involved.
- As a horizontal, intergovernmental exercise, it strengthens integration and alliances between Ibero-American countries.

To what extent does Latin America stand out in South-South Cooperation?

- The nine editions of the Report add to the mounting evidence of the intense dynamism of South-South Cooperation in the region, with Latin America playing a leading role in the global resurgence of South-South Cooperation.
- Indeed, the Report has contributed to this surge by strengthening partnerships, alliances and integration between the 22 member countries of the Ibero-American Conference.

How did the Report come to be?

- The Report was first published in 2007 upon the demand of Latin American countries, in the context of the efforts to achieve the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and the debate on replacing the MDGs with the new Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in 2016.
- The Report involves the 22 countries in the region and the SEGIB, who provides technical and political support. It provides an increasingly comprehensive outlook of South-South Cooperation in the region, and contextualizes developments in traditional cooperation.
- Since 2009, the Report includes a reflection by Heads of Cooperation regarding the situation in Ibero-America, South-South Cooperation and their role in the new post-2015 Agenda.

What has been the contribution of the Report?

- The Report has given greater visibility to South-South Cooperation in the region, consolidating its leadership in this area. It has embraced South-South Cooperation in the region, putting its value into perspective with other traditional areas of development cooperation, which sometimes get more attention and recognition.
- More specifically, it has contributed to building institutional and methodological capacity in Ibero-American countries, so that, today, most countries in the region have systems to evaluate this form of cooperation.
- The Report has served as a forum for debate and reflection, enabling a common Ibero-American vision and position on South-South Cooperation and on various aspects of the international development cooperation agenda.

The Ibero-American General Secretariat is the permanent support body for the Conference of Heads of State and Government, in charge of preparing the Ibero-American Summits and implementing the mandates of the Ibero-American Summits and Meetings.

It works with 22 Ibero-American countries to strengthen the Ibero-American community, promoting cooperation in education, social cohesion, innovation and culture in Spanish- and Portuguese-speaking countries in Latin America and the Iberian Peninsula.

Since 2014, Rebeca Grynspan, a Costa Rican, is the Ibero-American Secretary General.

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