



Photo: The Eastern Tropical Pacific Marine Corridor (CMAR by its Spanish acronym) goes from Costa Rica to Ecuador, with an extension of two million square kilometers. Through SSC, Ibero-American countries such as Colombia and Costa Rica contribute to responsible tourism and to the preservation of the biodiversity of these ecosystems. Image bank on South-South and Triangular Cooperation in Ibero-America. SEGIB-PIFCSS. 2022

3 Ibero-America and Regional South-South Cooperation: common challenges, shared solutions

Regional SSC requires bringing multiple and diverse stakeholders together (countries of the South, other regions' countries, and multilateral organizations) to search for shared solutions in the face of common challenges. This capacity to generate partnerships to contribute to the achievement of sustainable and inclusive development is certainly one of its great strengths. These associations, and the instruments through which this modality is put into practice, explain the fact that Regional SSC showed a relative resilience during the COVID-19 crisis. Since then, however, this SSC has been on a downward trend that shows no signs of recovery. In this sense, this chapter analyzes Ibero-American Regional SSC in the 2022-2023 period, contextualizing it and identifying the network of stakeholders, instruments

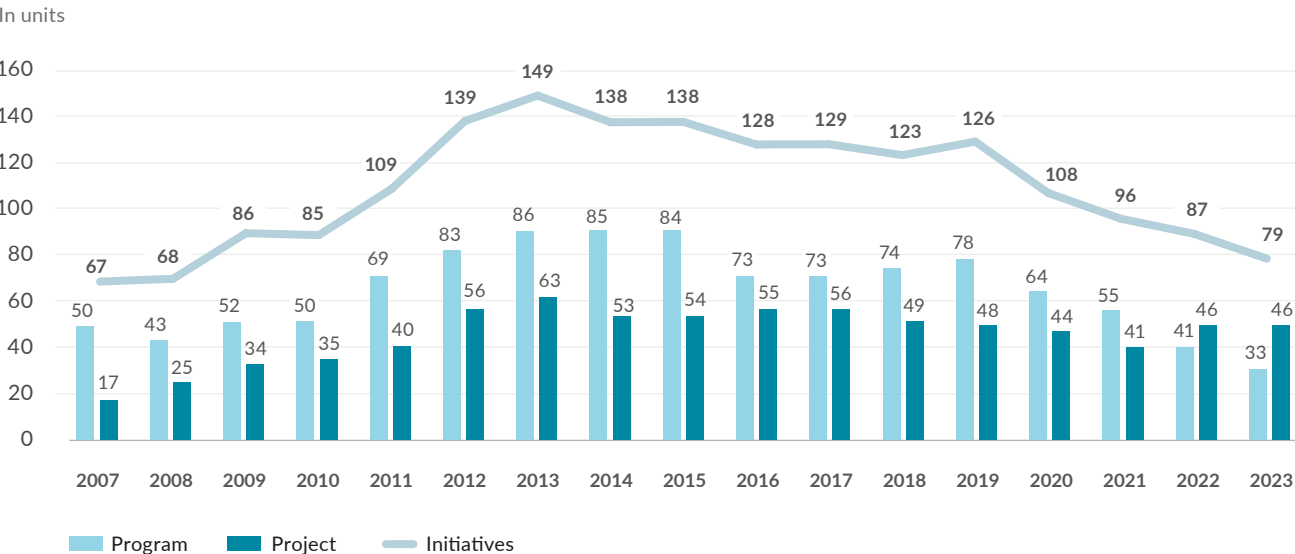
and thematic priorities that enabled this modality to continue to meet its commitment to development.

3.1 Regional SSC in Ibero-America in 2022 and 2023: a context analysis

Graph 3.1 was prepared to analyze the Regional SSC that was carried out in the 2022-2023 period, in the framework of the historical evolution of the exchanges that have taken place in this modality over the last 15

// Graph 3.1

Evolution of the total number of Regional SSC projects, programs and initiatives exchanged by Ibero-American countries with all partners. 2007-2023



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

years. To this end, the graph shows the total number of Regional SSC projects, programs and initiatives in which Ibero-American countries have annually participated since 2007 to 2023. A first approach suggests the succession of different stages of opposite sign: the sharp increase registered between 2007 and 2013 is followed by a series of declines, strongly intensified after the beginning of the pandemic.

Specifically, between 2007 and 2013, Regional SSC initiatives had an average growth rate of 15.0%, bringing the final number of exchanges from 67 to an all-time high close to 150. Since then, a series of successive decreases (-2.7% on average per year up to 2019) will severely intensify after the impact caused by the COVID-19 crisis, reaching an average of -11.0% in 2020-2023. As the graph shows, this dynamic pushes the final number of Regional CSS initiatives down to 79 in 2023, a value that is almost one half of the historical maximum registered in 2013.

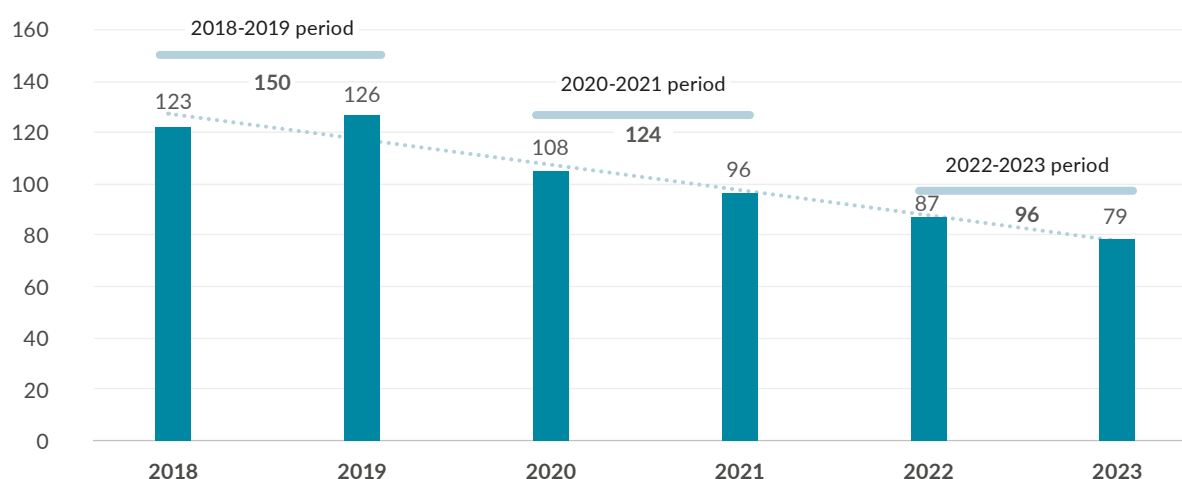
Graph 3.2 reviews this evolution once again, this time focusing on the specific context of the pandemic, between 2018 and 2023, both annually and on a two-year period basis. This enables the analysis of three key periods: before (2018-2019), during (2020-2021) and after the COVID-19 crisis (2022-2023).

Indeed, in Graph 3.2, the trend line that corresponds to the Regional SSC initiatives that were implemented from 2018 to 2023 has a distinctly downward trajectory. The analysis by two-year periods ratifies the above and shows that this tendency even intensifies in the post-pandemic years. In fact, between 2018-2019 and 2020-2021, exchanges fell by -17.3% (from 150 to 124). Meanwhile, from then on and after overcoming the crisis, that figure drops even more (by -22.6%), pushing the final number of initiatives in 2022-2023 to 96, below the threshold of 100.

// Graph 3.2

Regional SSC initiatives implemented in the pre- and post-COVID crisis, by year and two-year period. 2018-2023

In units



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

The loss that Regional SSC's relative importance has had in recent years and, specifically, during the 2022-2023 period, is precisely explained when comparing this dynamic with that registered in terms of Bilateral SSC and Triangular Cooperation in the same period. In order to illustrate the above, Graph 3.3 shows the annual evolution of the relative importance of the three modalities recognized in the Ibero-American space in the region's total number of initiatives in the 2018-2023 period. Indeed, the graph was plotted with a double vertical axis so as to better compare them: Triangular Cooperation's and Regional SSC's shares are placed on the left axis —percentages ranging

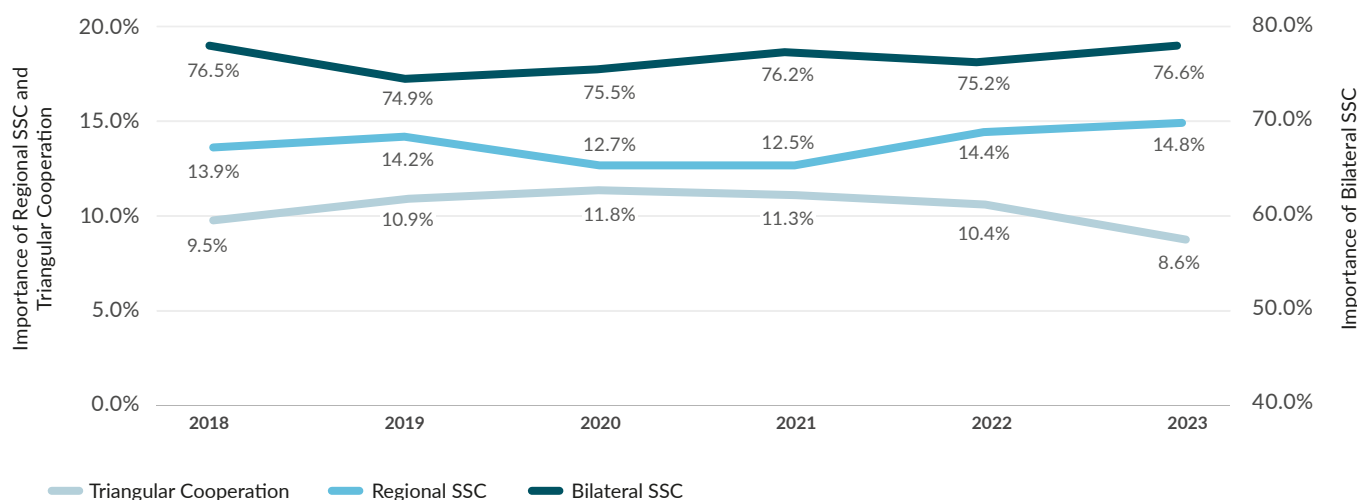
between 0% and 20%—; and Bilateral SSC's is located to the right and ranging between 40% and 80%.

Between 2018-2019 and 2020-2021, exchanges fell by -17.3%; meanwhile, from then on and after overcoming the crisis, that figure drops even more (by -22.6%)

// Graph 3.3

Evolution of the weight of Bilateral SSC, Triangular Cooperation and Regional SSC in the total number of initiatives exchanged by Ibero-American countries with all partners, in the pre- and post-COVID crisis. 2018-2023

In percentage

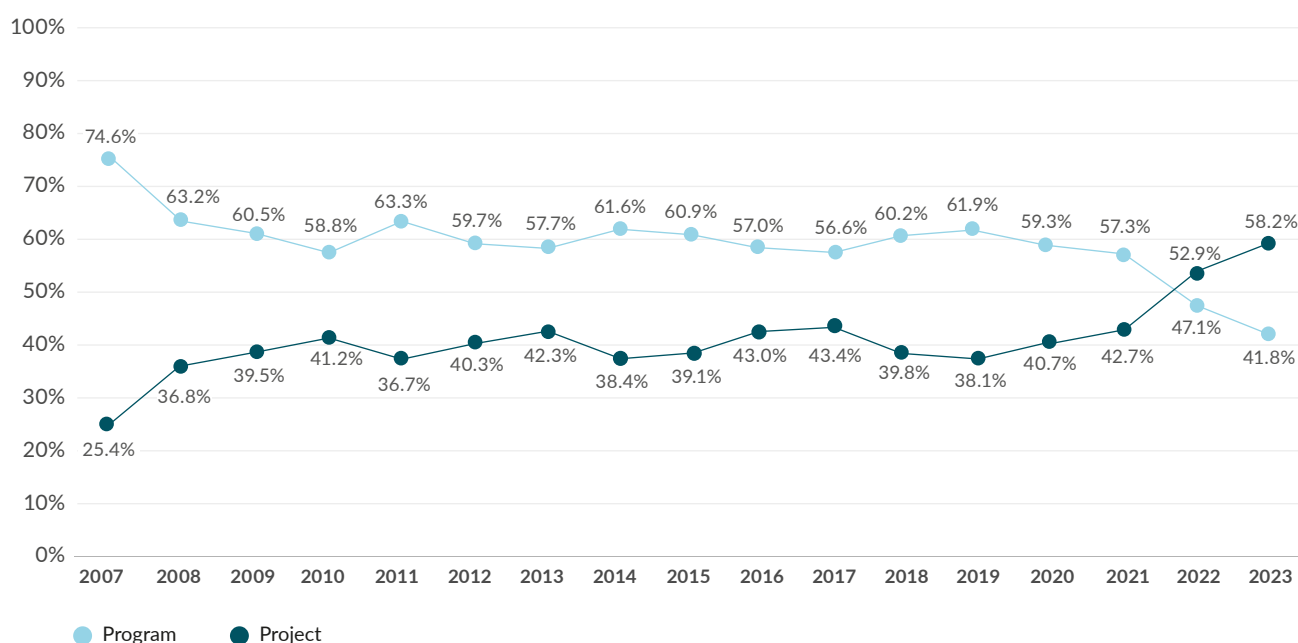


Source: SEGIB based on Agencies and Directorates-General for Cooperation

// Graph 3.4

Evolution of projects' and programs' weight in the total number of Regional SSC initiatives exchanged by Ibero-American countries with all partners. 2007-2023

In percentage



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

Graph 3.3 confirms several trends in this sense. First, the predominance of Bilateral SSC in the region exchanges as a whole, since, in the entire period, this modality has a relative share of over 75%. Second, the graph shows that in the midst of the crisis –and despite the fact that the pandemic had an impact on the three modalities, all

of them having a reduction in the number of initiatives in their framework–, Triangular Cooperation suffered the greatest shock, while Regional SSC held up comparatively better, as shown by an increase in its relative share of nearly two percentage points. Third, and in contrast, Bilateral SSC's and Triangular Cooperation's recovery

(more and less intense, respectively), combined with Regional SSC's remarkable fall, explains the inevitable displacement of this modality, which loses more than 3 percentage points (8.6% of the total), a figure which is even lower than that of the pre-pandemic period.

In short, in 2022-2023, Regional SSC has not only failed to stop the drop caused by the crisis triggered by COVID-19, but also loses relative importance in the region's exchanges as a whole, where it is displaced by the Bilateral and Triangular modalities, especially by the latter. It should be added that this dynamic also takes place in the context of an increasing discontinuation of some Regional SSC programs which, since 2020, have been successively falling, on an annual average close to -20.0% (see Graph 3.1). Meanwhile, projects decreased in the pandemic, but recovered during 2022 and 2023. This contrast is shown in Graph 3.4, which reveals the evolution of both instruments' annual relative importance in the total number of Regional SSC initiatives implemented in the 2007-2023 period. As can be seen, the programs-projects' ratio had been remarkably stable until the outbreak of the pandemic (60%-40%). The COVID-19 crisis, however, represents a turning point that completely reverses this relation in favor of projects which, by the end of 2023, already account for 6 out of 10.

