

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 aggregatedly 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%.

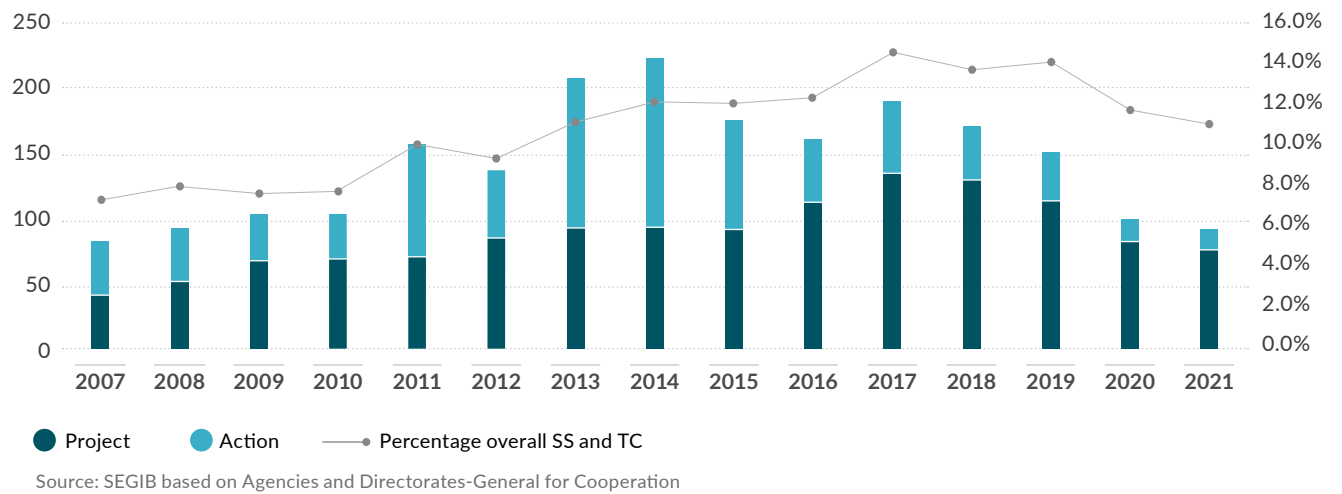
Graph 3.1 also sheds light on the different behaviors of the instruments through which Triangular Cooperation is implemented. Specifically, part of the dynamics shown by the total number of TC initiatives is explained by a "drag effect" caused by actions' strong variations. During the years of intense 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



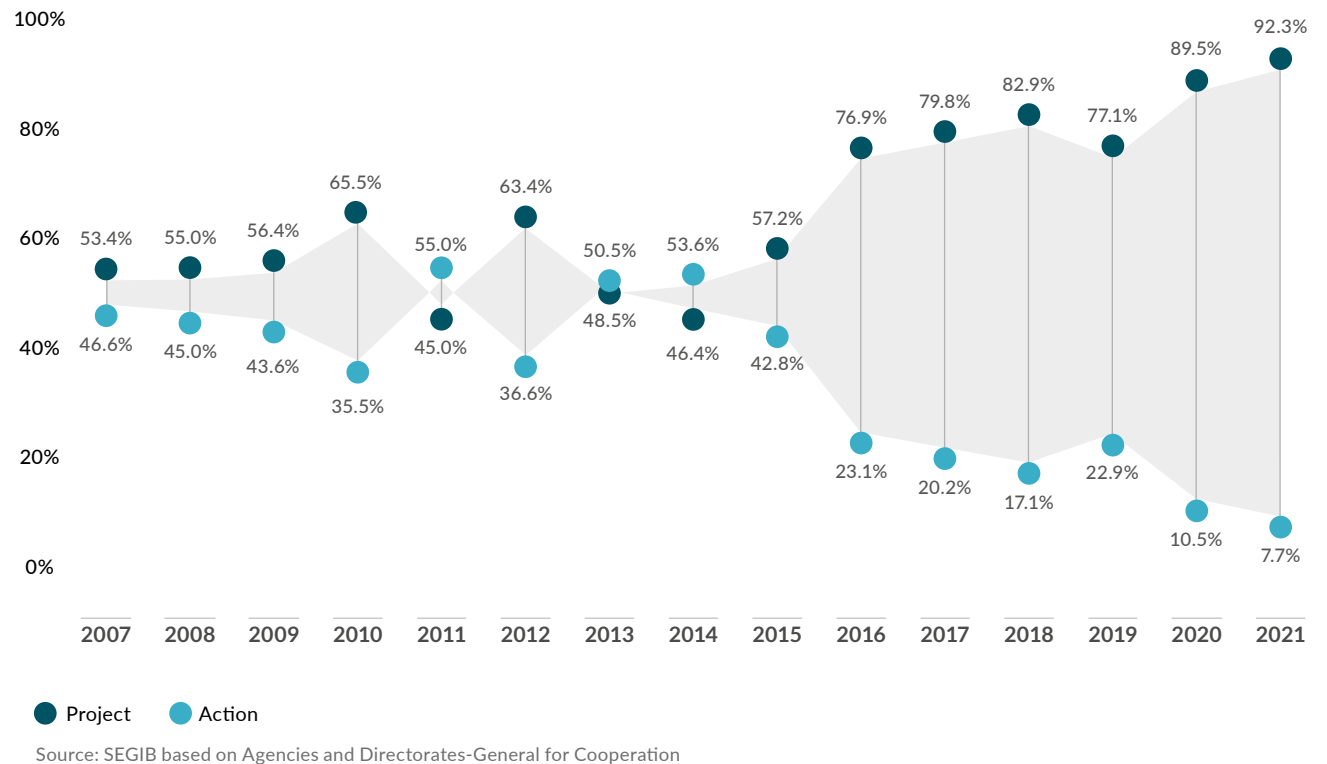
similar conditions, actions may have a very different behavior than projects: the former are more volatile while the latter are more resilient.

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

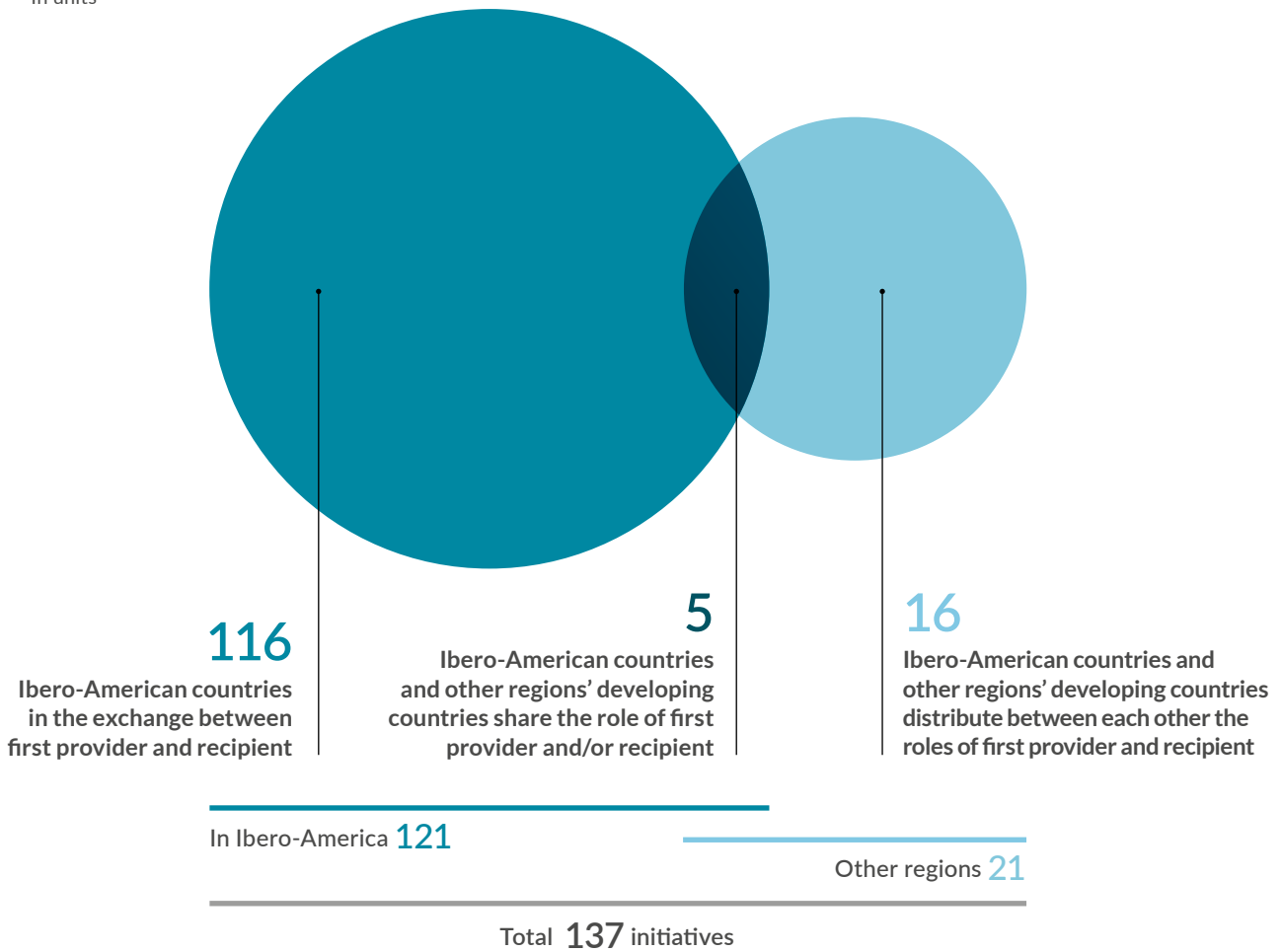
The above distribution is shown in Graph 3.3 which also differentiates (see methodological note) those initiatives in which Ibero-American countries and countries of other region(s) coincide in the exercise of one of these two roles (usually recipient) and consequently meet the two conditions. Therefore, 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

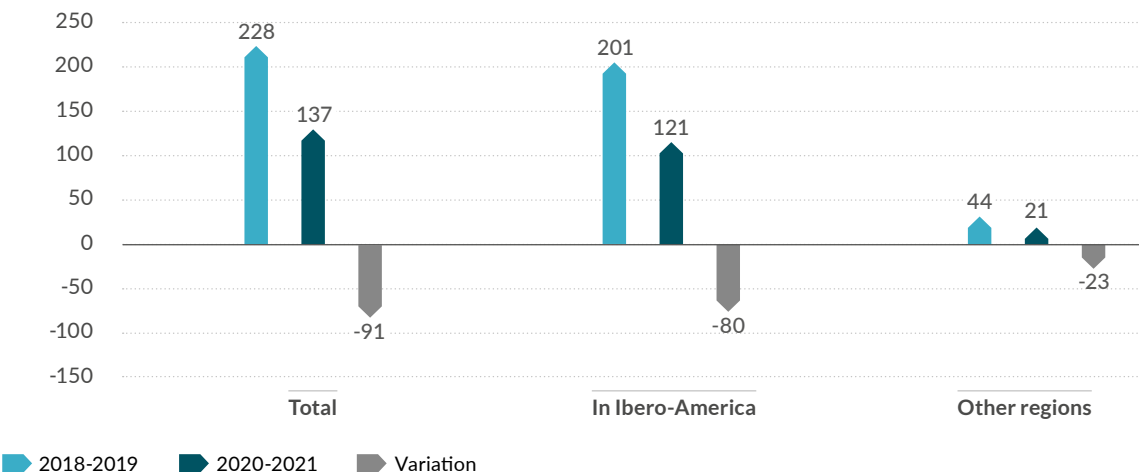


Source: SEGIB based on Agencies and Directorates-General for Cooperation

→ 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.



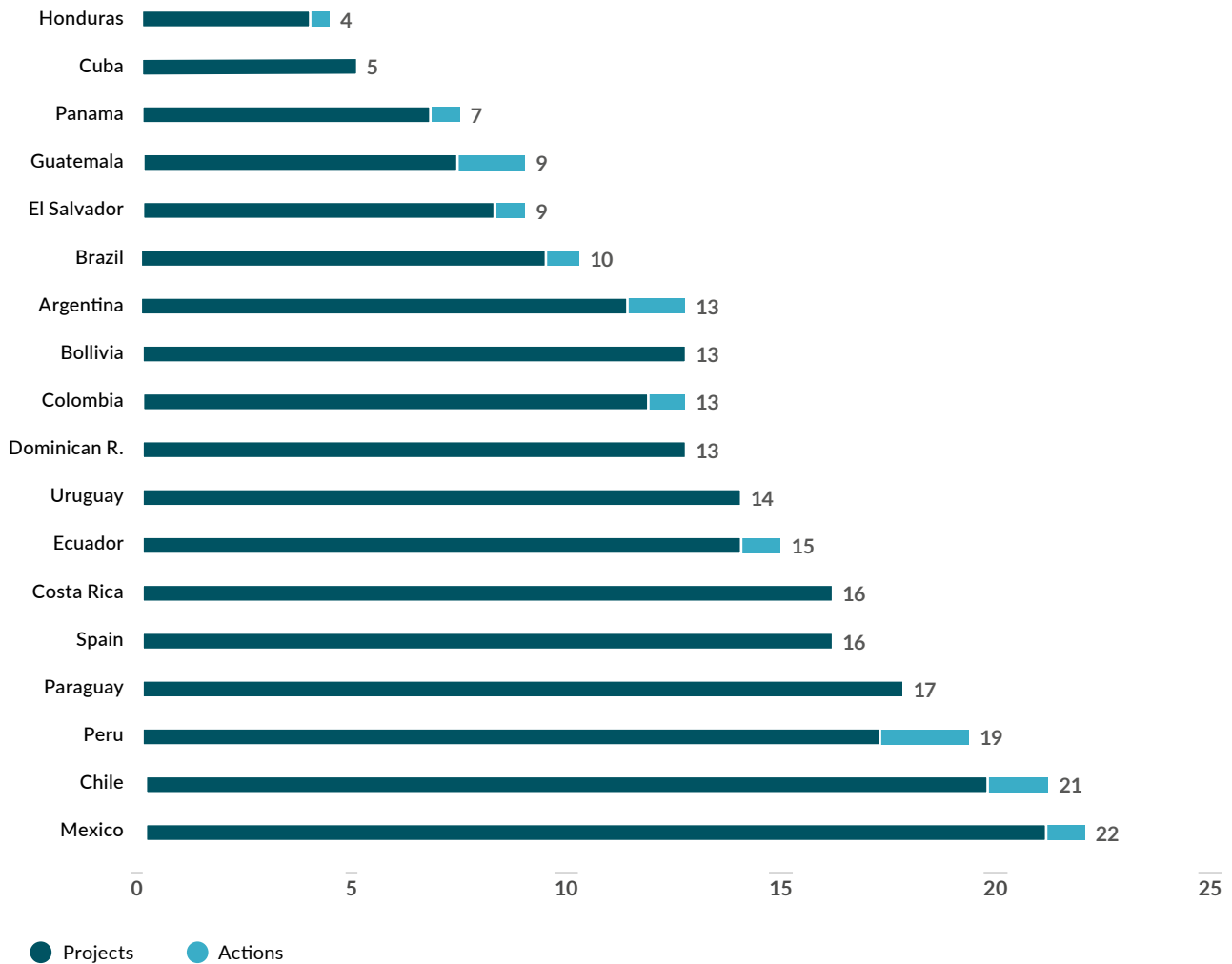
Photo: Maira Díaz studies design at the technical school of the Industry| Technology Center (*Polo Tecnológico Industry|* - PTI by its Spanish acronym) in Montevideo, Uruguay, and uses her skills in liquid packaging. Bilateral SSC project *Digital design and manufacturing for the development of vulnerable 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

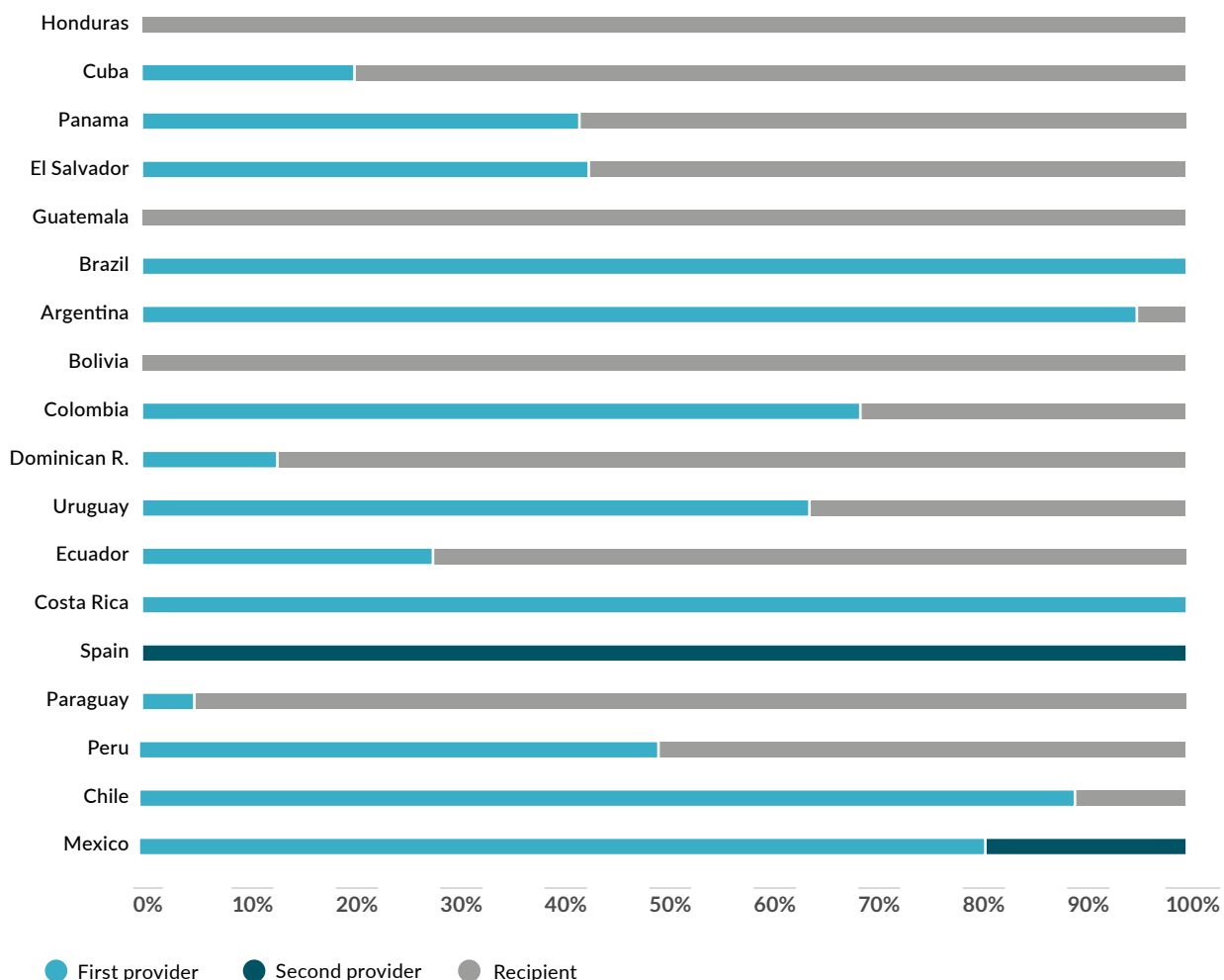
Countries' participation combined the exercise of different roles. Graph 3.6 arranges them, once again, in ascending order according to the number of initiatives in which they were involved and shows the distribution of the roles they exercised. Its interpretation suggests a trend: recipients tend to 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

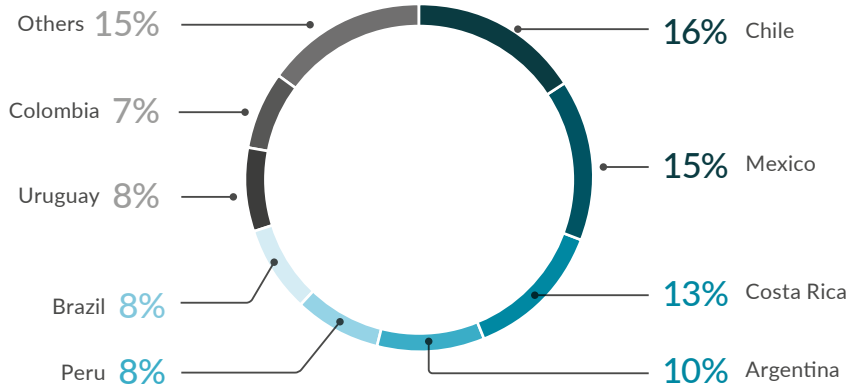
The above also explains the relative importance of each Ibero-American country in all Triangular Cooperation carried out in Ibero-America during the 2020-2021 period considering the possible roles. Graph 3.7 was plotted in order to illustrate this, as it shows the distribution of countries according 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