3.2

Partners and associations for development in the framework of Regional SSC

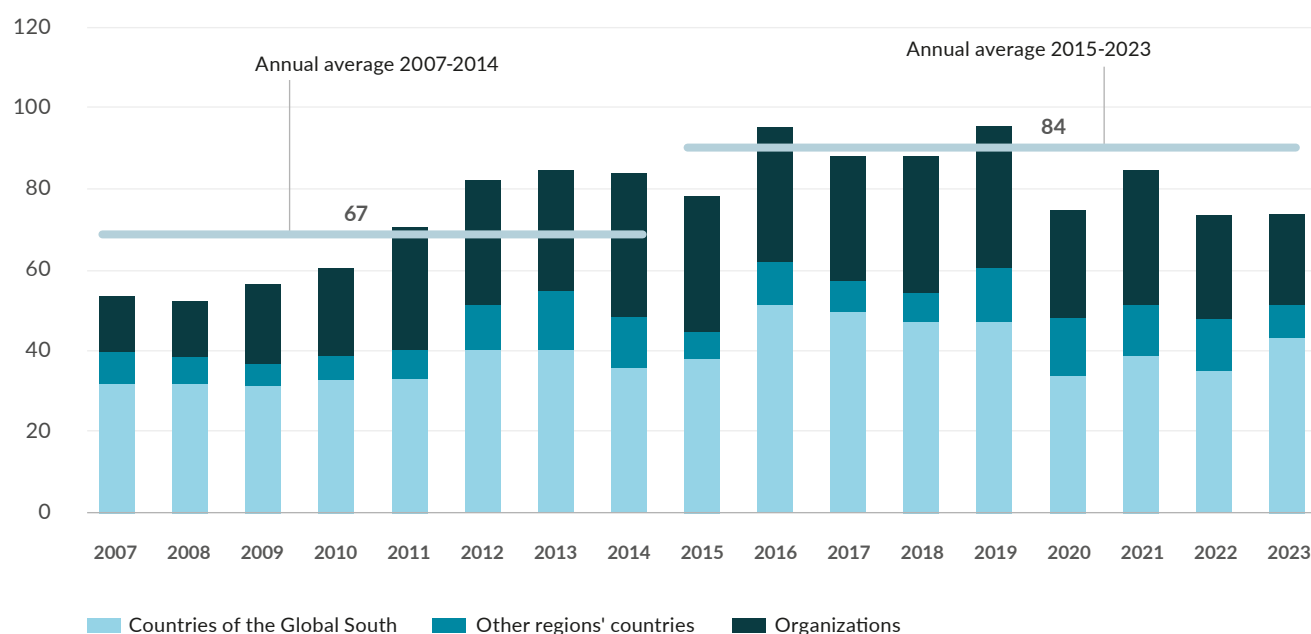
As Triangular Cooperation, the Regional modality has the potential to bring an increasingly larger and more diverse set of stakeholders together and facilitate the generation of partnerships to search for shared solutions to common challenges. In this sense, Graph 3.5 shows the evolution of the number of different partners that have annually participated in Regional SSC in Ibero-America between 2007 and 2023, differentiating between the countries of the South, those of other regions and multilateral organizations.

The graph shows an upward trend in this period, as a result of an increase in the number of stakeholders that participated in this modality before and after the approval of the 2030 Agenda. Thus, the average raises from 67 (2007-2014) to 84 (2015-2023). The evolution of this figure, however, is also affected by the impact of the COVID-19 crisis and the declining dynamics of the total number of exchanges. In fact, between 2015

// Graph 3.5

Number of different partners (countries of the Global South; other regions' countries; and organizations) that annually participated in Ibero-American Regional SSC initiatives with all partners. 2007-2023

In units



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

and 2019, the number of different stakeholders that —on average— took part in this Regional SSC reaches 89, while dropping to 77 in 2020-2023. Nevertheless, this number is still remarkably high and is even higher than that of the pre-2030 Agenda stage.

The same graph also shows that the importance of the different types of stakeholders has been rather stable. Specifically, in 2015, countries of the Global South were active in nearly 50% of the initiatives; those of other regions participated in 10%; and multilateral organizations were present in just over 40%. In 2023, the most significant change was related to the two main groups of stakeholders, organizations losing certain relative importance in favor of countries of the South (32% and 57% of the initiatives, respectively).

The following section analyzes Ibero-American countries' participation in the 96 Regional SSC initiatives carried out in the 2022-2023 period, as well as that of those of other regions. It also sheds light on the multilateral organizations that participated in their implementation and which, to a large extent, provided

these exchanges with an operational framework that is decisive to understand the partnerships and the shared challenges that were addressed.

3.2.1

Ibero-American countries and other regions' countries in the 2022-2023 period

Graph 3.6 places all Ibero-American countries on a map in which they are associated with a different color. As the number of Regional SSC initiatives in which each country participated during the 2022-2023 period increases, the color becomes more intense. The graph also shows the importance (%) of each partner's exchanges in the 96 programs and projects that the region executed in this modality during those years.

A first analysis reveals Colombia's dynamism, which in 2022-2023, participated in 69 Regional SSC



Photo: The project *Studying lithium carbonate crystallization through advanced analysis and characterization techniques*, between Argentina and Bolivia, aims to improve the yield and quality of products derived from this metal. Image bank on South-South and Triangular Cooperation in Ibero-America. SEGIB-PIFCSS. 2023.

// Graph 3.6

Ibero-American countries' participation in Regional SSC initiatives exchanged with all partners, by number and relative weight in the total. 2022-2023

In units and percentage



Number of Regional SSC initiatives in which each country participated in 2022-2023

● 60 or more ● Between 50 and 59 ● Between 30 and 49 ● Between 20 and 29 ● Less than 20

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

initiatives, accounting for more than 70% of the 96 exchanges. This country is followed by Peru, Chile, Argentina, Uruguay and Mexico, all of these having implemented more than 50 initiatives.

Meanwhile, approximately 10 countries were involved in between 30-40 Regional SSC projects and programs. This is the case of Costa Rica, El Salvador, Panama, Guatemala and the Dominican Republic in Central America and the Caribbean; of Ecuador and Bolivia in the Andean region; and of Paraguay and Brazil in the Southern Cone. On the other hand, Honduras,

Nicaragua, Cuba, Venezuela and Spain participated in between 20 and 30 exchanges. The analysis is completed with Portugal and Andorra, which records for this period are below the threshold of 20 initiatives.

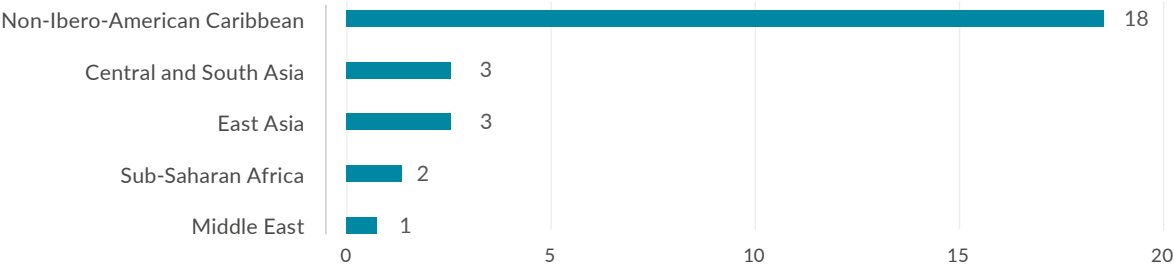
Up to 30 different countries of other regions of the Global South also participated in 22 of the 96 Regional SSC initiatives that were finally carried out in 2022 and 2023. Graphs 3.7 A and B, which detail the number of exchanges implemented by region and by country, illustrate the above.

// Graph 3.7

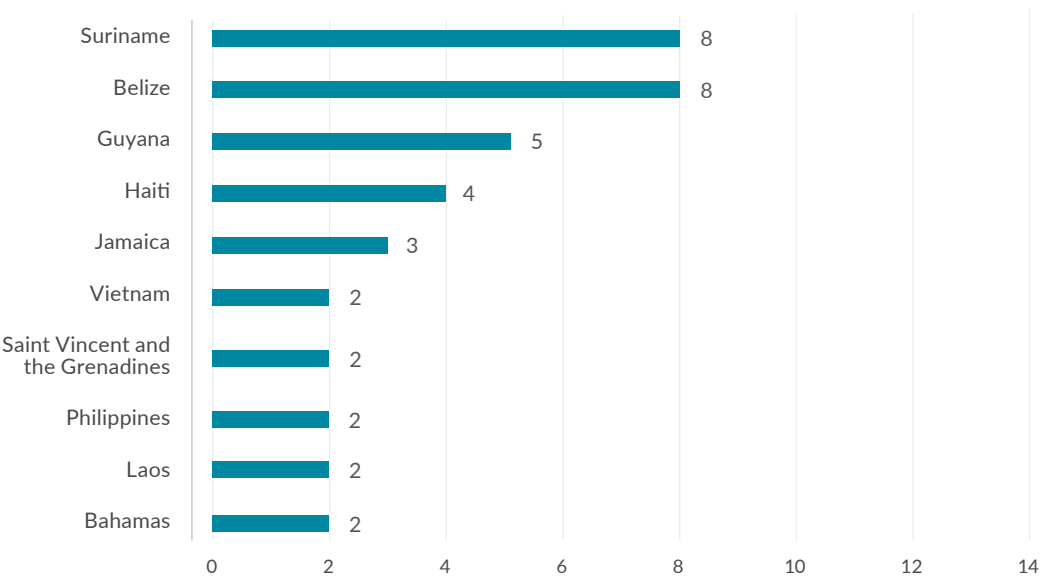
Participation of the Global South in Ibero-American Regional SSC initiatives with all partners, by region and main countries. 2022-2023

In units

A. Regions



B. Countries



Methodological note: The number of initiatives is counted individually for each region and country, and it may coincide in some of these.

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

As both graphs show, partnerships with the non-Ibero-American Caribbean stood out the implementation of these 22 Regional SSC programs and projects, accounting for up to 18 exchanges, in which Suriname, Belize, Guyana and Haiti were particularly active, and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines and the Bahamas had more specific participations. The associations with Central and South Asia, East Asia, Sub-Saharan Africa and the Middle East were also less frequent, ranging from 3 to 1 initiatives. In this sense, the participation of Vietnam, the Philippines and Laos, with 2 initiatives, is worth mentioning. Other countries of the Global South which participation was less frequent were Bangladesh, Brunei, Indonesia, India, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Malaysia, Tanzania and East Timor, to name a few.

3.2.2 Multilateral organizations, partnerships and instruments

The associations on which Regional SSC is based, the groups of countries that tend to work together, and the topics that were addressed, are closely related to the role played by multilateral organizations in this modality. Their participation is determined by the commitment of several countries to face shared challenges of a very different

nature, especially political, economic, geographic and even sectoral. These stakeholders, with their own supranational and intergovernmental governance systems, often also have instruments to promote cooperation among their member countries. Hence, the analysis of their involvement and the instruments on which Regional SSC is based—which provide it with operational frameworks, financial mechanisms and even define thematic priorities—is key to better understand this modality.

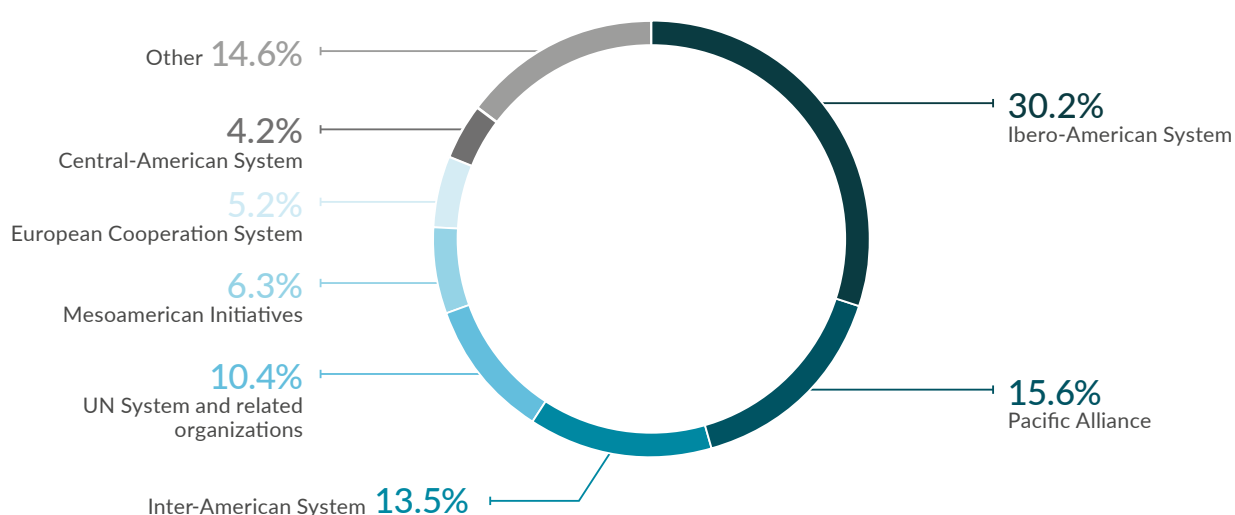
In this regard, Graph 3.8 shows the distribution of the 96 Regional SSC initiatives that Ibero-American countries carried out with all partners during the 2022-2023 period, according to the multilateral cooperation system in which these exchanges took place. These systems are categorized based on the multilateral organizations that are part of them.

The graph shows that 30.2% of the Regional SSC carried out in 2022-2023 is explained by the dynamics of the Ibero-American cooperation System. These initiatives are mainly exchanged between countries that work together to address a common challenge through the promotion of Ibero-American Cooperation Programs, Initiatives and Ascribed Projects (PIPAs by their Spanish acronym), which are always approved in the framework of the Ibero-American Summits of Heads of State and Government. In this type of cooperation countries are supported by the organizations that are part of this multilateral

// Graph 3.8

Multilateral cooperation systems' weight in the implementation of Ibero-American Regional SSC initiatives with all partners. 2022-2023

In percentage



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

system, mainly the Ibero-American General Secretariat (SEGIB by its Spanish acronym) and, more specifically, the Organization of Ibero-American States (OEI by its Spanish acronym) and the Ibero-American Organization for Social Security (OISS by its Spanish acronym).

Almost another 30% of the 96 Regional SSC exchanges are explained by the importance of the Pacific Alliance (15.6%) and the Inter-American System (13.5%). In the first case, initiatives were promoted within the Pacific Cooperation Platform, launched in 2011, following the signing of a Memorandum between Mexico, Colombia, Chile and Peru, which sets their operational, financing, coordination, follow-up and thematic framework. Meanwhile, in the Inter-American System, it is possible to identify Regional SSC projects implemented through the Regional Agricultural Technology Fund (FONTAGRO by its Spanish acronym) and the Regional Public Goods (RPG) Initiative of the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB). The Organization of American States (OAS), the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA) and the Inter-American Institute for Global Change Research (IAI) also participated in this cooperation on specific occasions.

Meanwhile, 10.4% of the Regional SSC implemented in 2022-2023 is explained by the intervention of the United Nations System and its related organizations. Up to 7 different multilateral organizations participate in these exchanges, often associating with each other and/or with those of other cooperation systems. The Economic Commission for Latin-America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) and the United Nations Environment Program (UNEP), as well as several specialized agencies, such as FAO (food and agriculture), UNIDO (industrial development), WHO/PAHO (health) and ILO (labor), should be highlighted in this framework, to which the Global Environment Facility (GEF) must also be added.

Another 10.5% of the Regional SSC in which Ibero-American countries participated with all partners in the 2022-2023 period is explained by Mesoamerican Initiatives (6.3%) and the Central-American System (4.2%). These two are connected through their participation in the Central-American Integration System (SICA by its Spanish acronym). Specifically, SICA promotes the Central-American System's Regional SSC through various instruments, while its member countries participate, together with Mexico and Colombia, in the Mesoamerican programs under the Tuxtla Mechanism for Dialogue and Coordination. Another framework, the Mesoamerica Project, completes the map of these 6 Mesoamerican Initiatives.



Almost another 30% of the 96 Regional SSC initiatives that were carried out in 2022 and 2023 are explained by the importance of the Pacific Alliance (15.6%) and the Inter-American System (13.5%)



The European Cooperation System also deserves a special mention (5.2%). Those experiences that in 2022-2023 were supported and/or promoted either by the European Union (EU) or by its member countries' cooperation agencies (AECID or the French Development Agency -AFD by its French acronym) are part of this category. The Spanish Program INTERCOONECTA or AFD's CLIMAT AMSud, which are respectively dedicated to innovation for the strengthening of public policies and to the generation of R&D networks —and even to financing to fight against climate change—, are two examples of the above.

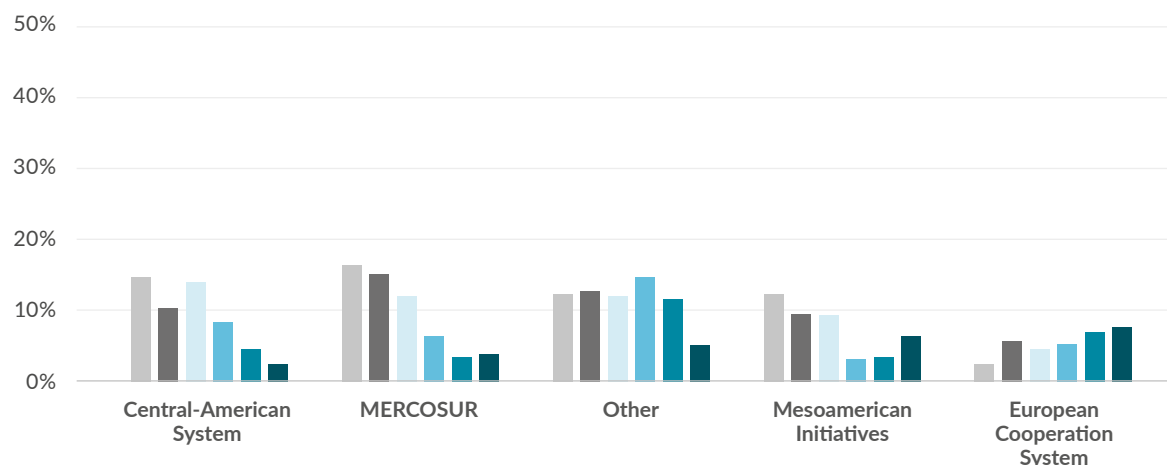
The remaining 14.6% of the exchanges combine the participation of other cooperation systems and its implementation does not follow any specific operational framework. Although these are very diverse initiatives, the specific intervention of some organizations is worth mentioning, for example: the Andean Community (CAN by its Spanish acronym); the Southern Common Market (MERCOSUR); the Development Bank of Latin-America (CAF by its former acronym); the Amazon Cooperation Treaty Organization (ACTO); the Permanent Commission for the South Pacific (CPPS by its Spanish acronym); the Green Climate Fund (GCF), and the Union of Universities of Latin-America and the Caribbean (UDUAL by its Spanish acronym), among others.

// Graph 3.9

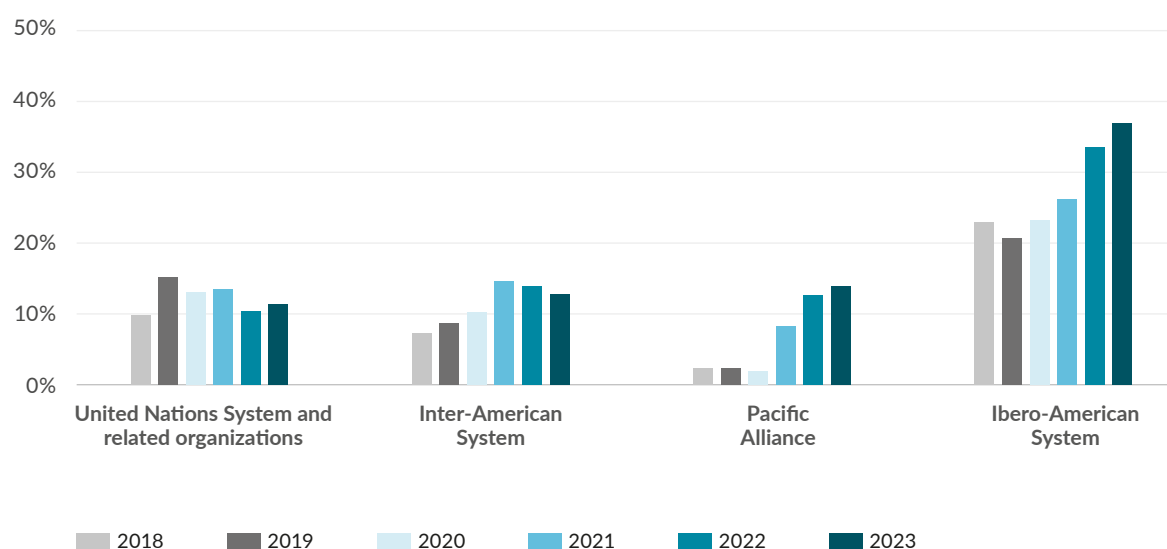
Evolution of the importance of multilateral cooperation systems in Regional SSC initiatives in the pre- and post-COVID crisis, by system. 2018-2023

In percentage

A. Systems which relative weight was below 10% of the total in 2023



B. Systems which relative importance was higher than 10% of the total in 2023



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

Likewise, the relative importance of the different multilateral cooperation systems in the 2022-2023 period is determined by the combination of the different impacts that the COVID-19 crisis had on them. Graphs 3.9 A and B, which show the evolution of the relative importance that the main systems have had from 2018 to 2023, were plotted in order to understand

the most significant changes. The first one (3.9 A) refers to those systems which accounted for less than 10% of the exchanges in 2023. The second (3.9.B) makes reference to those which relative importance after the crisis exceeded the 10% threshold.

As Graph 3.9 A shows, in 2018 (before the pandemic), exchanges within the Central-American System, MERCOSUR and Mesoamerican Initiatives had relative shares that were close to or even higher than 15%. The COVID-19 crisis pushes down the number of exchanges in the framework of these systems, causing their importance to be reduced to 2.5%, 3.8% and 6.3% by 2023, respectively. On an aggregate basis, the participation of these systems in Regional SSC falls from 43.1% in 2018 to 12.7% in 2023.

In a context in which Regional SSC has been successively reduced, these systems are displaced in favor of others that are gaining relative importance. Indeed, as Graph 3.9 B shows, the Pacific Alliance, the Inter-American System, and the Ibero-American System were those that increased their participation the most between 2018 and 2023 (from 2.4% to 13.9%; from 7.3% to 12.7%; and from 22.8% to 36.7%, respectively). In fact, this can also

The Pacific Alliance, the Inter-American System, and the Ibero-American System were those that increased their participation the most between 2018 and 2023

be explained by different dynamics: the only framework that has experienced a significant increase in terms of the number of initiatives is the Pacific Alliance (from 3 to 11); meanwhile the Inter- and Ibero-American systems have been significantly resilient (around 10 and 30 exchanges, respectively), a behavior that, in a context of a generalized decline, can only translate into an increased participation.

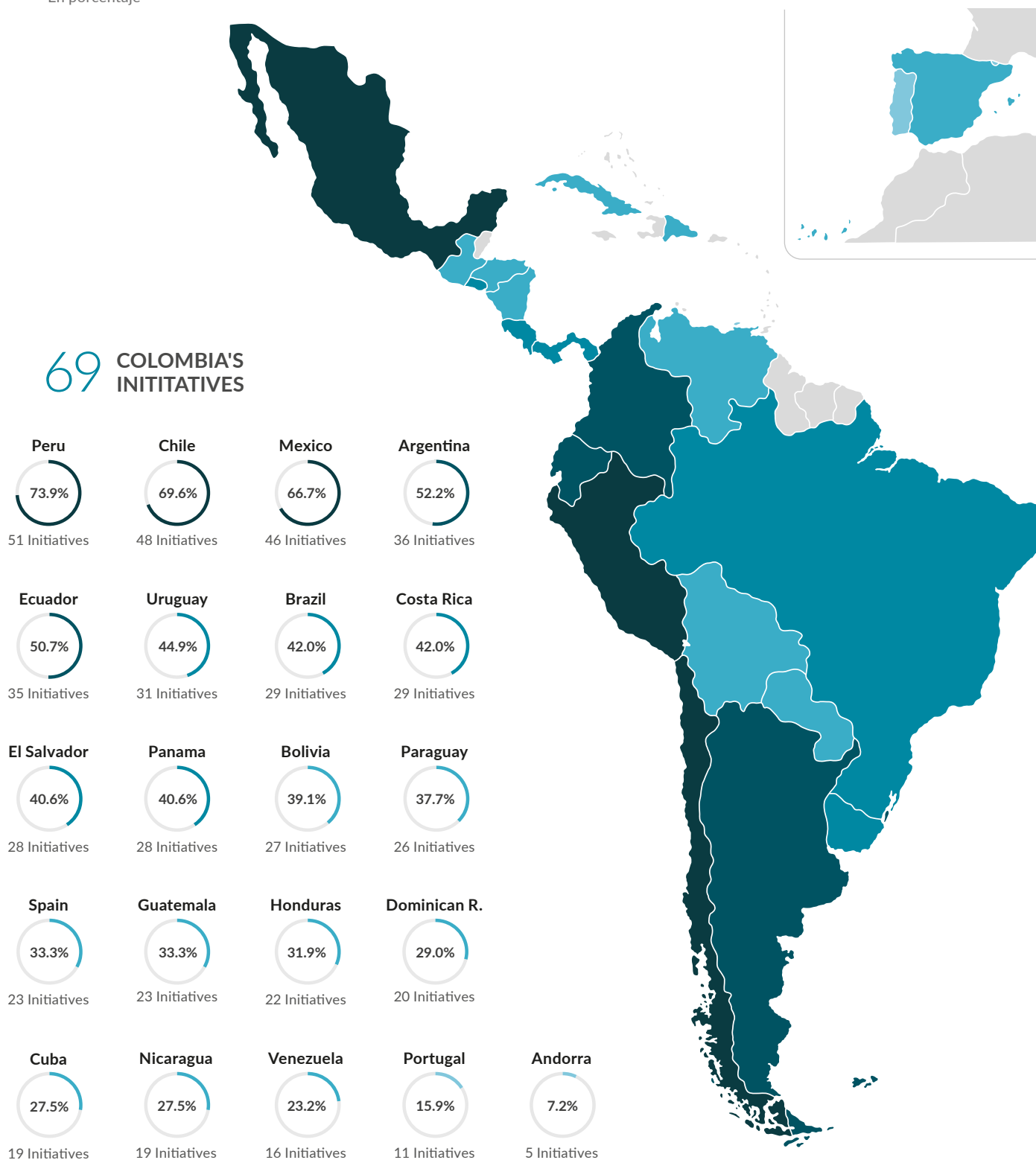


Photo: Students and academics of the University of Morelos work on the sound and audiovisual recording of 100 bird species in order to disseminate the natural heritage of the area and preserve the knowledge of the biodiversity resource of birds in the indigenous communities of San Andrés de la Cal and Coatetelco, Morelos, Mexico. Image bank on South-South and Triangular Cooperation in Ibero-America. SEGIB-PIFCSS. 2023.

// Graph 3.10

Map of Colombia's associations with other Ibero-American countries, by the total number of its Regional SSC initiatives and the weight of each partner in this total

En porcentaje



Weight of Regional SSC initiatives in which the two countries coincide, in the total number of Colombia's initiatives (69 in the 2022-2023 period).

● More than 60%
 ● 50%-59%
 ● 40%-49%
 ● 30%-39%
 ● Less than 20%

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

Finally, Graph 3.10 was prepared in order to conclude this analysis and illustrate the way in which these dynamics, and being part of these systems, influences countries' relationship profile (their partnerships and their partnerships' intensities). The map shows the number of initiatives in which Colombia (which in 2022-2023 participated in up to 69 Regional SSC exchanges, corresponding to 72% of the total) associated with the other 21 Ibero-American countries. According to the legend, colors' intensity increases when the number of exchanges moves to a higher range of values.

In this sense, the number of initiatives in which Colombia participates is higher when it associates with other countries that are members of the same multilateral system. Hence, more than 60% of the 69 Regional SSC initiatives in which Colombia participated in 2022-2023 were carried out in the framework of the Ibero-American System (40.6%) and the Pacific Alliance (21.7%). Indeed, it is the latter that makes the difference in the map, since the three countries with which Colombia has a higher level of association (in more than 2 out of 3 exchanges) are precisely those which are part of that integration scheme: Mexico, Peru and Chile.

The rest of Colombia's Regional SSC is mainly implemented within the European Cooperation System (8.7%) and the Mesoamerican system

(another 8.7%). It is also based on a variety of other instruments (15.9%), including collaborations in the framework of the Andean Community of Nations (CAN by its Spanish acronym) and the ACTO.