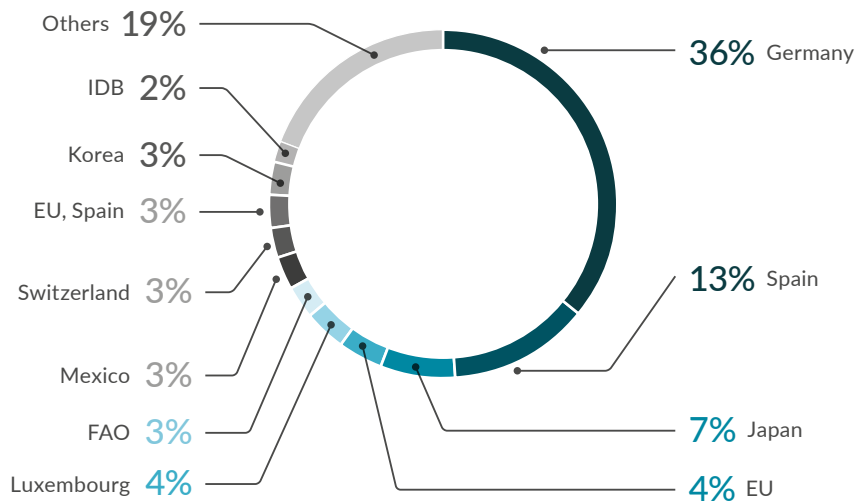
Distribution of Triangular Cooperation initiatives in Ibero-America, by roles and partners. 2020-2021

In percentage

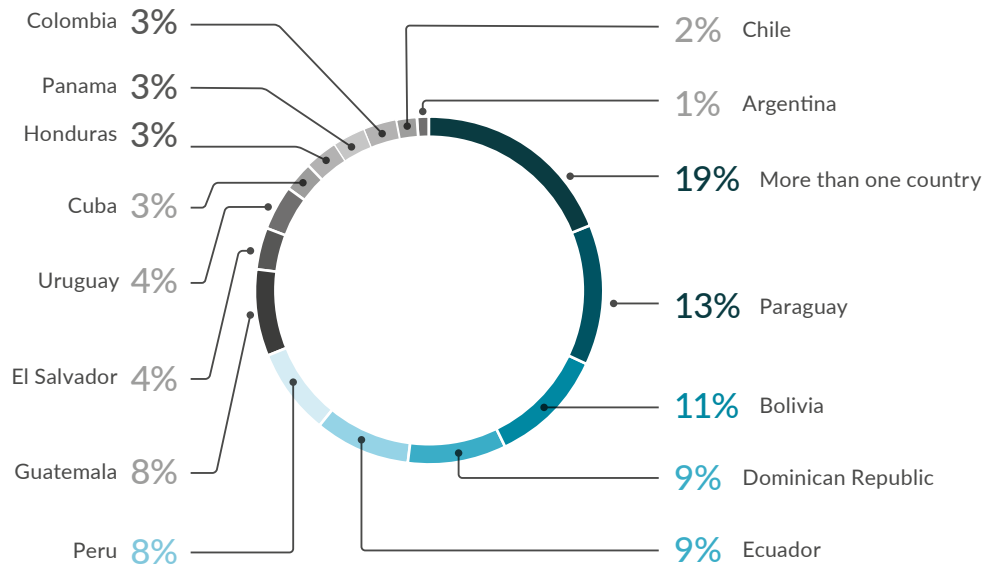
A. First provider



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.

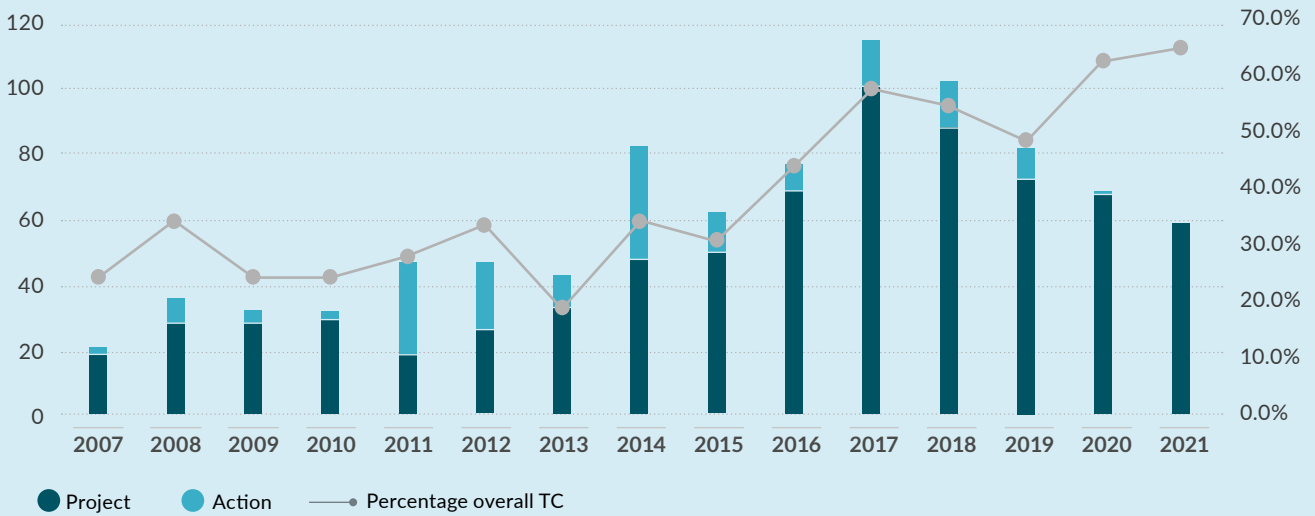
In addition, Latin-America and the Caribbean (LAC) is the region in which TC has been most dynamic, both from the point of view of the implementation of concrete initiatives as in terms of political and technical reflection (Olivié and Santillán, 2022). The document *Guidelines for the management of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

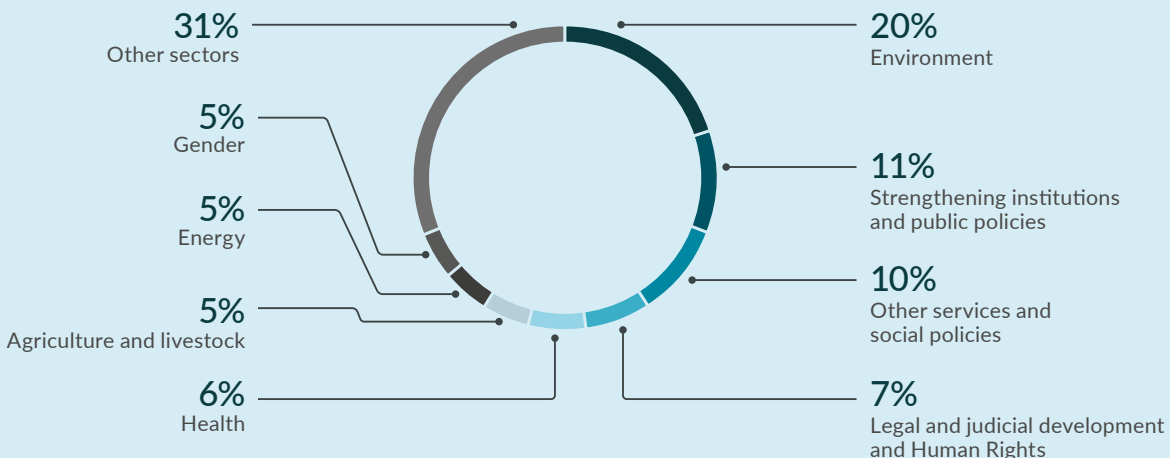
(almost all initiatives are projects and not specific actions), which is also an indicator of the consolidation of bi-regional TC.

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

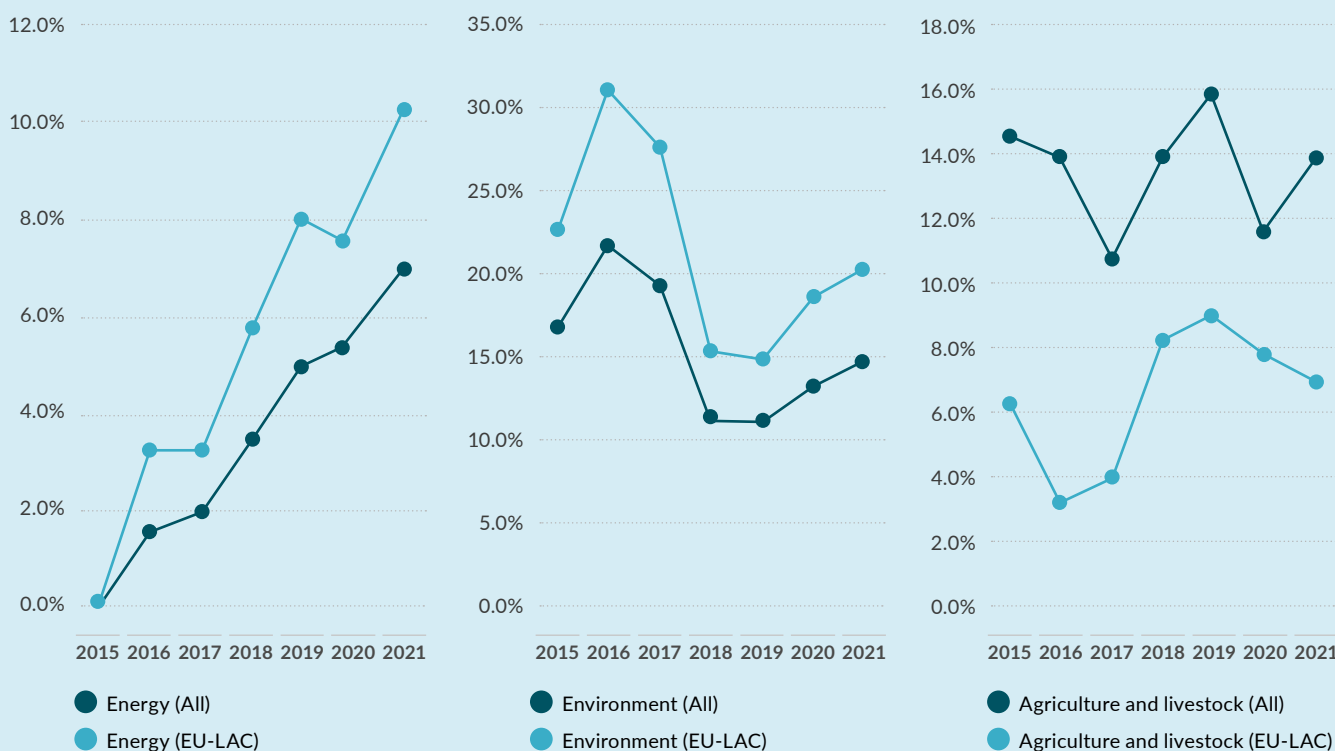
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In addition, the second graph confirms *Environment* has been the sector most strengthened by bi-regional TC between 2015 and 2021, as it accounts for one fifth

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.

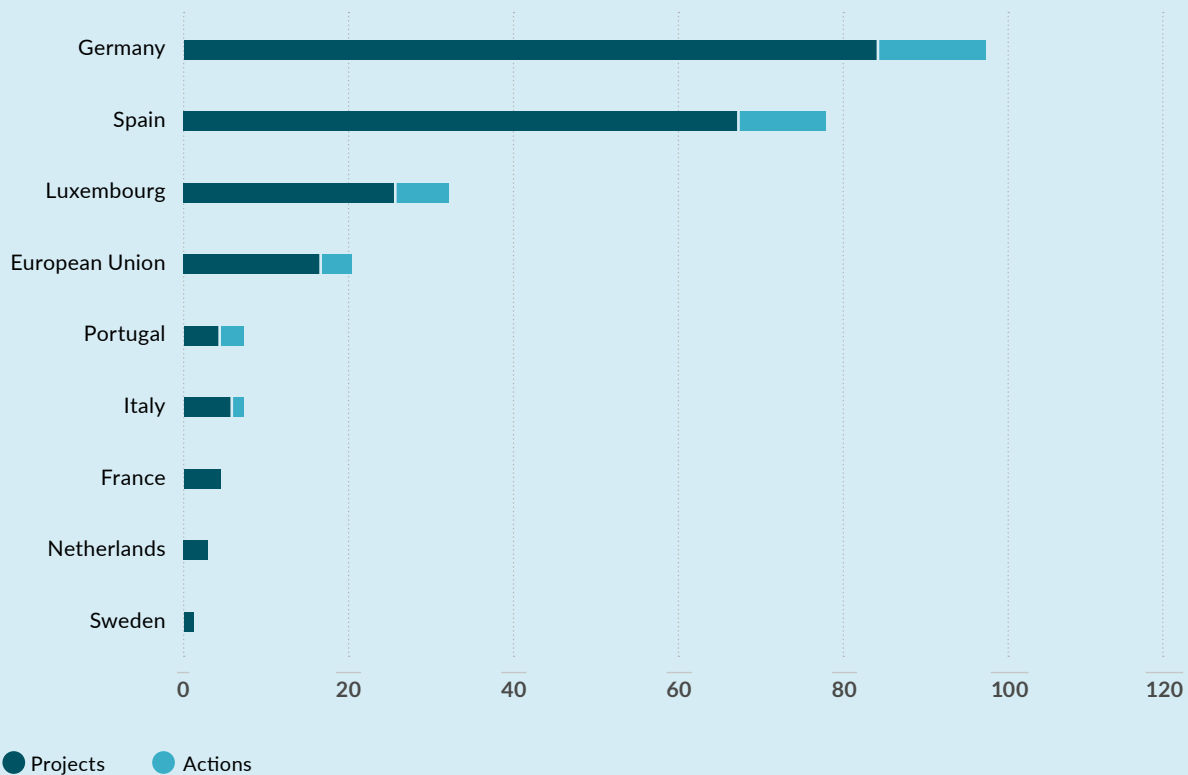
The evolution of EU-LAC TC in *Environment* is very similar to that of Ibero-America as a whole, but bi-regional TC is, on average, 6% higher in absolute terms in all the years that were analyzed. The behavior of *Agriculture and livestock* is completely opposite: while this sector, together with *Environment*,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

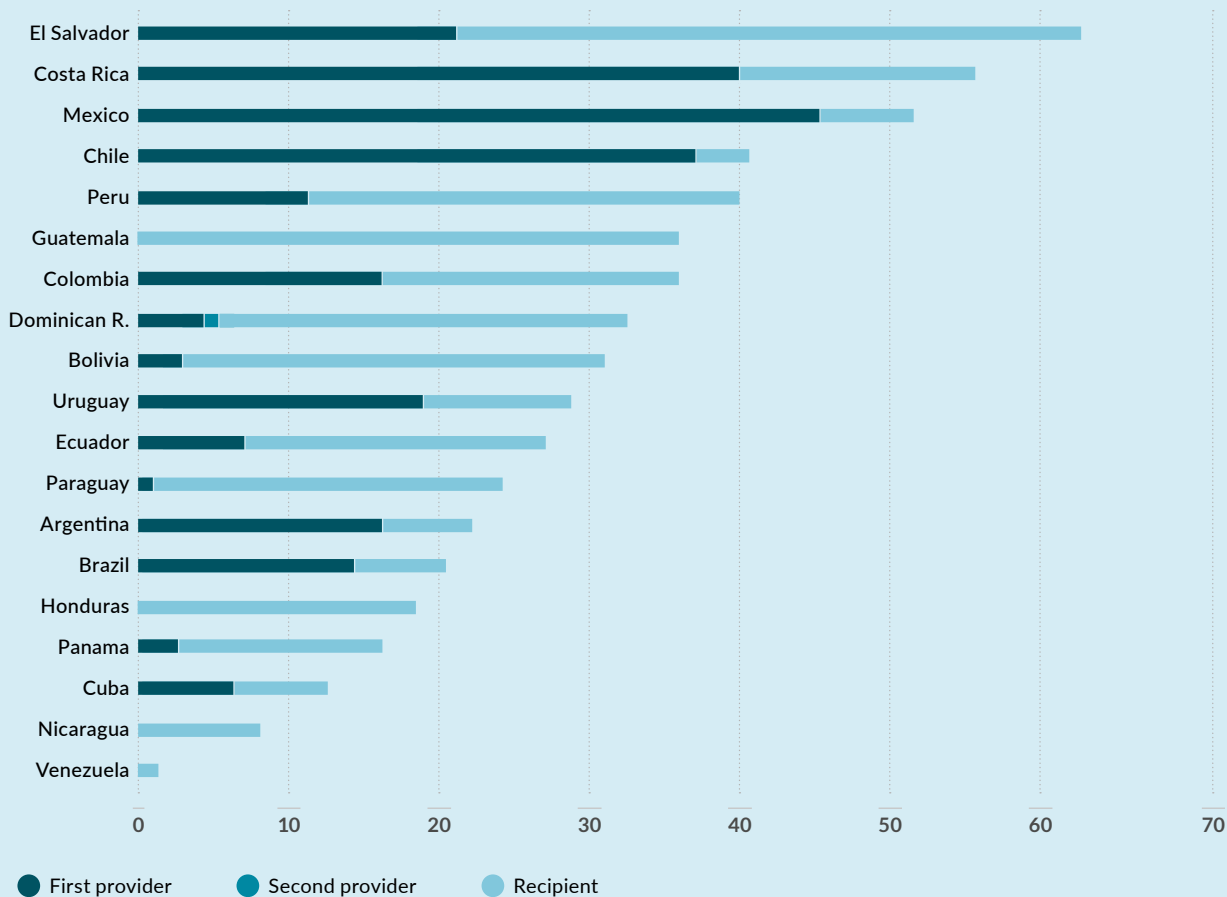
and Triangular Cooperation (FOSAL by its Spanish acronym). Costa Rica, Mexico and Chile follow. These three countries have mainly acted as providers in bi-regional TC during the analyzed period. In addition to the above, it is important to note that all 19 countries have participated in at least one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

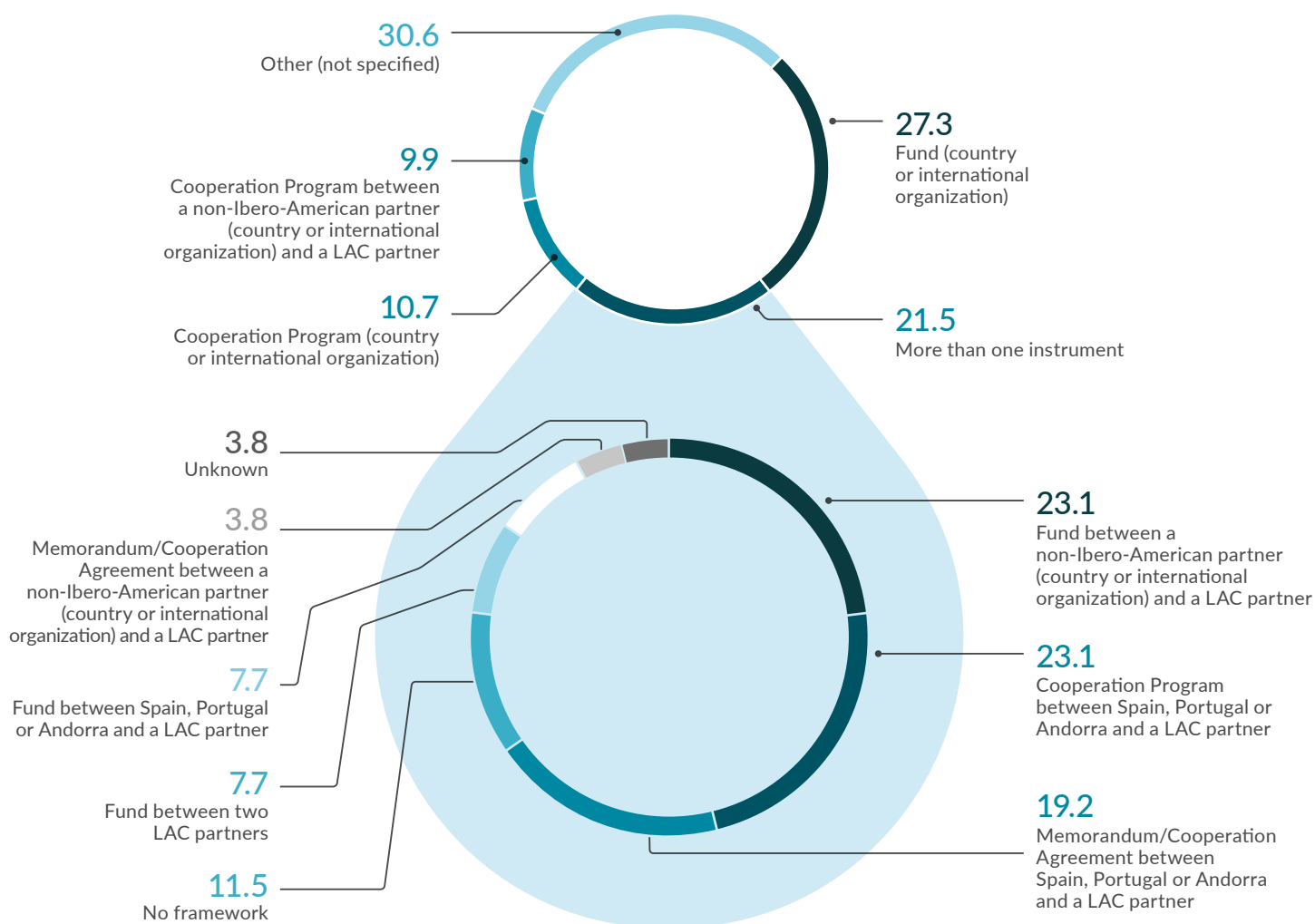
Graph 3.8 also reveals that a remarkable 21.3% of the initiatives are associated with "Other" instruments. As shown, their classification is diverse, but two cases stand out given their capacity to generate partnerships within the Ibero-American space itself: first, "Funds between two LAC partners"; 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).