3.3

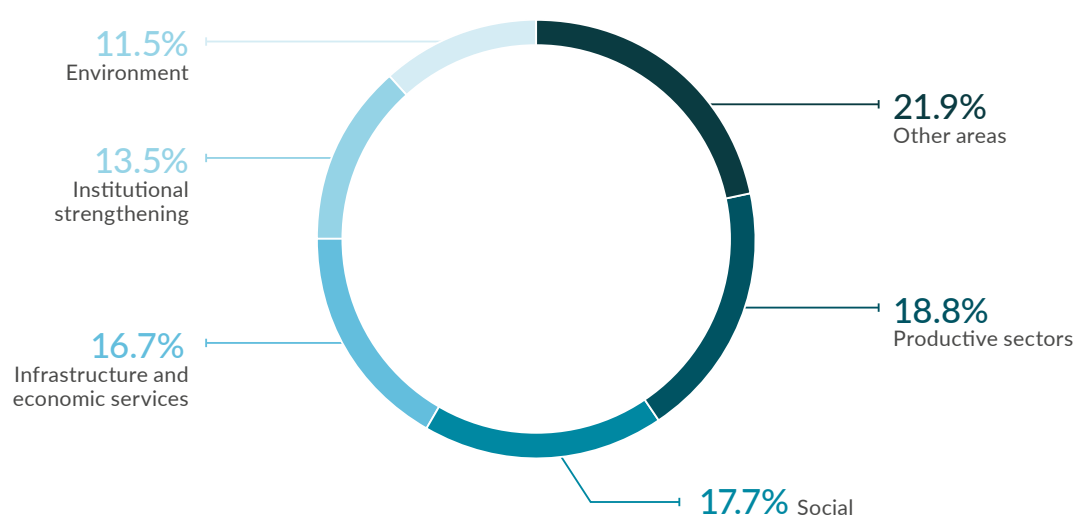
Sectoral analysis: operational frameworks and thematic priorities

The support provided by multilateral organizations to Regional SSC is also decisive to understand the thematic priorities addressed by this modality, the challenges it faces and the type of solutions it provides. Thus, and in order to understand the above, a sectoral analysis of the initiatives that were implemented in this modality in the 2022-2023 period is developed. This examination is carried out from a double and complementary perspective: first, in terms of all the exchanges that took place in the period; and second, in terms of the initiatives that were exchanged in the framework of the main multilateral cooperation systems. This enables a correlation between these and the priorities that were addressed.

// Graph 3.11

Distribution of Ibero-American Regional SSC initiatives with all partners, by area of action. 2022-2023

En porcentaje

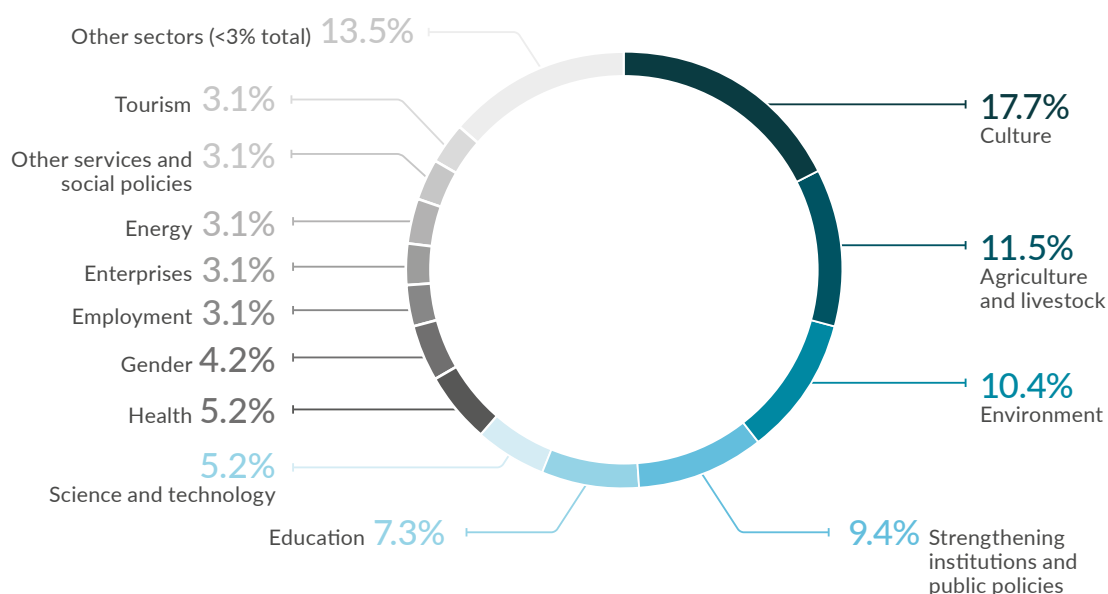


Source: SEGIB based on Agencies and Directorates-General for Cooperation

// Graph 3.12

Distribution of Ibero-American Regional SSC initiatives with all partners, by activity sector. 2022-2023

In percentage



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

Indeed, Graphs 3.11 and 3.12 show the distribution of the 96 Regional SSC initiatives in which Ibero-American countries participated in 2022 and 2023, according to the area of action and the activity sector with which they were associated. A combined analysis places *Culture* as the purpose that the highest number of initiatives addressed (17). Meanwhile, 21.9% of the Regional SSC initiatives —mainly classified in *Other areas*—, are explained when the exchanges that aimed to promote *Gender* equality (4) are added to the above.

Agriculture and Livestock (in the Productive sectors area) is the second most important sector, accounting for 11.5% of the total number of exchanges. The rest of the initiatives classified in this area (which aggregate percentage reaches 18.8%) had a more specific nature in the following sectors: *Tourism* —the only one which share exceeds 3%—, together with *Industry*, *Fisheries* and *Transportation and storage*, all below this threshold.

On the other hand, around 10 Regional SSC projects and programs were dedicated to protect the *Environment*. A similar number (9 exchanges) focused on *Strengthening institutions and public policies*. Accordingly, as shown in Graph 3.12, these were the third and fourth most important sectors in this period. However, the fact that the remaining initiatives were rather specific (such as *Disaster Management*, on the one hand; and *Peace, public and national security and defense*, on the other), explains that the Environment and Institutional strengthening areas are, according to Graph 3.11, those with the least relative importance during these years (11.5% and 13.5%, in each case).



Agriculture and Livestock is the second most important sector, accounting for 11.5% of the total number of exchanges in the 2022-2023 period



Additionally, Graph 3.12 shows how, following *Strengthening institutions and public policies*, the distribution of Regional SSC initiatives in which Ibero-American countries have participated in 2022 and 2023 is dispersed around different sectors which, nevertheless, share two main priorities: the attention to Social matters and the generation of Infrastructure and economic services, two areas which relative importance is, in both cases and according to Graph 3.11, approximately 17%. In the Social area, the Regional SSC that focuses on *Education* (7.3%), *Health* (5.2%) and *Other services and social policies* (3.1%) stands out. Meanwhile, the initiatives that supported *Science and technology* (5.2%), *Employment*, *Business* and *Energy* (3.1% each), should be highlighted in the framework of economic purposes.

Finally, as mentioned at the beginning of this section, a full understanding of the thematic priorities addressed by Regional SSC must be contextualized considering multilateral organizations' instruments and operational frameworks. In order to make a more detailed analysis,

Graphs 3.13 A-D show the distribution of Regional SSC initiatives that in 2022-2023 were supported by the main multilateral cooperation systems (those that account for more than 10% of exchanges), according to the area action in which they were classified. These are radial/radar charts that have the shape of a hexagon. Each graph has six axes, associated with the different areas of action. The relative importance of the areas is shown by a percentage in this axes, and the connection of the resulting values shapes a figure that defines each systems' priority pattern.

Thus, Graph 3.13 A shows the distribution of the 30 Regional SSC initiatives that took place in the framework of the Ibero-American System. More than half of these (51.7%) are cooperation programs, projects and initiatives aimed at strengthening *Culture* and, specifically, at promoting Gender equality, two of the sectors that are classified in Other areas. This analysis is complemented by the support provided by Ibero-American Cooperation to the Social (20.7%) and Institutional strengthening (17.2%) areas (almost 40% of the initiatives).



Photo: Family producers in the Paraguayan village of La Colmena work in the care and reproduction of bees, as well as in the collection, processing and marketing of beekeeping products (honey, pollen, propolis, wax). Through SSC, Paraguay and Colombia contribute to increasing this sector's competitiveness and productivity, ensuring food security for the families that are involved in this activity. Image bank on South-South and Triangular Cooperation in Ibero-America. SEGIB-PIFCSS. 2021.

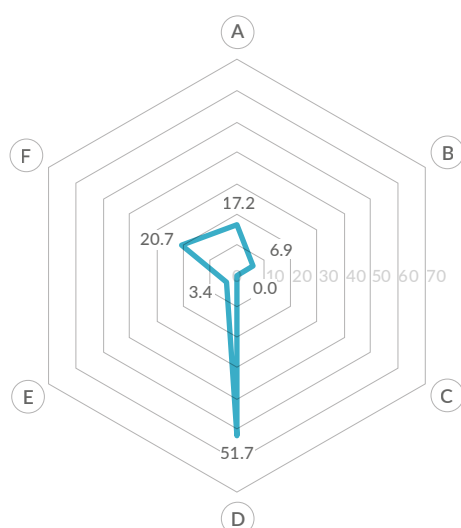
// Graph 3.13

Distribution of Regional SSC initiatives carried out in the framework of the main multilateral cooperation systems, by area of action. 2022-2023

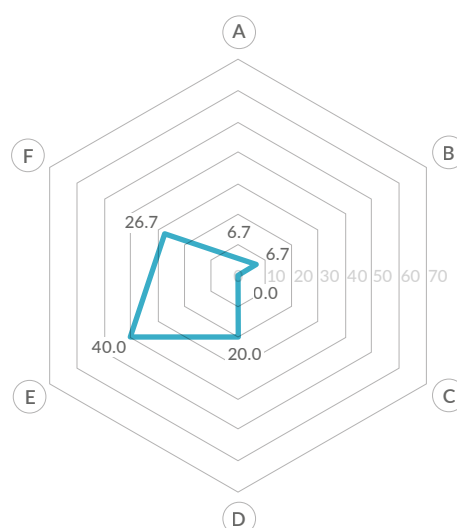
In percentage

- (A) Institutional strengthening
- (B) Infrastructure and economic services
- (C) Environment
- (D) Other areas
- (E) Productive sectors
- (F) Social

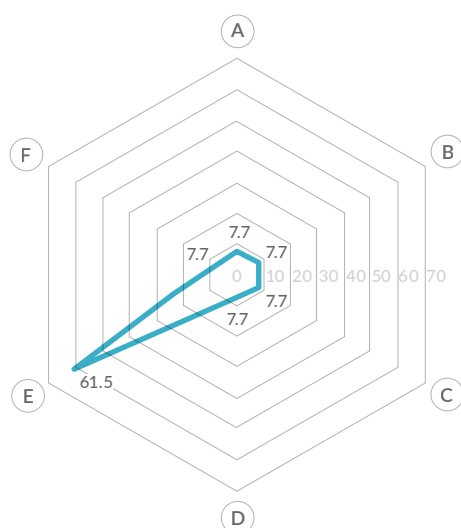
A. Ibero-American System (30)



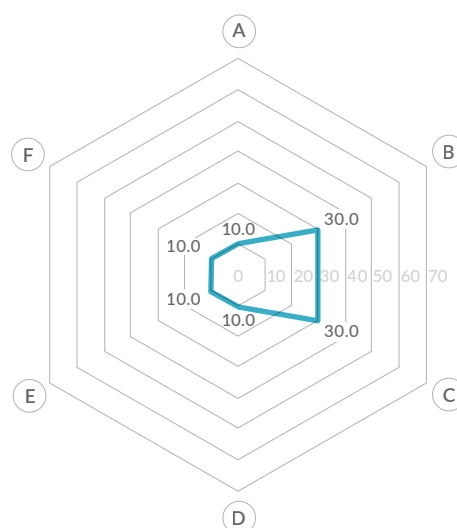
B. Pacific Alliance (15)



C. Inter-American System (13)



D. United Nations System and related organizations (10)



Methodological note: All axes range between 0 and 70%.

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

The above is consistent with the commitments adopted by Ibero-American countries' Heads of Cooperation during the 15th Summit held in Cartagena de Indias (Colombia), in 2016, where the three specialized spaces were created

(Culture, Social Cohesion and Knowledge). In fact, and as stated in the Operating Manual of this cooperation, Ibero-America is committed to these areas in order to "turn culture into a cross-cutting axis of development"; "support

social programs and policies to achieve more inclusive societies"; and "transform Higher Education, research and innovation to provide higher quality services and goods, and improve the region's competitiveness" (SEGIB, 2016; p.8).

Therefore, the thematic priorities that are addressed by the Ibero-American System (Graph 3.13 A) are aligned with these purposes and have a correlation with the Regional SSC that was carried out in the 2022-2023 period. Two experiences that were recently promoted were selected to illustrate the aforementioned: the Ibero-American

Institute of Indigenous Languages Initiative (IIALI by its Spanish acronym) and the Ibero-American Program on Global Citizenship for Sustainable Development. The former, detailed in Case 3.1, promotes the cultural and linguistic rights of indigenous societies from an approach that, combining traditional uses and new technologies, contributes to greater social inclusion. The latter, described in Case 3.2, supports values education as a means to advance sustainable development, providing regional and global citizens—as key stakeholders in this process—with tools to face the challenges of the 2030 Agenda.

// CASE 3.1

Ibero-America's commitment to advance the promotion and preservation of indigenous languages



According to the report *The Revitalization of Indigenous Languages*, more than 500 of the languages that are still spoken in Latin-America face some kind of threat. This, in turn, represents a risk even to the existence of indigenous peoples (IIALI, 2024a).

The Initiative Ibero-American Institute of Indigenous Languages (IIALI by its Spanish acronym)—approved in 2021, during the 27th Ibero-American Summit of Heads of State and Government held in Andorra—seeks to promote the use, preservation and development of the indigenous languages that are spoken in Latin-America and the Caribbean (LAC), supporting indigenous societies and States in the exercise of cultural and linguistic rights (SEGIB, 2024). Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia and Mexico are part of this Ibero-American Initiative, which also has Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay and Peru as observer countries. IIALI's Technical Unit is managed by the Fund for the Development of Indigenous Peoples of Latin-America and the Caribbean (FILAC by its Spanish acronym), an international public law organization—created in 1992 during the 2nd Ibero-American Summit of Heads of State and Government in Madrid (Spain)—that has been supporting indigenous peoples' self-development processes for more than 30 years.

Thus, the Institute provides technical support in the "design and implementation of linguistic and cultural policies for indigenous peoples and (facilitates) informed decision-making on the use and vitality of their languages" (OEI, 2022). This Institute officially began its work in February 2022 and, since then, it has developed several processes and steps to achieve its goals. Specifically, different initiatives have been developed in 2023 and 2024, such as the Trinational *Kukama* Project in the Amazon or the Multinational *Qhapaq Ñan* Project for cultural and linguistic revitalization in the Andes, through innovative means such as art and technology.