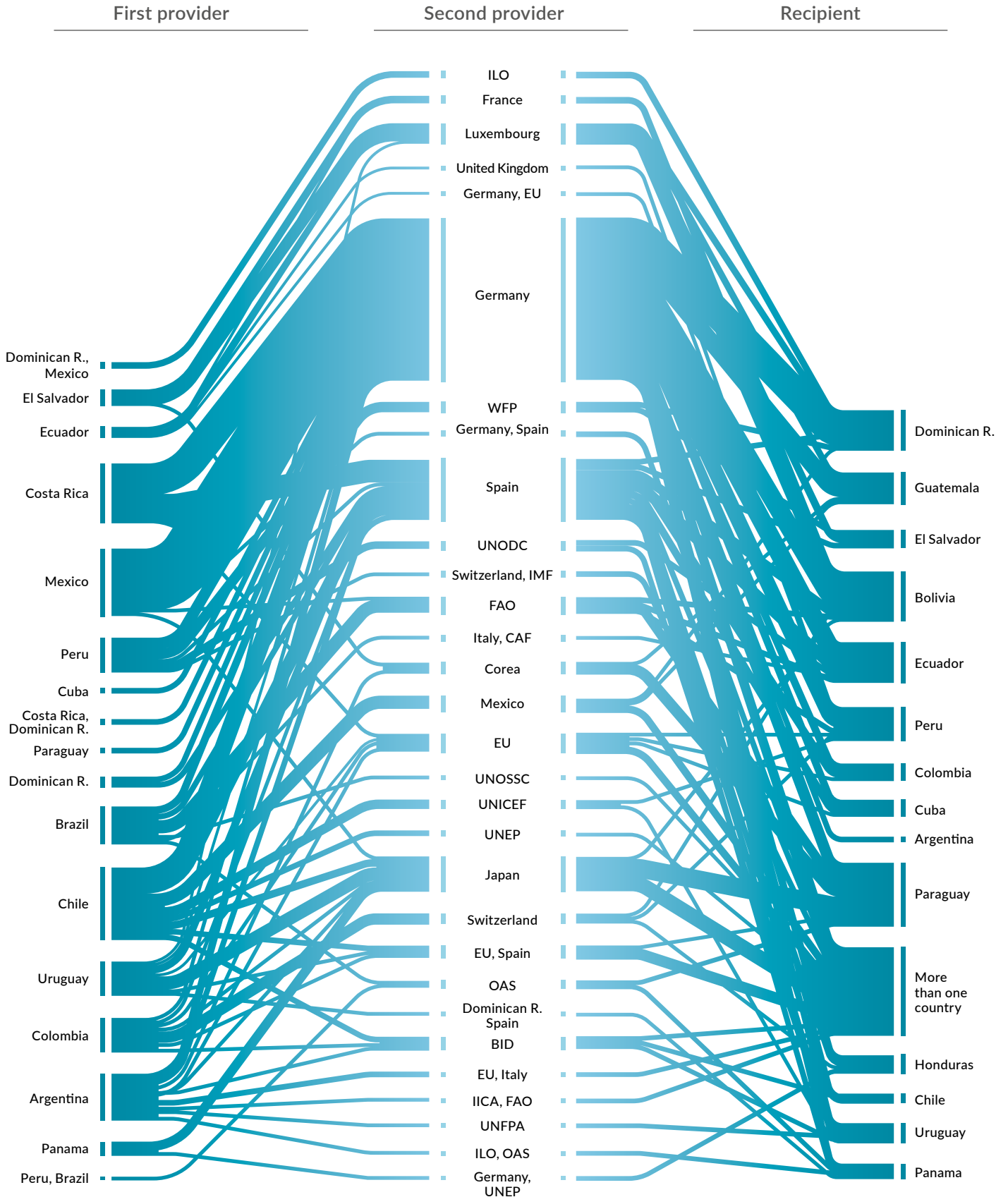
The category "Funds between a non-Ibero-American partner (country or international organization) and a LAC partner" completes this diversity of "Other" instruments. Special attention in this sense deserve the Mexico-Germany Mixed Fund, which focuses on supporting projects in third countries in areas 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.

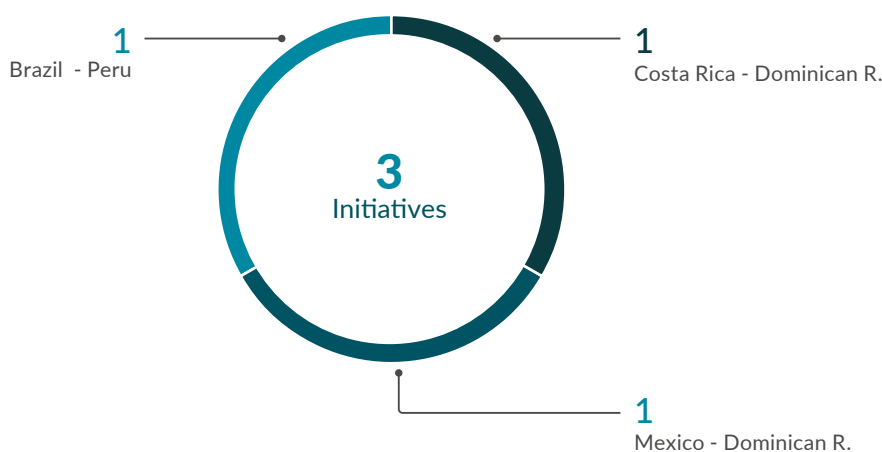
The most consolidated partnerships seem to be established between first and second providers. In contrast, reception tends to be more dispersed among different partners or exercised by several countries simultaneously

→ GRAPH 3.10

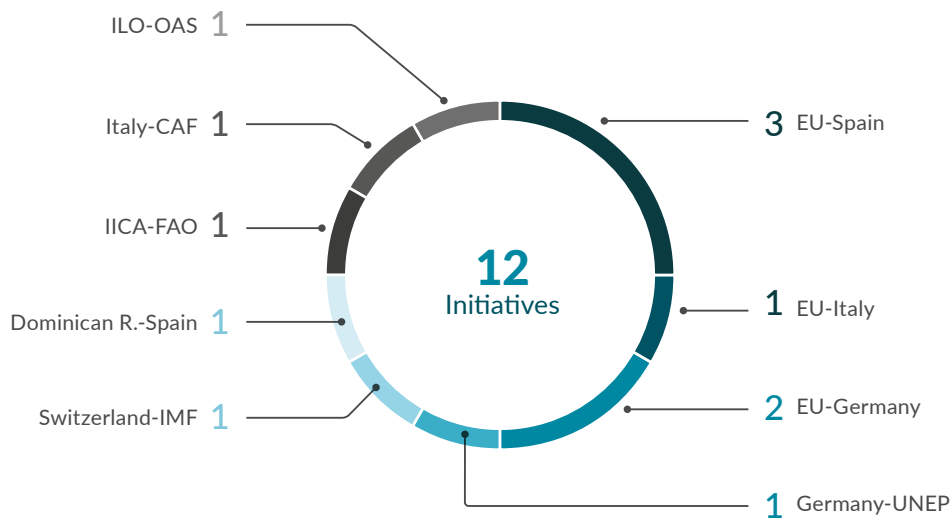
Triangular Cooperation initiatives in Ibero-America in which two or more partners share the same role. 2020-2021

In units and percentage

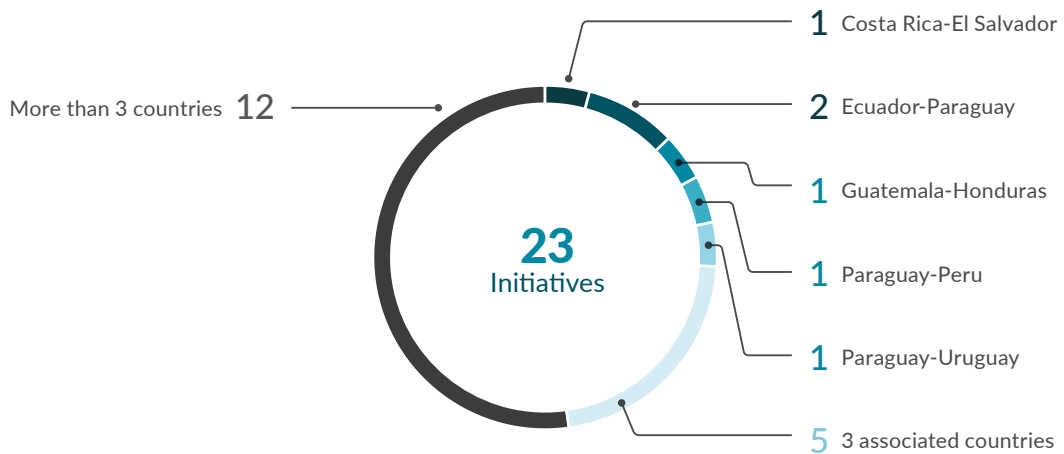
A. First provider



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

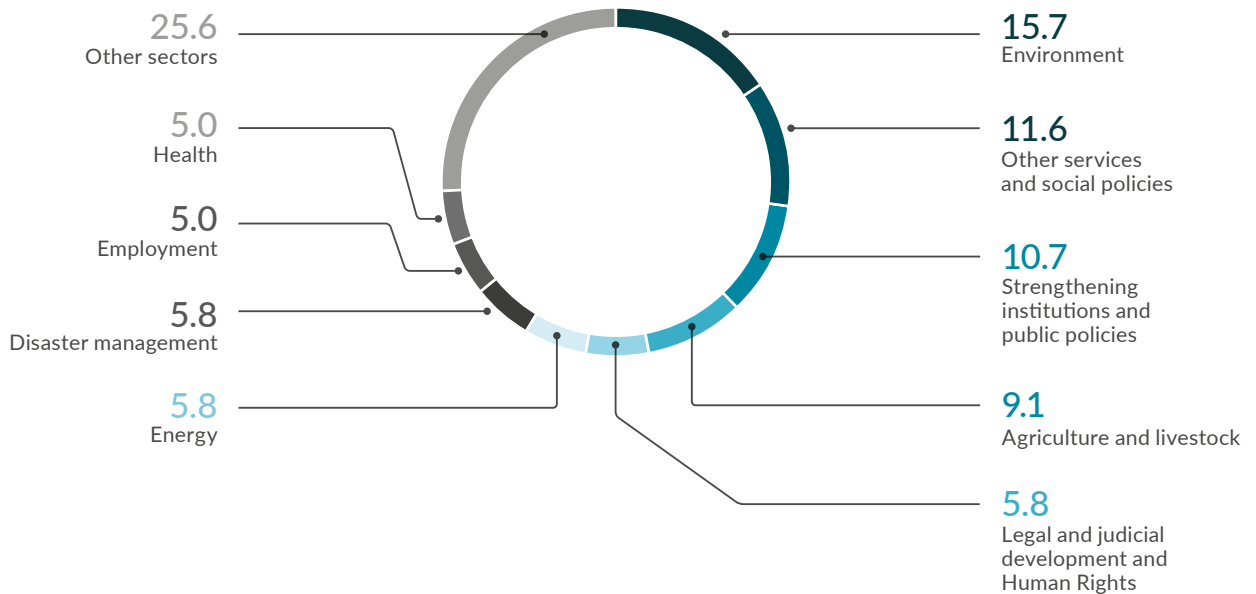
A combined analysis of Graph 3.11 and 3.12 sheds light on those capacities that were mainly strengthened in the region, through TC, during the 2020-2021 period, when the aim to advance sustainable development coincided with need to address the impact caused by COVID-19. The first graph distributes the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

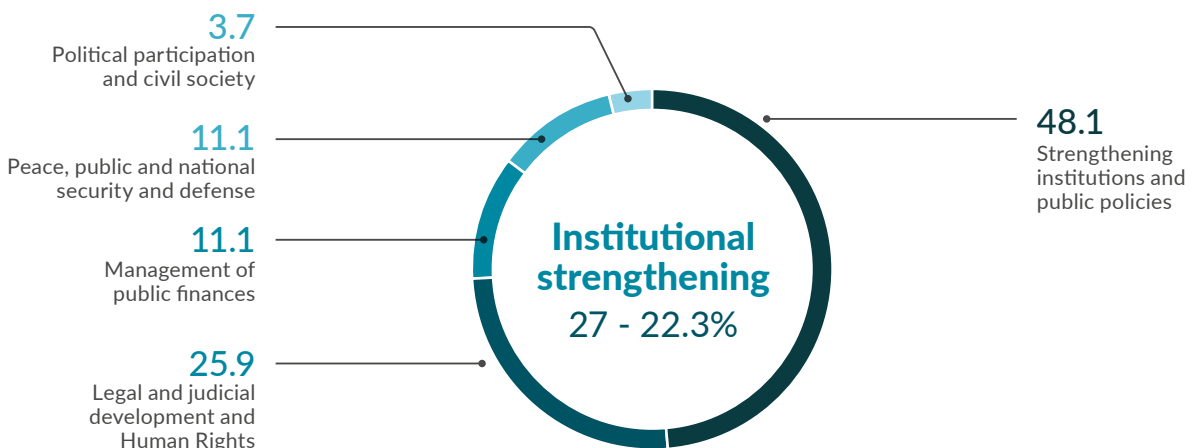
Three areas of action stood out in the 2020-2021 period: on the one hand, Institutional strengthening and Environment, both with more than 25 initiatives, each accounting for around 22% of the final number; and the Social area, on the other hand (24 initiatives, accounting for almost another 20% of the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

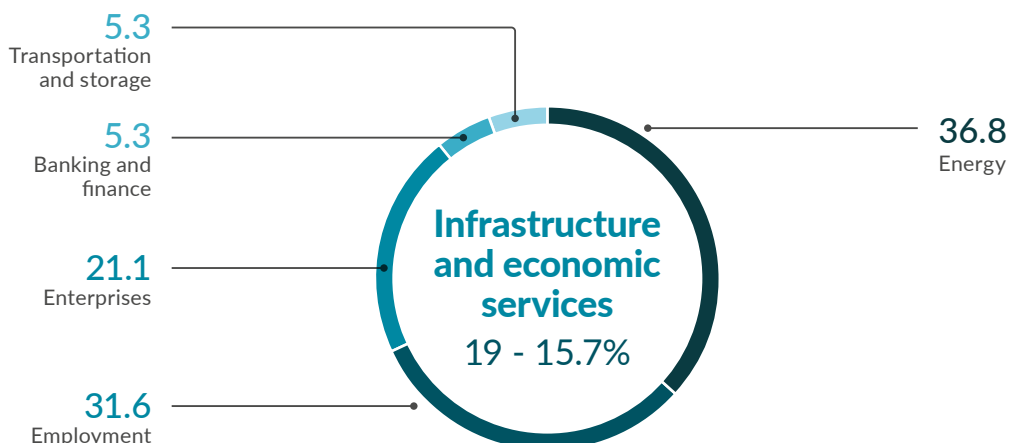
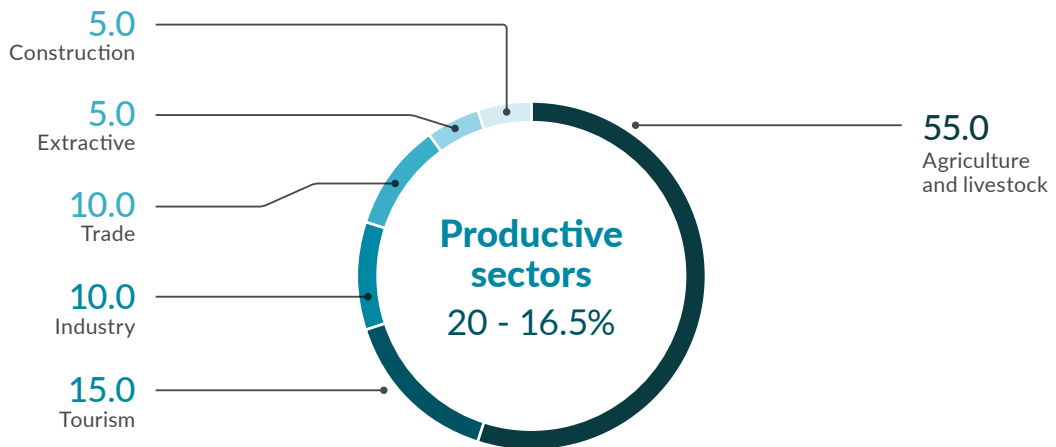
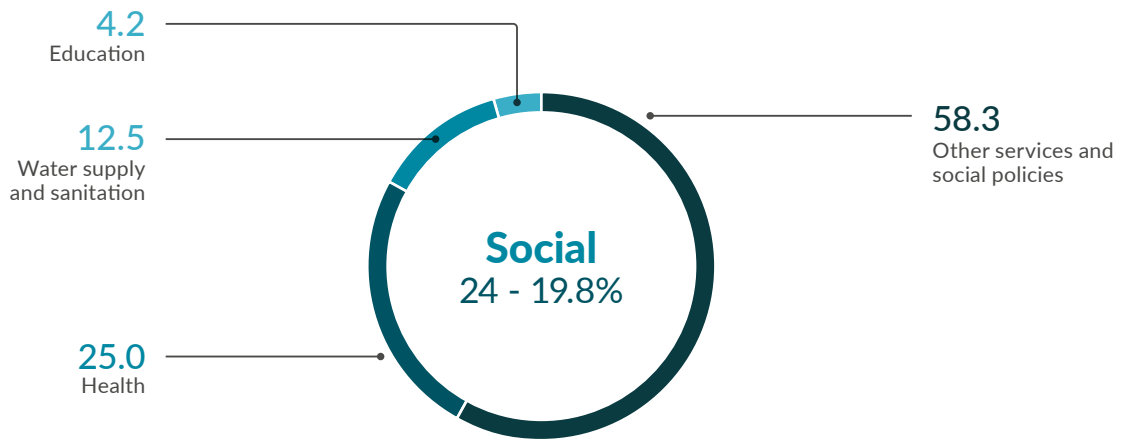
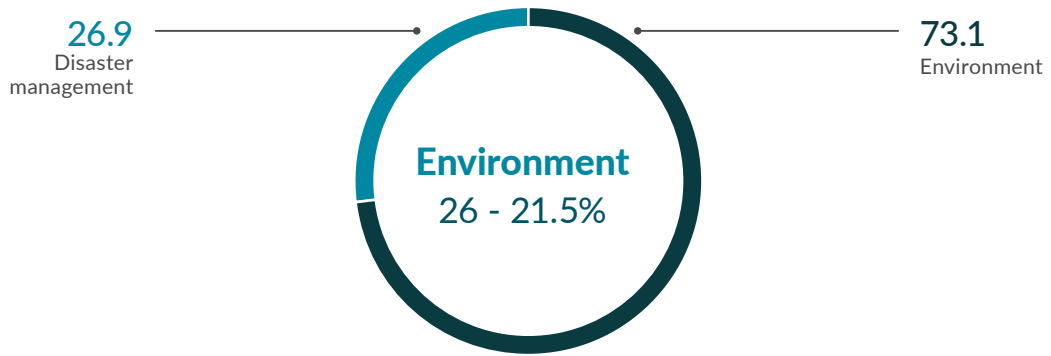
both the Productive sectors and the generation of Infrastructure and economic services, had a similar relative importance of around 16% respectively. The share of TC dedicated to Other areas was less significant, only 4.1%.