Technical assistance was also provided to the Central-American Integration System (SICA by its Spanish acronym) to design the Global Action Plan of the International Decade of Indigenous Languages. Additionally, IIALI contributed to the preparation of the Latin-American Atlas of Indigenous Languages in Danger and the Laboratory on the Vitality and Use of Indigenous Languages in LAC (IIALI, 2024a).

In April 2024, the Atlas of Indigenous Languages in Danger began its implementation in the Bolivian Amazon, the results of which would be available

in early 2025. In addition, actions were carried out to launch the *Saq B'e* Project—with five Mesoamerican countries—, which revalorizes indigenous child-rearing patterns and highlights the role of indigenous mothers in preserving the intergenerational transmission of knowledge, wisdom, culture and language.

A series of regional and international meetings were held—apart from the aforementioned projects—, bringing together a wide range of stakeholders. For example, high-level government authorities of Guatemala, together with the Directors of UNESCO and OEI in that country, carried out a working visit to promote intercultural bilingual education, cultural and linguistic revitalization and intercultural health. Additionally, the event *Native Languages: Protectors of the Thought and Memory of the Peoples* was held in Bogotá in order to highlight the role of indigenous languages in the fight against racism and discrimination. In this activity, IIALI's Coordinator, highlighted the role that second and third generation youth are playing by using information technologies to strengthen their languages, recover them and even teach them (IIALI, 2024b).

Source: SEGIB based on Agencies and Directorates-General for Cooperation and the Initiative Ibero-American Institute of Indigenous Languages (IIALI, 2024a) (2024b), OEI (2022) and SEGIB (2024).

// CASE 3.2

Values education as an instrument to advance Sustainable Development



In the framework of the 27th Ibero-American Summit of Heads of State and Government held in Andorra in 2020, the countries of the region approved the Ibero-American Program on Global Citizenship for Sustainable Development (CGpDS by its Spanish acronym), which objective is to contribute to raise Ibero-American citizens' awareness of their role in the achievement of the 2030 Agenda on a global scale (SEGIB, 2021a).

This Program places educational processes at the core, for people to be better prepared to face global problems and to provide answers and solutions to generate the necessary social change to achieve development (SEGIB, 2021b). In addition, it is considered that, in order to advance sustainable

and inclusive development on a global scale, it is also essential to make the interconnection and interdependence between the global and the local levels visible, as well as to promote collaboration and solidarity between individuals and States (SEGIB, 2021b).

Chile, Andorra, the Dominican Republic, Paraguay, Uruguay, Spain and Portugal have participated as member countries since its constitution. It was launched on December 1st, 2022, at the Municipality of Maldonado (IDM by its Spanish acronym) in Uruguay, with the participation of the Portuguese Presidency, authorities of the Uruguayan Agency for International Cooperation (AUCI by its Spanish acronym) and representatives of member countries'

cooperation agencies, as well as other government organizations.

Activities began in 2023, through the design of a communication and visibility plan; the preparation of national and regional diagnoses and mappings on CGpDS; and the dissemination of the initiative with other prioritized stakeholders in these countries. In 2024, representatives of the Ministries of Education, Environment and Foreign Affairs of Uruguay, Chile and the Dominican Republic had a series of technical meetings with their Portuguese counterparts in Lisbon where Portugal presented its Global Citizenship Agenda.

Source: SEGIB based on Agencies and Directorates-General for Cooperation and SEGIB (2021a) (2021b).

On the other hand, Graph 3.13 B focuses on the profile of Regional SSC in the framework of the Pacific Alliance. In this case, of the 15 initiatives carried out during the 2022-2023 period, 40.0% aimed to contribute to strengthen the Productive sectors area; 26.7% addressed Social issues; and 20.0% were associated with Other areas. Specifically, this Regional SSC was focused on supporting *Tourism, Education, Other services and social policies, and Gender equality*.

With reference to the *Education* sector, it should be added that one of the most outstanding experiences in the framework of this modality is related to the Student and Academic Mobility Platform of the Pacific Alliance, a scholarship program launched in 2012 which purpose is to contribute to the training of human capital and

to promote academic integration among its member countries. Indeed, scholarships are an important instrument for development which, however, has not been given enough visibility in the framework of SSC initiatives. Accordingly, Ibero-American countries have promoted an exercise to define and characterize the scholarships that are exchanged in the framework of the region's South-South and Triangular Cooperation, as well as to clearly differentiate them from other instruments (actions, projects and programs). As a result, a conceptual and methodological work has been advanced that will have an impact on the information that will be systematized for the next and subsequent Reports. This process was led by a group of countries (Working Group on Scholarships) and its main outcomes are summarized in Box 3.1.

→ BOX 3.1

Methodological progress on Ibero-American SSC: scholarships as a new type of initiative

In order to prepare the *Report on South-South and Triangular Cooperation in Ibero-America*, the region has promoted a process to collectively define a conceptual and methodological framework for this cooperation, based on consensus. This process, in which each and every Ibero-American country participates, is continuously being reviewed and progress is being made always considering both technical and political features. The resulting agreements have enabled the definition of several aspects, for example: the three SSC modalities that are systematized in this document (Bilateral, Triangular and Regional); the type of initiatives that are implemented (actions, projects, programs); and the 30 activity sectors in which they are categorized. Through this process, the region has also designed a methodology that facilitates the identification of the alignment of these initiatives with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). In recent years, Ibero-American countries – together with the Ibero-American Program for the Strengthening of South-South Cooperation (PIFCSS by its Spanish acronym) and with the technical leadership of SEGIB—, have been working “on a conceptual and methodological approach to (SSC and Triangular Cooperation) scholarships in order to improve their registration and systematization in SIDICSS” and consider them as a new type of initiative (SEGIB, 2024; p. 2).

Scholarships —a cooperation instrument of enormous importance for some countries in terms of their South-South and Triangular Cooperation— were being registered in SIDICSS in a very heterogeneous manner, without a unified criterion that would allow their correct systematization. These experiences were often related to the training of human capital; however, additional information was not available in order to determine if these were actually scholarships. This could lead to inaccurate interpretations making this instrument impossible to measure. In this context, where the systematization of this powerful cooperation instrument was an important challenge, Ibero-American countries agreed on setting a series of minimum common criteria to approach this type of initiative and make its importance in South-South and Triangular Cooperation visible. In line with the above, the exercise promoted in the Ibero-American space aimed to make progress on:

- a) A definition and conceptual framework of what is understood to be a South-South and Triangular Cooperation scholarship;
- b) An agreement on *how to register them* and on whether to consider (or not) a different approach with respect to other cooperation initiatives (actions, projects and programs);

- c) A consensus on the necessary information that has to be registered on each scholarship's record.

The second step would involve making the necessary changes in SIDICSS for this to be properly uploaded.

Considering all the above, the Ibero-American space began its work to materialize the political mandates (adopted in the successive PIFCSS' Intergovernmental Councils), through a series of technical activities, mainly workshops. The need to promote a specific Working Group on Scholarships was also soon identified, of which Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Honduras and Mexico have been members since its inception. The following chart details the mandate, activities and main achievements of this Group, which action has been key to provide inputs for the agreements that were finally adopted —collectively and always by consensus—, by the 22 Ibero-American countries.

Continues >>

Working Group on Scholarships: mandate, activities and main achievements (2021-2025)

JULY 2021: PIFCSS INTERGOVERNMENTAL COUNCIL (VIRTUAL)

The Working Group on Scholarships is officially created and joined by Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Honduras and Mexico.

SEPTEMBER TO NOVEMBER 2021: WORKING SESSIONS (VIRTUAL)

Session 1. Background presentation: reasons to create this group; main outcomes of the first workshop held in Panama City, in 2018; goals; roadmap.

Session 2. Each country made a presentation on the following aspects:

1. Institutional framework on scholarships (especially in the framework of Cooperation Agencies and Directorates-General).
2. Elements that define a scholarship.
3. Information associated with a scholarship.
4. Scholarships' operational framework.
5. Particular features/changes as a consequence of the impact of the pandemic.

Similarities and differences were identified in terms of countries' different approaches. This was key to define the main aspects that should be considered when working on a regional conceptualization of South-South and Triangular Cooperation scholarships.

Session 3. Guest countries (Spain, Ecuador and the Dominican Republic) were invited to make a presentation of the same aspects that were addressed in session 2.

Session 4. The main outcomes of sessions 2 and 3 were presented. The group identified a series of questions to make progress on a definition of this type of scholarships.

Sessions 5 and 6. During both sessions, countries agreed on a definition that will enable the systematization of the information on South-South and Triangular Cooperation scholarships.

MAY 31ST AND JUNE 1ST, 2022: WORKSHOP TOWARDS A BETTER DEFINITION AND SYSTEMATIZATION OF SCHOLARSHIPS IN SIDICSS (II) (MADRID, SPAIN)

The members of the Working Group agree on how to characterize and define scholarships in the scope of the South-South and Triangular Cooperation, as well as the features that differentiate them from other instruments to finance or support the training of human capital, which are also carried out through other SSC and TC mechanisms.

MAY 16TH-17TH, 2023: SEGIB-PIFCSS WORKSHOP TOWARDS A BETTER DEFINITION AND SYSTEMATIZATION OF SCHOLARSHIPS IN SIDICSS (III) (LIMA, PERU)

The progress of the Working Group is presented for the consideration of all countries. Consensus is reached on: 1) the definition of South-South and Triangular Cooperation scholarships; 2) their approach as a new type of initiative (scholarship); 3) the registration unit (call for application); and 4) the associated information (type of training, number of scholarships awarded associated with each call, among others). Initial guidelines were defined on how to make the necessary changes in SIDICSS. A pilot exercise would be conducted once the registration is possible.

2024 AND FIRST QUARTER OF 2025: PILOT EXERCISE

A pilot exercise is being promoted with the following countries: Argentina, Brazil, Cuba, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Paraguay, Peru and Portugal. The objective is to confirm whether the aspects that were defined result on a better systematization of this instrument. It is also intended to carry out a first analysis to provide an overview of South-South and Triangular Cooperation scholarships in the 2022-2023 period.

Source: SEGIB

Continues >>

As a result of this effort and as shown in the following picture, countries agreed that a South-South and Triangular Cooperation scholarship is defined based on:

- a) The participation of at least two countries that act as provider and recipient.
- b) The contribution to the training of human capital for inclusive and sustainable development.
- c) The existence of a financing mechanism to facilitate access to training.
- d) A framework of a call for applications, which must set the conditions to award the scholarship.

The call for applications is assumed as the registration unit of the scholarships. Likewise, scholarships are considered a new type of initiative, with a different approach from that of cooperation actions, projects and programs. The definition of other aspects that are understood to contribute to a better categorization of the scholarships (type of training, target population, duration, face-to-face or virtual format, number of scholarships awarded, among others) are part of the associated information which should be registered to better understand this instrument.

At this point, in 2024 and in order to test these conceptual and methodological agreements, some countries began a pilot exercise to register the calls for application of the 2022-2023 period and the number of scholarships in their framework. Argentina, Brazil, Cuba, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Paraguay, Peru and Portugal also participated in this exercise in addition to the countries of the Working Group. A specific analysis of South-South and Triangular Cooperation scholarships, which is expected to be published in the first quarter of 2025, will be the final outcome of this process.

Defining elements of a SSC and Triangular Cooperation scholarship (2023 Workshop, Lima)

EXCHANGE BETWEEN COUNTRIES



It requires the concurrence of at least 2 countries that exchange from the roles of provider and recipient.
Offer: From a government institution of a country.
Receiving: To people from a country other than that of the provider.

OBJECTIVE: K-H TRAINING



It must contribute to the formation of human capital to contribute to the inclusive and sustainable development of the countries.

GRANT/FINANCING ELEMENT



It accompanies the instrument and is conceived precisely to facilitate and guarantee access to training.

EXISTENCE OF A CALL FOR APPLICATIONS



It governs all scholarship award conditions (who can apply, from which country, for what type of study, with what financial support, among others).

Source: SEGIB and Working Group on Scholarships (+countries that joined the pilot exercise).

[Continues >>](#)

Regional SSC in the framework of the Inter-American System (3.13 C) deserves a special mention as it focuses, as well as that of the Pacific Alliance, on supporting the Productive sectors. However, in this case, this area accounts for more than 60% of the 13 initiatives that were registered, only a few exchanges having other purposes. All these are dedicated to strengthening countries' capacities in *Agriculture and livestock* by combining partnerships that promote innovation and the transfer of technology applied to livestock farming and agriculture, while at the same time mainstreaming two recurring topics: sustainability and Food and Nutritional Security (FNS). In fact, the importance of FNS in Regional SSC is enhanced by the participation of specialized organizations such as FAO, IICA and FONTAGRO. Box 3.2 approaches this issue by analyzing the contribution of SSC in Ibero-America –over the last 15 years, and especially

after the approval of the 2030 Agenda– to generate innovative solutions to address this enormous challenge.

Finally, Graph 3.13 D shows the profile of the 10 Regional SSC initiatives that in 2022-2023 were supported by the UN System and its related organizations. In this case, 3 projects and programs that respectively strengthened the generation of Infrastructure and economic services –specifically through the promotion of Employment– as well as the protection of the Environment, should be highlighted. These sectoral priorities are closely related to the participation, in the first two initiatives, of the International Labor Organization (ILO) and, in the second, of the Global Environment Facility (GEF) created on the eve of the “Earth Summit” held in Rio, in 1992, and made up of the 183 signatory countries of the different UN Agreements and Conventions.

→ BOX 3.2

SSC' approach to the challenge of Food and Nutritional Security (FNS)

The prevalence of hunger and poverty in Latin-American and Caribbean was prioritized in the regional development agenda. According to the 2023 *Regional Overview of Food Security and Nutrition*, between 2021 and 2022, the number of people affected by hunger in the region is estimated to have fluctuated between 38.5 million and 51 million. Considering the mid-range of this estimate, 43.2 million people suffered from hunger in 2022 (FAO et al., 2023, p. 2). These data suggest an important challenge: strengthen Food and Nutritional Security (hereinafter FNS). This means that all people should have physical and economic

access to safe and nutritious food to meet their dietary needs and to have an active and healthy life (FAO, 1996).

Given this complex context, it is necessary to generate effective and innovative mechanisms to mobilize financial and technical resources to mitigate this problem. Indeed, South-South Cooperation, through its different modalities, can serve as an instrument to strengthen FNS and, as the following data suggests, Ibero-American countries have accumulated a significant experience in this topic. According to the information available in the Ibero-American Integrated

Data System on South-South and Triangular Cooperation (SIDICSS by its Spanish acronym) and as shown in the following chart, between 2007 and 2023, Ibero-American countries have implemented 1,055 initiatives that focused on FNS, corresponding to 10% of the region's total cooperation. By modality, cooperation on FNS accounted for around 10% of Bilateral and Triangular exchanges, and represented 7.6% of Regional SSC initiatives. Of these 1,055, 66.8% were projects (705), 32.7% were actions (345) and 0.5% were programs (5).

Initiatives on Food and Nutritional Security (FNS) and total number of initiatives, by cooperation modality. 2007-2023

In units and percentage

MODALITY	INITIATIVES FNS	TOTAL	FNS/TOTAL
BILATERAL SSC	875	8,504	10.3%
TRIANGULAR	142	1,431	9.9%
REGIONAL SSC	38	497	7.6%
TOTAL	1,055	10,432	10.1%

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

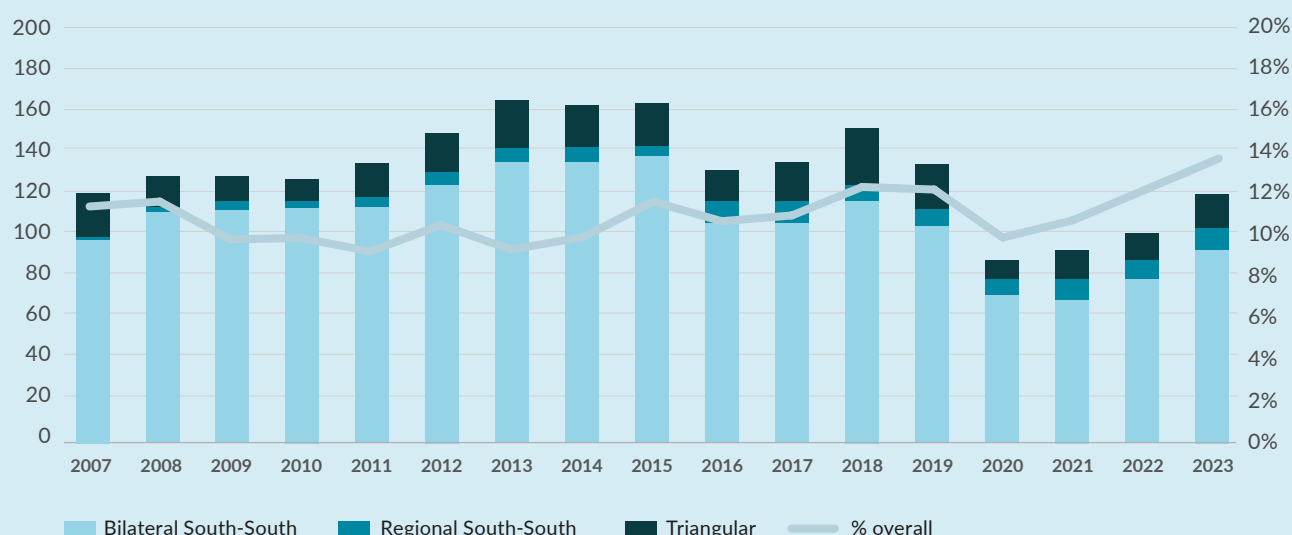
A first graph was prepared in order to understand this cooperation's behavior over time. The diagram shows the

evolution of the number of initiatives on FNS that were implemented each year—in the 2007-2023 period—, by

modality. It also illustrates the evolution of their importance in the total number of exchanges, on an annual basis.

Evolution of the initiatives on FNS, by cooperation modality and percentage in the total number of initiatives. 2007-2023

In units and percentage



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

Thus, between 2007 and 2015, it is possible to identify a 36% growth in initiatives on FNS (from 125 to 170), which are followed by two significant drops, one in 2016 and others in 2020, coinciding with the impact of the COVID-19 crisis. However, the graph

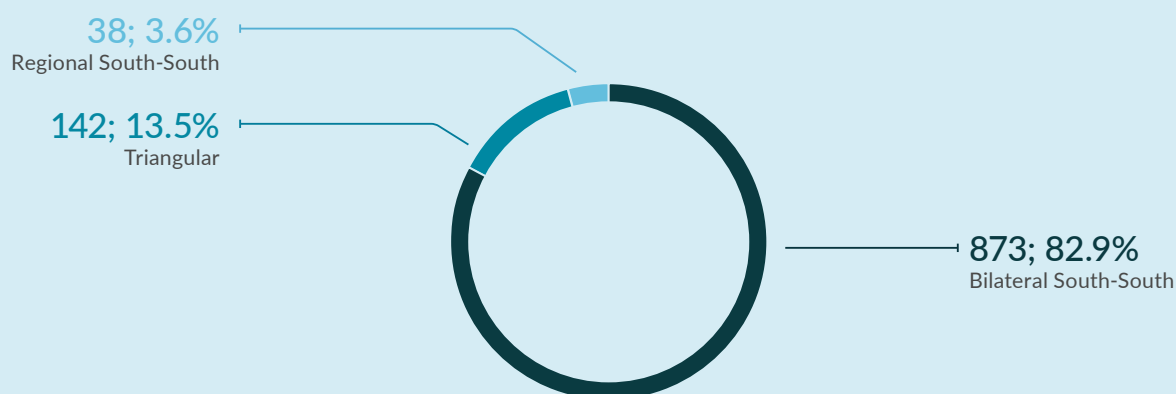
shows that, after this last decline, cooperation on FNS is recovering, with a positive increase of 29% in the 2021-2023 period, a percentage which is higher than that corresponding to all cooperation (8%). As a result, the importance of FNS as a percentage

of the total number of initiatives has increased over the last three years to 14%, a figure 4 percentage points above the average of previous years.

The second graph illustrates the distribution of the total number of

Distribution of the initiatives on FNS, by cooperation modality. 2007-2023

In units and percentage



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

Continues >>

initiatives on FNS by cooperation modality in the 2007-2023 period. It suggests that, of the 1,055 initiatives that served this purpose, 83% were implemented through Bilateral SSC, 13% through Triangular Cooperation and 4% through Regional SSC.

On the other hand, a third graph was prepared to identify the Ibero-

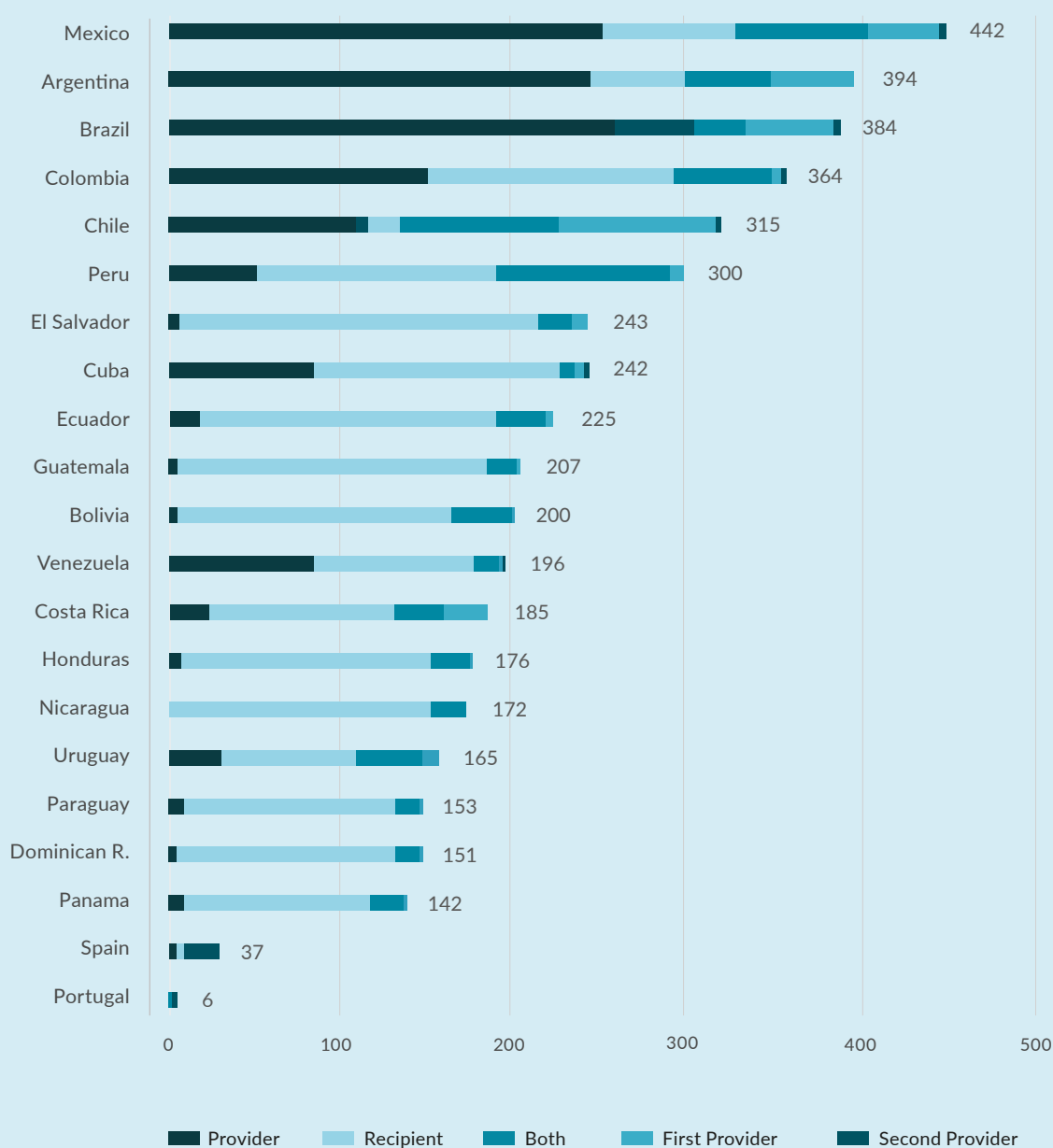
American countries that most actively participated in this cooperation. This graph shows the number of initiatives that, between 2007 and 2023, were dedicated to this topic, by country and by the different roles.

It is possible to identify three groups of countries: first, Mexico, Argentina, Brazil, Colombia, Chile

and Peru, all with more than 300 exchanges; second, El Salvador, Cuba, Ecuador, Guatemala, Bolivia, Venezuela, Costa Rica, Honduras, Nicaragua, Uruguay, Paraguay, the Dominican Republic and Panama, with between 100 and 300 exchanges; and third, Spain and Portugal, with less than 100 exchanges.

Ibero-American countries' initiatives on FNS, by role. 2007-2023

In units



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

[Continues >>](#)

The majority of the most dynamic countries participated as providers in this cooperation, Colombia and Peru being the only exceptions. The former predominantly had a dual role, combining its participation as provider and recipient, while the latter mainly stood out as recipient.

Within this group, Mexico shared its experience in FNS in the framework of almost 450 initiatives, through a wide range of projects such as *Sembrando vida*, an initiative that this country has transferred to El Salvador, Honduras, Guatemala, Belize and

Cuba, which seeks to address the multidimensional problem of rural unemployment and its impact on irregular migration (UNDP, 2022, p.19).

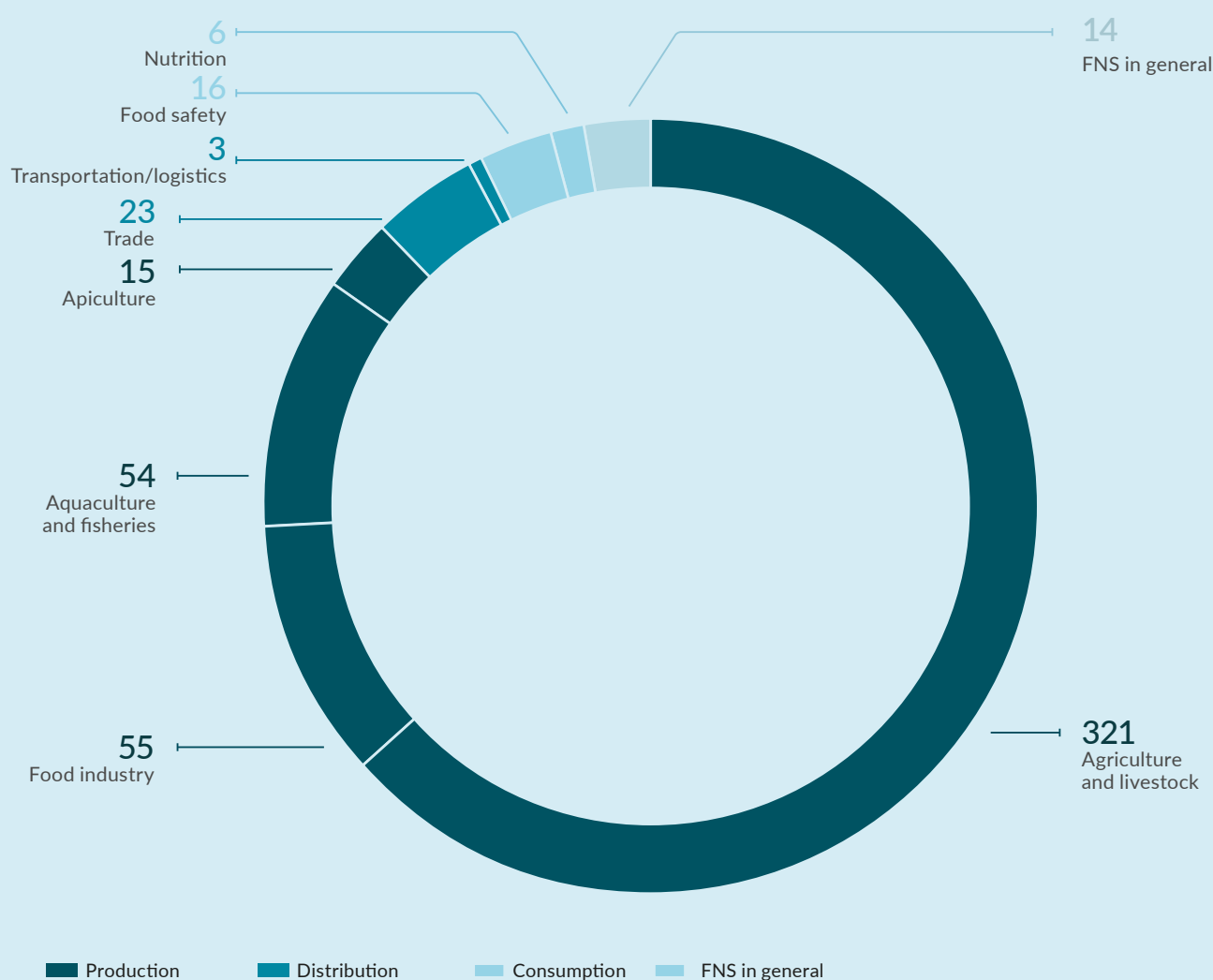
In turn, Argentina—which in 2021 and according to the World Bank (2024) was the world's third largest food exporter and its agricultural sector accounted for 15.7% of its Gross Domestic Product (GDP)—shared its recognized experience (also at the interregional level) through almost 400 exchanges. The National Institute of Agricultural Technology (INTA by its Spanish acronym) participated in

many of these projects and according to INTA itself, between 2010 and 2022, 158 projects were carried out that technically strengthened more than 1,100 professionals (Barreto and Torres, 2022, p. 13).