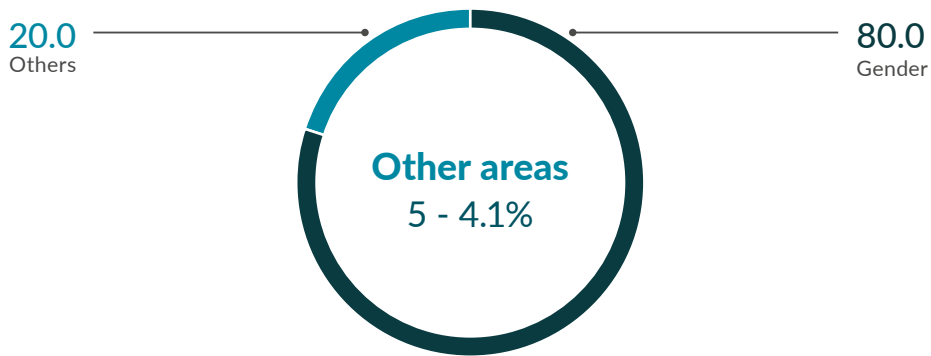
→ GRAPH 3.12

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.

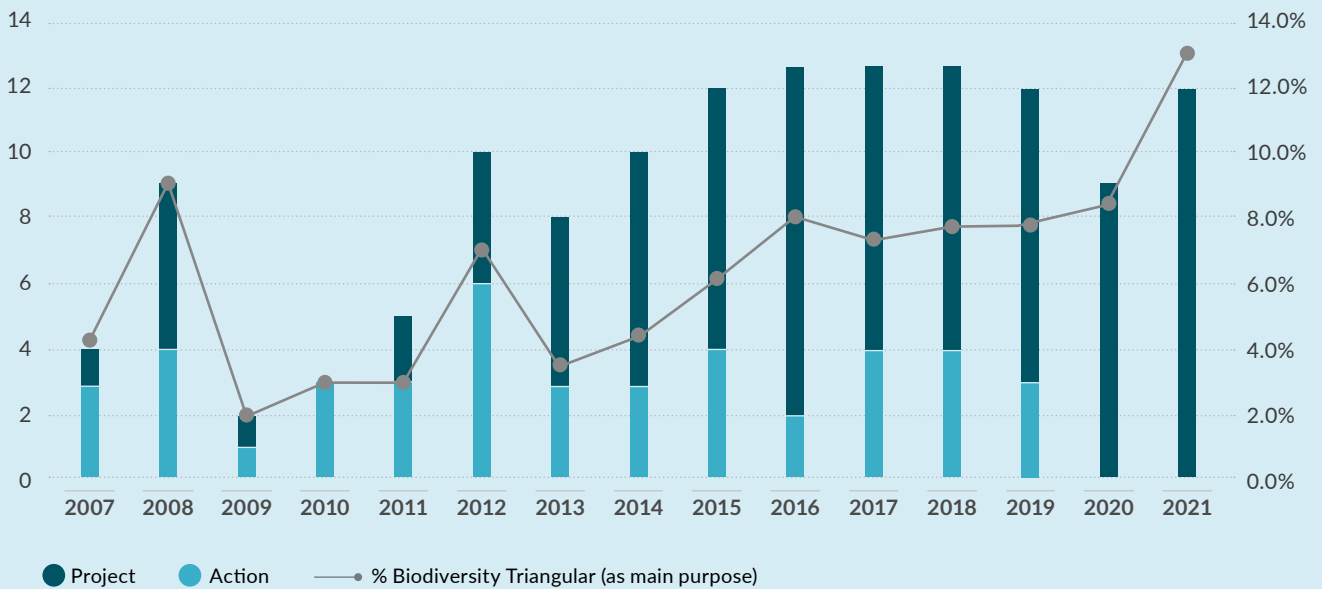
Those that indirectly focus on biodiversity were dedicated to improve environmental care (Planning and management; Data, evaluation and control; Education and Research), pollution reduction (water, soil, air, hazardous pollutants, waste, etc.),

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

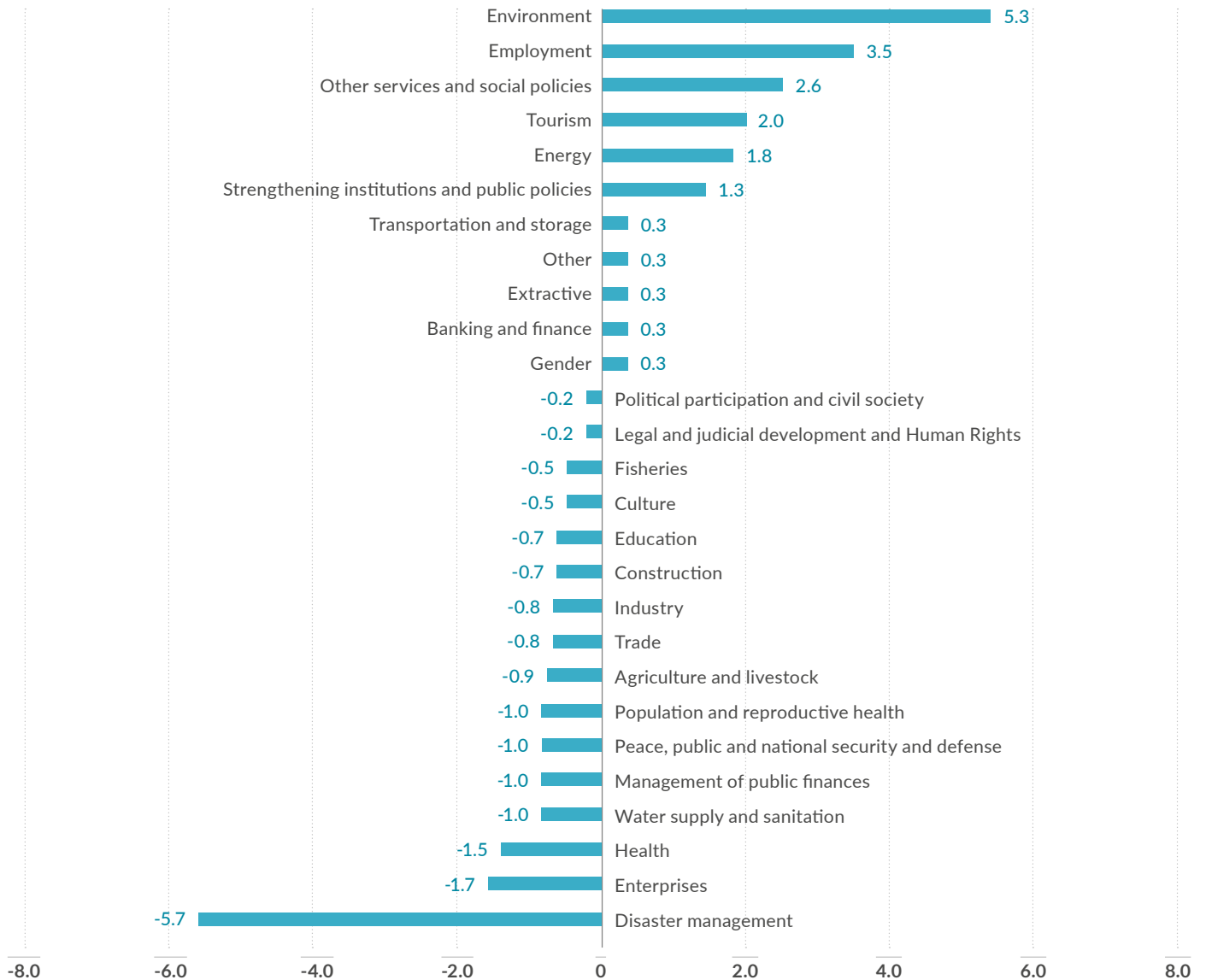
succeeded in reversing the trend of recent years in which the *Health* sector is being progressively outperformed by *Environment*.

— 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.

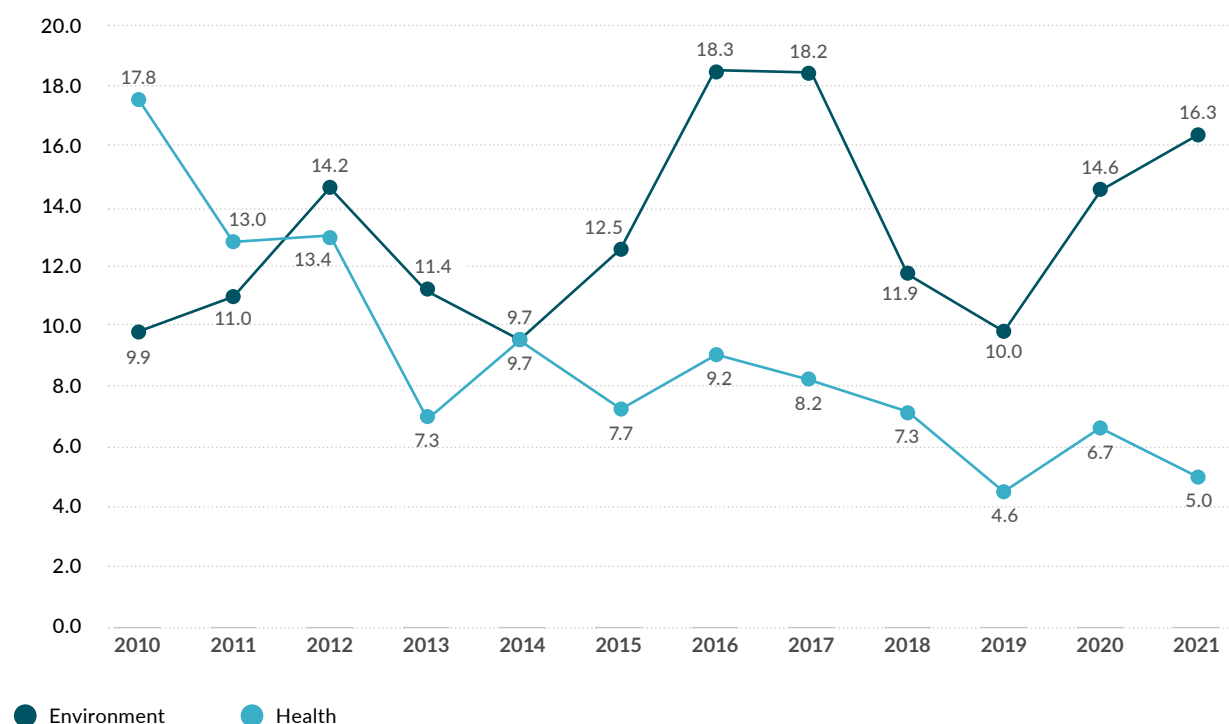
The second graph illustrates the evolution of the relative importance of each of these two sectors in the total number of triangular initiatives implemented each year in the 2010-2021 period. As can be seen, in 2010, most TC initiatives focused on *Health*, with a share of almost 18%, 8 percentage points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