Brazil, the fourth largest agricultural producer in the world (IFAD, 2023), also stands out for its contribution to regional FNS. Specifically, Brazil has 232 Human Milk Banks and it has supported nutrition and the reduction of neonatal mortality by sharing its experience in this topic with most Ibero-American countries

Distribution of the initiatives on FNS, by category and subcategory. 2015-2023

In units



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

Continues >>

and other Portuguese-speaking countries such as Cape Verde, Angola and Mozambique (Lisbon, V. 2019).

Meanwhile, Colombia participated in 364 exchanges in which its role was mainly dual. For example, as provider, it was able to technically assist Paraguay in the creation of its *National Food and Nutrition Survey*, a key instrument to diagnose the nutritional status of a society and facilitate better targeting of public policies and budgets (University of Antioquia – UDEA by its Spanish acronym -, 2016). As recipient, it strengthened its capacities in beekeeping as a result of, precisely, Paraguay's knowledge transfer.

Chile, which has more than 4,200 kilometers of coastline in the Pacific Ocean and a maritime area of 3.15 million km² (ICEX, 2020, p. 3), especially stood out in the promotion of aquaculture and fisheries, particularly in terms of technological development; the management of hydrobiological resources; and the prevention of illegal fishing, through 315 initiatives. Indeed, the Chilean experience has been acknowledged and, between 2003 and 2018, the country has been recognized for being the eighth largest producer of fish in aquaculture in the world, according to FAO (ICEX, 2020, p. 3).

Finally, Peru took advantage of its participation in 300 exchanges to strengthen its own capacities in a wide range of areas, including sustainable bovine production for small and medium-scale livestock farming; the management of aquaculture production systems; the management of native genetic resources and the development of ornamental varieties; the promotion of family farming; and the implementation of phytosanitary controls.

Additionally, a special mention should be made of FNS after the approval of

the 2030 Agenda and the inclusion, in this framework, of SDG 2 (Zero hunger), as well as the international community's call to reverse the forecast that *"more than 600 million people worldwide will be facing hunger in 2030"* (United Nations, 2024). In this regard, the graph above was plotted in order to understand the way in which SSC in Ibero-America has responded to this challenge. This diagram distributes the 506 initiatives that between 2015 and 2023 addressed FNS, according to their thematic priorities. For this purpose, the exchanges are classified in 4 different categories covering the entire food cycle (Production, Distribution, Consumption, and FNS in general), also taking the key concepts on FNS provided by FAO, as a reference (availability; stability; access and control; consumption and biological utilization). Each category is then divided into subcategories, for example: Agriculture and livestock; Food industry; Aquaculture and fisheries; and Beekeeping, correspond to Production. Thus, in the concentric circles diagram, the main categories are in the inner ring and the subcategories are in the outer ring.

As the graph shows, 88% of the exchanges (445) were aimed at strengthening *Production*, those dedicated to *Distribution* (25, corresponding to 5%), *Consumption* (22, accounting for 4.3%) and *FNS in general* (14, representing 2.7%) being more specific. In turn, these 445 initiatives focused on supporting the Agriculture and livestock (72%) sector and, to a less extent, Food industry (12.4%); Aquaculture and fisheries (12.2%); and Beekeeping (3.4%).

The initiatives that supported family and subsistence agriculture to improve their productivity, competitiveness and the capacities of small-scale producers stood out in terms of Agriculture and livestock. Projects that addressed the recovery of degraded soils; the efficient use of

water for agricultural production; and irrigation techniques, were also frequent. Additionally, the exchanges on animal and plant health and those related to integrated pest and livestock disease management should not go unmentioned. Finally, in terms of biotechnology, the genetic improvement of agricultural products and livestock to increase productivity and resistance to adverse weather conditions—which are becoming increasingly frequent as a result of climate change—, also deserves a special reference.

On the other hand, initiatives associated with the Food industry subcategory mainly focused on agrifood production chains and productive and territorial development models; on strengthening agroforestry and vegetable systems; on generating capacities, technologies and best practices in agroindustry; and on promoting the association of agricultural producers in cooperatives. Special emphasis was also placed on the strengthening of the dairy chain and the processing of foods such as cocoa, avocado, rice, cassava and coffee.

In turn, initiatives on Aquaculture and fisheries reinforced capacities in regulations and fisheries management models (prevention of illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing); sustainable livestock production; the promotion of fisheries and aquaculture's circular economy; research on the intensive management of shrimp and tilapia; and the development of electronic fishing logs on industrial vessels for spatial management in fishing areas.

Between 2015 and 2023, the second most recurrent category was *Distribution*. These initiatives were mainly dedicated to *Trade* (92%) and *Transportation and logistics* (8%). In general, the exchanges focused on strengthening rural cash registers;

developing traceability systems for agricultural, aquaculture and fishery goods; modernizing bovine certification processes; assessing risks in import processes; and applying alternative technologies for post-harvest grain storage, to mention a few examples.

This category is followed by initiatives aimed at strengthening Consumption, distributed in topics related to Safety (73%) and Nutrition (27%). The former addressed the different aspects which are necessary to ensure that food and water are safe for human consumption, specifically through the strengthening of regulatory frameworks for activities with Genetically Modified Organisms

(GMOs); the generation of capacities in official inspection systems and quality management to guarantee safety; and the management and handling of pesticide and micro-plastic residues. In terms of Nutrition, the main topics included breastfeeding; nutritious food in childhood; obesity prevention; and food labeling, among others.

The 14 initiatives that were classified in the FNS in general category heterogeneously tackled various aspects for a comprehensive strategy on the sector, including hunger reduction and rural development.

Finally, and mainstreaming the above, it should be added that up to 77 of the 506 initiatives on FNS between 2015 and 2023 incorporated a sustainability approach. This cooperation focused on organic food production; the use of bio-products; and the promotion of sustainable, resilient and adaptable agriculture in the face of climate change. This becomes especially relevant because, according to the Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), *"agriculture, forestry and land use" account for "22% of global Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emissions"* (IPCC in FAO, 2023).

Methodological note: The Ibero-American Integrated Data System on South-South and Triangular Cooperation (SIDICSS) was used to carry out this exercise. Given that the information available in the system does not include a specific marker on FNS, it was decided to make a first filter with the initiatives that could be related to this topic, such as those in the Agriculture and livestock and Fisheries sectors; those associated with SDG 2 (Zero hunger) as the main SDG; and those that included at least one of the 113 keywords extracted from the literature review on the topic and adapted to the regional context (in Spanish and Portuguese). Subsequently, and in order to carry out an analysis in the framework of the 2030 Agenda, a classification was made by subcategories—for the 2015-2023 period—selecting the specific category with which the initiatives were associated: production, distribution and consumption.

Source: SEGIB based on Agencies and Directorates-General for Cooperation, Barreto and Torres (2022), FAO et al (2023), FAO (1996), FIDA (2023), ICEX (2020), IPCC (2023), Lisboa, V. (2019), United Nations (2024), UNDP (2022), UDEA (2016) and World Bank (2024).

3.4 Regional SSC in 2022-2023 and the Sustainable Development Goals

The capacity of Regional SSC to bring together a growing number of diverse stakeholders in the search for shared solutions to promote sustainable development is confirmed by the fact that the 96 Regional SSC initiatives that took place in the 2022-2023 period involved, on average, between 9-10 different stakeholders, including countries of the South, other regions' countries and multilateral organizations.

In this sense, the analysis of how these efforts contributed to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in the 2022-2023 period—and halfway to achieving the targets to which the international community is committed in the framework of the 2030 Agenda—is especially significant. Graph 3.14 was prepared for this purpose. This radial bar chart distributes the 96 Regional SSC initiatives of this period according to the Main and Second SDG with which they were aligned.

As the graph portrays, one half of the Regional SSC of the 2022-2023 period was aligned—in almost identical proportions and in a preferential manner—with SDG 8 (Decent work and economic growth) and SDG 4 (Quality education) (24%), on the one hand; and with SDG 10 (Reduced inequalities), SDG 11 (Sustainable cities and communities) and SDG 17 (Partnerships for the goals)

(25%), on the other. The other half aimed to support the achievement of up to 11 different Development Goals (with which between 5-6 initiatives were associated), such as SDG 2 (Zero hunger); SDG 3 (Good health and well-being); SDG 9 (Industry, innovation and infrastructure); SDG 12 (Responsible production and consumption); and SDG 16 (Peace, justice and strong institutions). It should be added that, in 2022-2023, no initiative specifically addressed SDG 1 (No poverty).



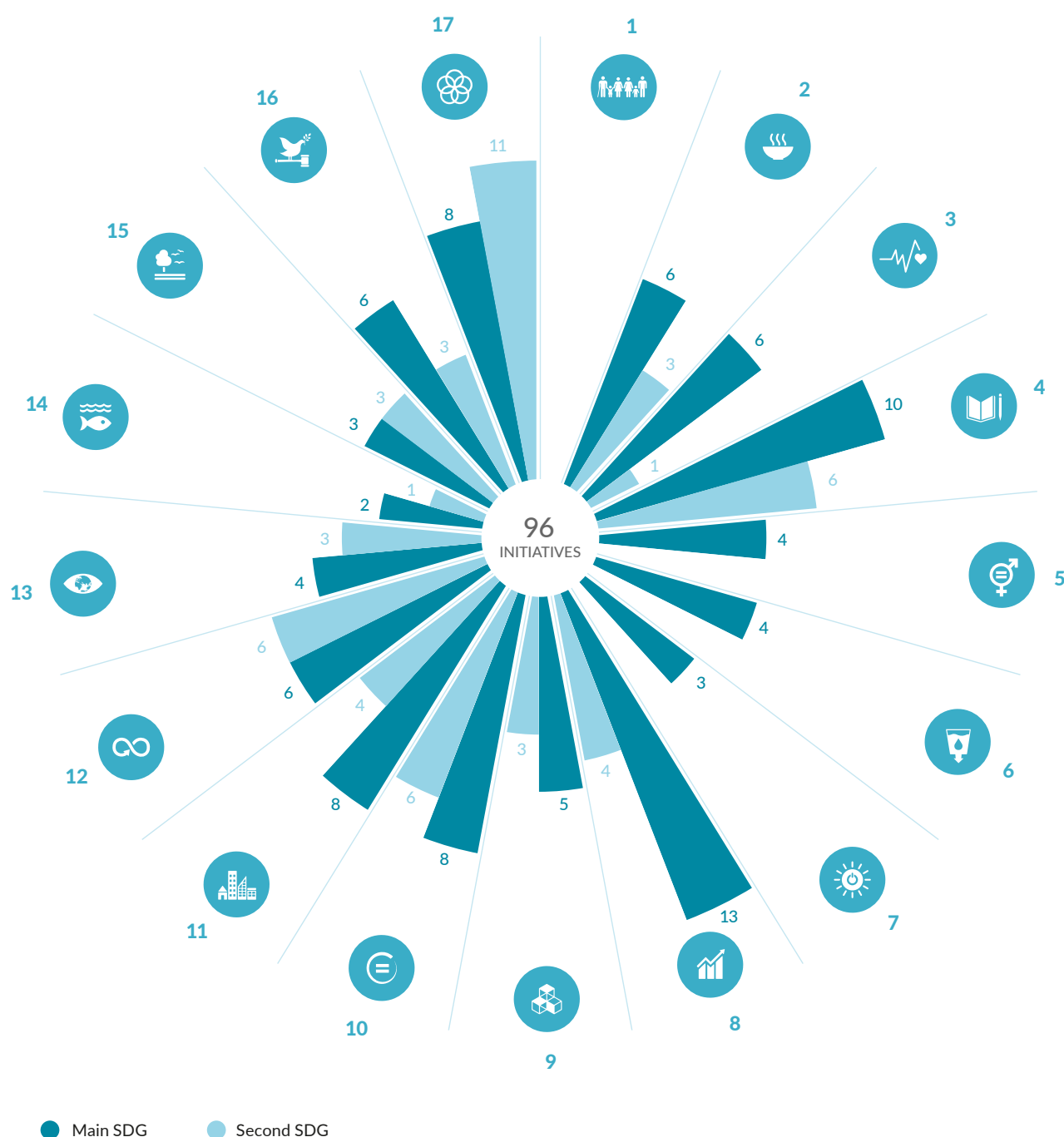
Each of the 96 Regional SSC initiatives that took place in the 2022-2023 period involved between 9-10 different stakeholders on average, including countries of the Global South, of other regions and international organizations



// Graph 3.14

Regional SSC initiatives exchanged by Ibero-American countries with all partners, by their potential alignment with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). 2022-2023

In units



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



Photo: Since 2014, *Ibercocinas* has been working to rescue and promote traditional cuisine, its knowledge and meanings, sustainable production chains and culinary innovation. One of its specific objectives is to strengthen intercultural communities. Image bank on South-South and Triangular Cooperation in Ibero-America. SEGIB-PIFCSS. 2021.

The Second SDGs with which Regional SSC was aligned deserve a special mention. More specifically, in 2022 and 2023, countries associated 56% of the 96 initiatives that were implemented with a second SDG. Their identification is important as it provides information on those purposes that – although not a being a priority– tend to mainstream cooperation. Therefore, Graph 3.14 suggests that, through these second SDGs, the region prioritizes cooperation's contribution to generate partnerships (SDG 17); to reduce inequalities (SDG 10); and to promote sustainability, both in terms of production and consumption models (SDG 12) and for cities and communities (SDG 11).

Finally, the relevance of SDG 17 should also be highlighted. This goal ranked first among the other “second” SDGs of this period, and third in terms of those that were selected as main SDGs. Its importance reveals a strong interrelation between SSC and Development, which goes

beyond the recognition of the potential of this modality to generate partnerships and strengthen capacities that contribute to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. This link had its most important expression in 2019, coinciding with the celebration of the Second United Nations High-Level Conference on South-South Cooperation, which commemorated the 40th anniversary of the Buenos Aires Plan of Action (BAPA), considered a founding milestone of this modality.

The dialogue between both agendas becomes a key input to better understand how this cooperation can support the achievement of the 2030 Agenda. Indeed, Box 3.3, which reviews the nearly 450 events on SSC that have been held globally in the 2015-2023 period, was prepared for this purpose. This Box defines, categorizes and systematizes all these activities –which have positioned this cooperation as a strategic instrument to advance Sustainable Development– and highlights the important role that the Ibero-American community has played in this ongoing connection between SSC and Development.