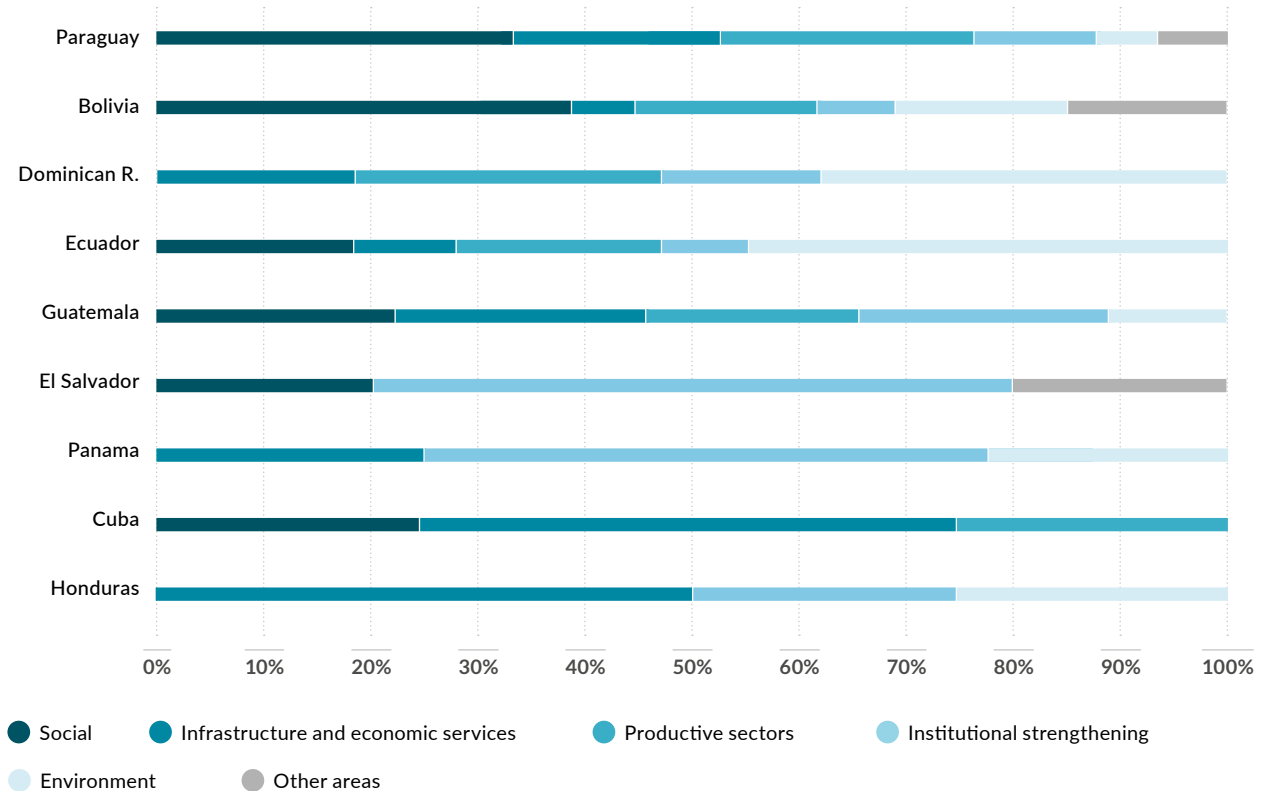
The type of capacities that were strengthened in Ibero-America as a result of TC implemented during the 2020-2021 period responds to a combination of aspects: the main stakeholders that participated in the different partnerships; the participation (or not) of international organizations with a strong 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,

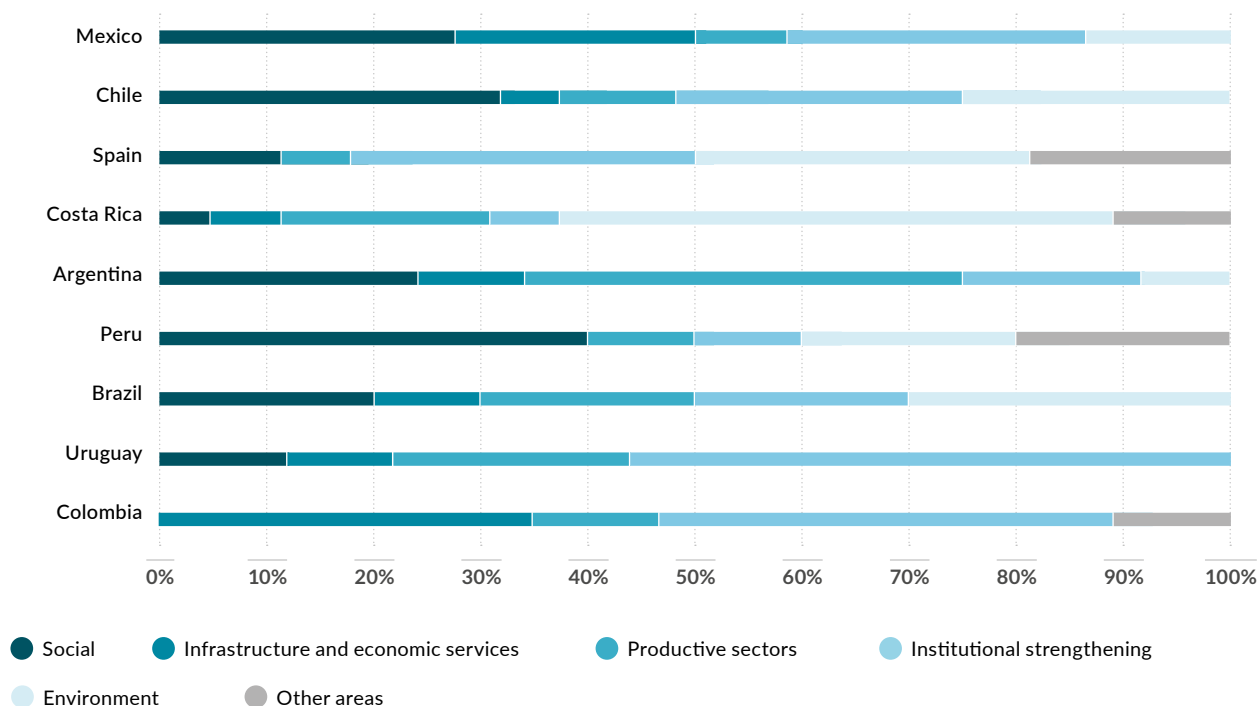
Honduras and Cuba focused on *Energy*, through actions to foster the use of renewable sources (solar thermal technology) and a more efficient management, which, in the case of the Caribbean country, is expected to have a special impact on industry.

— 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

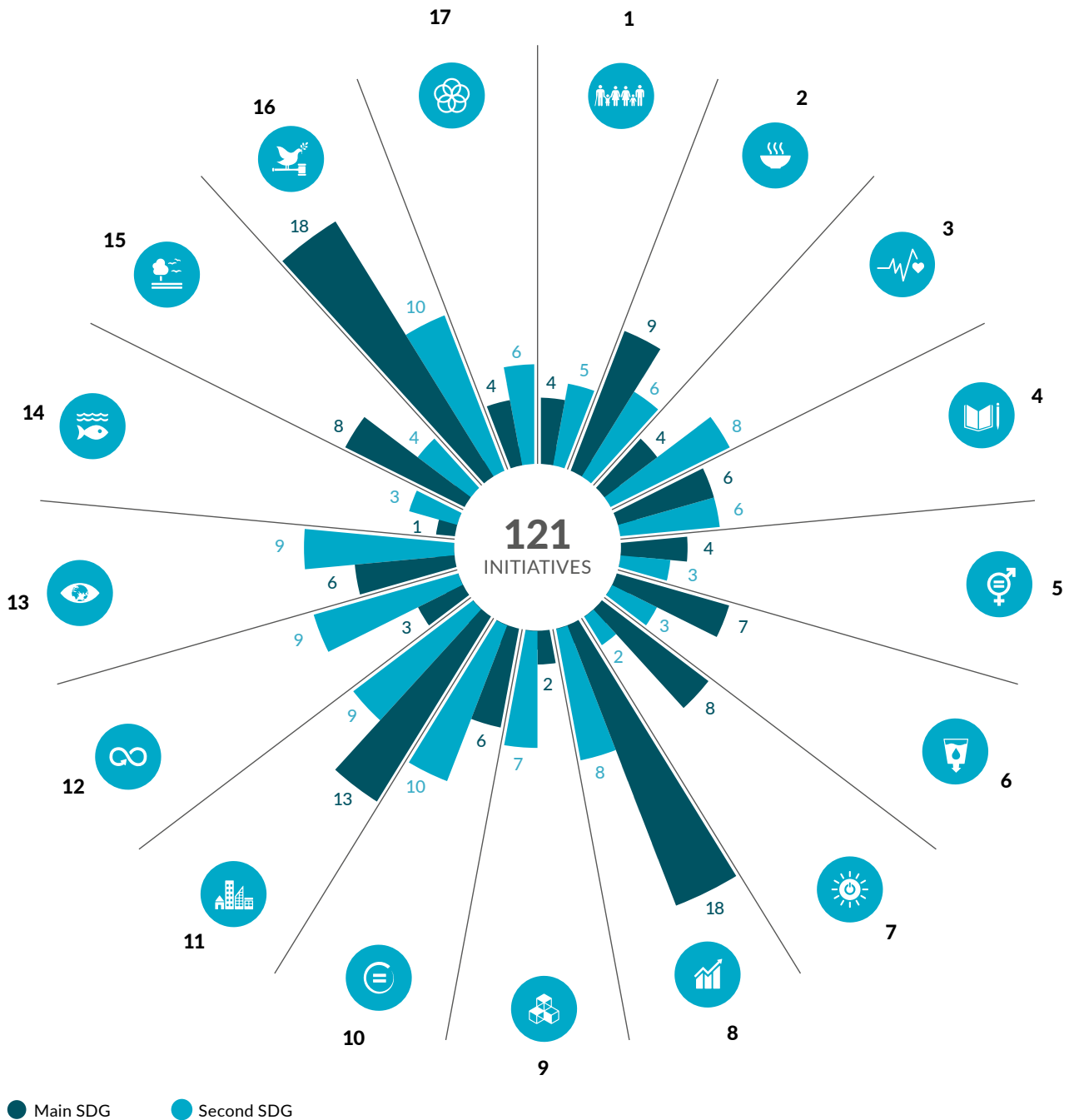
The profile of the capacities TC has enabled to strengthen in Ibero-America during the 2020-2021 period has another interpretation related to the way in which this modality can contribute to the region's progress to achieve the SDGs and the 2030 Agenda. In this sense, Malacalza (2022) points out that, 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.