→ BOX 3.3

SSC in the development agenda: an analysis based on global events (2015-2023)

In recent years, SEGIB has promoted a new process to define and categorize global events on SSC in order to make a systematization and, through this, have a better understanding of the relationship between South-South Cooperation and the International Development Agenda. This exercise follows-up on previous efforts, which most relevant outcomes were the document *Chronology and History of South-South Cooperation* –precisely prepared by SEGIB and edited by PIFCSS in 2014–, and the infographic that summarizes the sequence of the most outstanding activities that took place between 1955 and 2019, which is included in the book *A Decade of South-South Cooperation in Ibero-America*, published by SEGIB in commemoration of the tenth edition of this Report.

Indeed, in 2023, SEGIB promoted a systematization of the global events on SSC that have been held since the approval of the 2030 Agenda in 2015,

to date. The first step in this sense was to design the *Methodological guidelines to systematize and categorize the events on South-South Cooperation and Triangular Cooperation*. This document defines the concept of an “event on SSC” and the necessary information to better categorize it. Accordingly:

- a) It is understood that an “event on SSC” meets four criteria: 1) it is an activity to work or debate on SSC; 2) it has an intergovernmental character; 3) it takes place in the framework of platforms that have a political-technical relevance; and 4) its objectives, title and/or denomination make direct reference to or explicitly address some dimension associated with this cooperation modality.
- b) It is necessary to have information on the year of the event, its geographical scope, and the objective and the format (on-site, virtual or hybrid). Likewise, and

in order better understand the event's nature and its approach, it is essential to add data related to its potential “Contribution (to Development)”, as well as the contribution it may make to strengthening the “Governance”, “Instrumentation” and “Visibility” of South-South Cooperation and Triangular Cooperation.

As a result of this exercise, it was identified that 444 “events on SSC” were held between 2015 and 2023. Their evolution by year, differentiated by the so-called “main” events from the “parallel” ones, is shown in the first graph. Its analysis suggests a series of several different moments marked by a record in 2019 which coincided with the celebration of the BAPA+40 event. Thus, a relative growth stage is identified before 2019, followed by a decline and a stabilization phase from 2020 onwards, as a result of the impact of the COVID-19 crisis.

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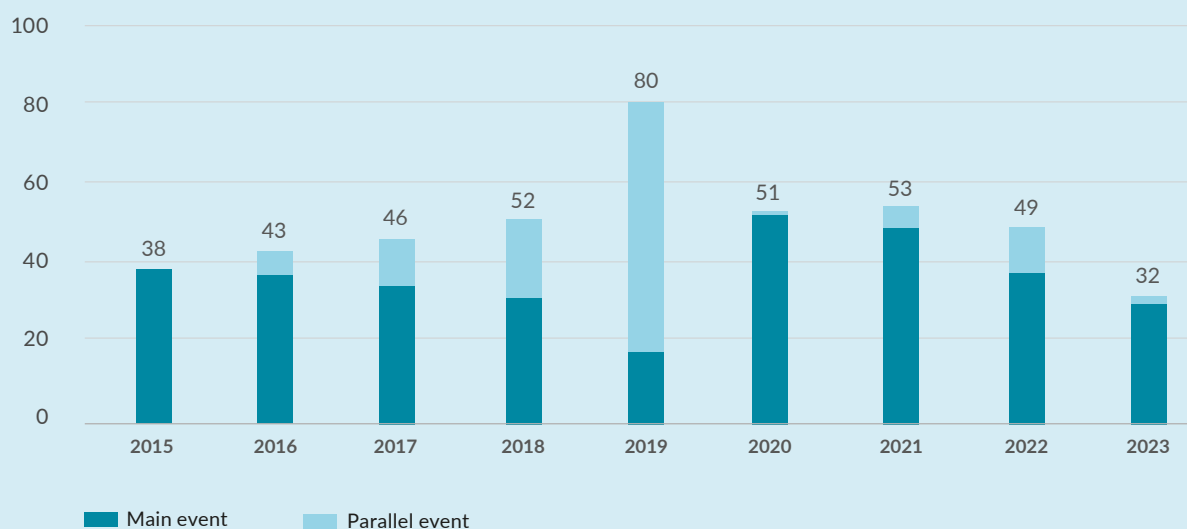
As mentioned above, the same graph distinguishes between the way in which the total number of events was influenced by the “main” and the “parallel” events, the latter being understood as those generated as spaces for simultaneous debates in

the framework of others of a higher rank. The importance of these parallel meetings finds its maximum expression precisely in 2019, with side events that, in the framework of BAPA+40, account for 77.5% of the total registered. Other relevant moments

in terms of these side events coincide with the Development Cooperation Forum (2016 and 2018) and the High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (2021, 2022 and 2023).

Main events and Parallel events on SSC. 2015-2023

In units

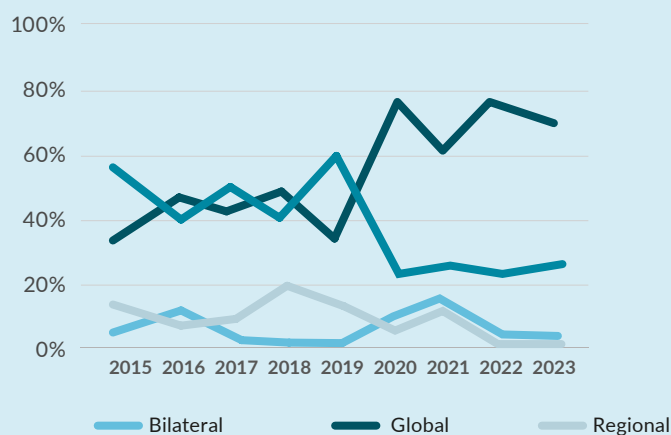


Source: SEGIB (2024)

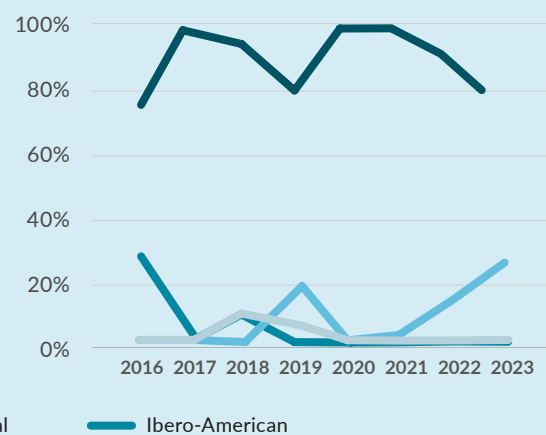
Evolution of the Main events and the Parallel events on SSC, by the scope of action in which they were carried out. 2015-2023

In percentage

A. Main events



B. Parallel events



Source: SEGIB (2024)

[Continues >>](#)

Another significant analysis in relation to the 444 events on SSC that took place between 2015 and 2023, refers to the scope of action under which these meetings were framed: Global, Regional, Ibero-American and Bilateral. Specifically, most of these meetings (64%) were Global, the United Nations (UN) and its specialized agencies having a strong role in specifically 4 out of 5 of these activities. This percentage was followed by that corresponding to the Ibero-American space (a remarkable 26%), with SEGIB and PIFCSS playing a decisive role. The last 10% of the meetings were Bilateral (6%) and Regional (4%), 2 out of 3 of which were attended by ECLAC.

Two other graphs were prepared in order to provide detailed information on the above. These diagrams show the evolution of the relative importance of each of these four

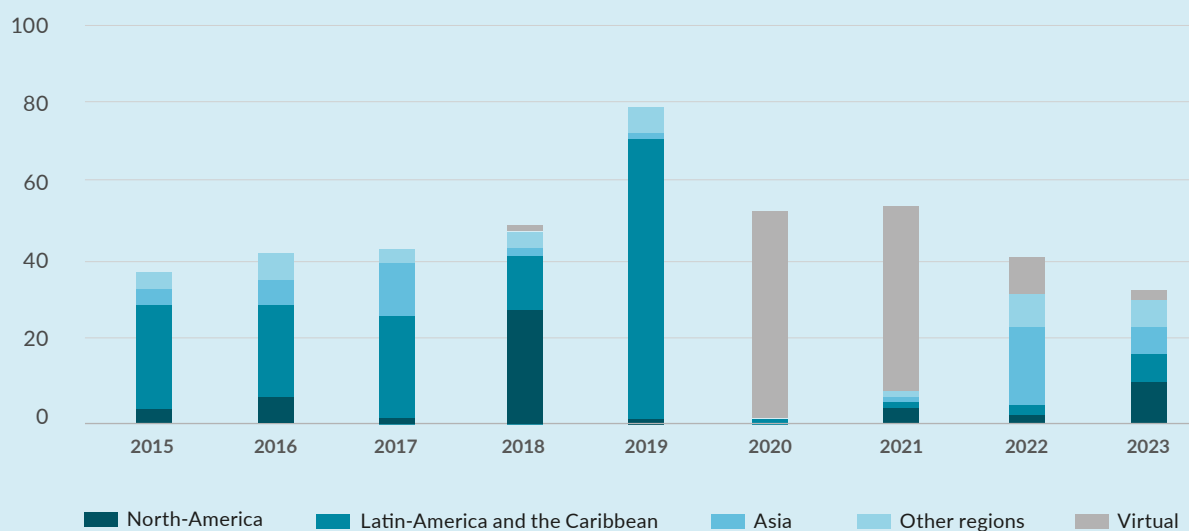
scopes of action in the total number of main events and parallel events. The combined analysis of these two graphs reveals that, between 2015 and 2019, the Ibero-American space was the most important promoter of the main events on SSC, annually accounting for between 40% and 60% of them. This situation changes as of 2020, when that figure drops to just over 20%, the Global scope taking absolute leadership, in which most of the parallel events were also framed.

These 444 events on SSC can also be distributed according to the region in which they were held: North-America; Latin-America and the Caribbean; Asia; and Other regions; also considering a Virtual category, which is associated with the outbreak of the COVID-19 crisis. The contribution of each of these regions to the total number of meetings annually held

between 2015 and 2023 is shown in the third graph. Its examination confirms that Latin-America and the Caribbean is the region where the largest number of events on SSC were hosted (167) —with great importance of the Ibero-American space itself—; followed by North-America (56) —most of these held at the UN headquarters in New York (United States)—; as well as Asia (56) and Other regions (Europe, 35; Africa, 10 and Oceania, 1). The activities in other regions were also mainly driven by the United Nations and its regional agencies, as well as by the OECD and the Global Partnership Initiative (GPI). In addition, about 120 events were virtual, an option that will be particularly frequent in 2020-2022. In 2023, face-to-face events were once again the most common, although hybrid activities —which combine face-to-face and virtual formats—, also gained strength.

Face-to-face/hybrid and virtual events on SSC, by the region in which they were held. 2015-2023

In units



Source: SEGIB (2024)

[Continues >>](#)

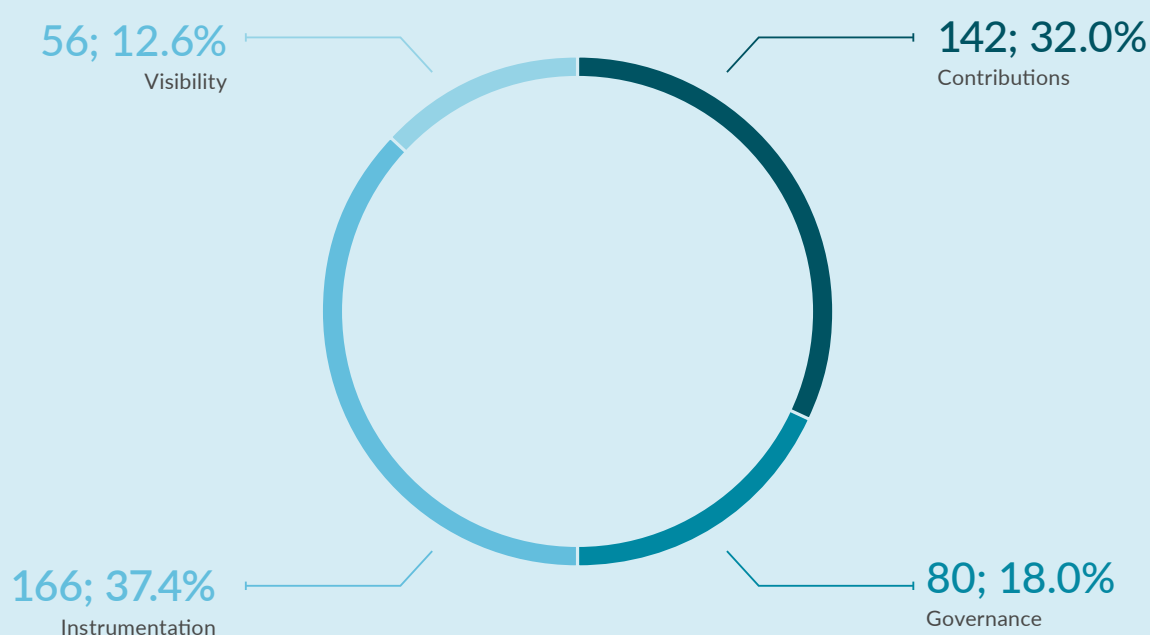
Finally, the 444 events on SSC carried out in the 2015-2023 period were systematized according to their potential Contribution (to Development) and their possible support to SSC Governance, Instrumentation and Visibility. The graph suggests that, in 37% of the

cases, these meetings contributed to the promotion of new Instruments for SSC (from Funds and Programs with financial resources to tools for their better management; measurement and evaluation; and those that were promoted to try to respond to the COVID-19 crisis). Another remarkable

32% is explained by the events that addressed the Contribution of these modalities to sustainable and inclusive development. The remaining 31% is divided between those that strengthened SSC's Governance (18%) and those which improved its Visibility (13%).

Distribution of the Events on SSC, by their potential contribution to SSC's development and strengthening. 2015-2023

In units and percentage



Fuente: SEGIB (2024).

The last graph replicates the same distribution by category, specifically for the 115 events that took place between 2015-2023 in Ibero-America, by year. The events that provide new and better Instruments for SSC in Ibero-America, especially before the COVID-19 crisis, stand out. These should be certainly associated with

the coordinated work between SEGIB and PIFCSS, which, for almost 15 years, have been promoting activities to strengthen SSC in the region. Those meetings which purpose was to support SSC's Governance followed, with an average of 4-5 per year. Ibero-American events on Visibility stand out third, which, however, have

tended to decline. Finally, even less frequent were the events dedicated to understanding the potential Contribution of SSC to sustainable and inclusive development, this being one of the challenges in which to continue working in the future.

Continues >>

Evolution of the Events on SSC carried out in Ibero-America, by their potential contribution. 2015-2023

In units



Source: SEGIB (2024)