



REPORT
ON **SOUTH
SOUTH** COOPERATION
IN
IBERO-AMERICA
2017

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



Secretaría General
Iberoamericana

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FOREWORD

The **Report on South-South Cooperation in Ibero-America 2017** is put forward to the international community within a specific context of South-South Cooperation (SSC) in which three particularly important processes come together. Firstly, the global debate ahead of the United Nations High-level Conference that commemorates the 40th anniversary of the Buenos Aires Plan of Action (BAPA+40), the foundational milestone of contemporary SSC. Secondly, the progress made in the instrumentalization of the new Sustainable Development Goals' (SDGs) Agenda 2030, which gives SSC and its specific instruments an unprecedented role in the new global development agenda. Thirdly, a decade since the first Report on South-South Cooperation in Ibero-America, a far-reaching technical and political effort that has made Ibero-America an international benchmark in this field, which reflects symmetric, horizontal, voluntary cooperation, based on the belief that we all have to learn and contribute to building an inclusive and sustainable development.

In this regard, the convening of the BAPA+40 Conference in Buenos Aires in 2019 is a historic opportunity for Ibero-American countries to reflect on this journey and on the results achieved in these decades. It is clear that the geometry and geography of international cooperation have changed dramatically

since the adoption of the Plan almost four decades ago. The BAPA was a watershed in the history of international cooperation. It is of strategic importance that a similar milestones be created today. The debate should address, inter alia, the need to adopt metrics that go beyond the countries' income to define its connection with cooperation relations. The SSC is not a substitute, but rather, a complement for other ways to fund cooperation. Indeed, it is an increasingly important complement.

Traditional cooperation instruments must adjust to the new realities and the Agenda 2030, a global agenda, and in the construction of which Latin America played a much more active role than in the previous Millennium Development Goals. To achieve the SDGs, we must move from a graduation to a *gradation* approach, moving away from the binary paradigm that classifies countries between donors and recipients, developed and developing. We must instead understand development as a continuum of many categories in which countries can fit in and interact depending on where they fall in the spectrum.

This approach to cooperation should not exclude middle-income countries. Neither should it exclude partnership agreements or arrangements that embrace combined funding. This will mean, inter alia,


understanding that cooperation today means dialogue, alliances and partnerships, rather than monetary aid. The debate should address these and other matters to achieve a more comprehensive, more inclusive cooperation that gives greater attention to global public goods. That is the kind of cooperation that requires implementation of the SDGs.

Few regions exemplify this as well as Ibero-America. The Ibero-American General Secretariat, together with the Ibero-American Program to Strengthen South-South Cooperation (PIFCSS), publishes the only regional report on South-South Cooperation in the world, based on the largest South-South Cooperation database. The full functioning of the Ibero-American Integrated Data System on South-South and Triangular Cooperation (SIDICSS) enables us to develop an annual analysis for drafting the regular Report, a historical systematization of the decade of Reports, with more than 5,000 cooperation initiatives between different countries in the region.

This 2017 report confirms the significant dynamism of SSC in our region. In recent years, the Report has registered more than 1,000 South-South Cooperation actions every year, which is an unprecedented achievement. As further elaborated in this Report, Ibero-American countries participated in the execution

of 1,475 South-South Cooperation initiatives. Similarly, Triangular Cooperation continues to play an increasingly important role, with 159 initiatives implemented in the region. This means that this form of cooperation has increased eightfold in a decade. Also impressive are the 101 regional SSC initiatives developed in 2015, and Ibero-America's engagement in at least 378 SSC initiatives with other regions of the world.

We are convinced that the massive accumulation of substantive experience in these cooperation modalities in our region constitutes a powerful "acquis" of capacities, enabling us to provide effective solutions to the development challenges of the global south set out in the Agenda 2030. SEGIB is honored to contribute to and unlock the value of this process in which the Ibero-American Community is engaged.



Rebeca Grynszpan
Ibero-American Secretary General

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HIGHLIGHTS

This edition of the **Report on South-South Cooperation in Ibero-America** is framed in the context of two anniversaries. On the one hand, the decade since the first Report, an annual exercise that brings together the Ibero-American community to systematize and align the South-South Cooperation in which all participate; and on the other hand, 40 years – in 2018 – since the approval of a major historical milestone in South-South Cooperation, the adoption, by 138 countries, of the Buenos Aires Plan of Action to Promote and Implement Technical Cooperation among Developing Countries (BAPA) at the United Nations Conference on TCDC in 1978.

Against this backdrop, and as is customary since 2009, this **Report on South-South Cooperation in Ibero-America 2017** starts with a reflection on the role of Ibero-American countries in South-South Cooperation and issues on the international development agenda. This first chapter of the 2017 Report, drafted by the heads of cooperation, places Ibero-America in a scenario that combines the relevance of the BAPA and the new Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development. The report then focuses on the systematization exercise that justified its release: three chapters analyze and characterize each of the accepted forms of South-South Cooperation (Bilateral South-South, Triangular Cooperation and Regional South-South

Cooperation) in which Ibero-American countries engaged in our space in 2015. The fifth chapter focuses on South-South Cooperation implemented by Ibero-American countries in 2015 together with other developing regions, in particular, an analysis of the cooperation with the non-Ibero-American Caribbean, Africa and Asia.

Towards 40 years of the Buenos Aires Plan of Action

In the first chapter, the Ibero-American countries, through the heads of cooperation, review the impact of the Buenos Aires Plan of Action (PABA) on the region virtually 40 years on. In this regard, the convening of the United Nations High-level Conference on South-South Cooperation, which commemorates this 40th anniversary, in Buenos Aires in 2019, is a historic opportunity for Ibero-American countries to reflect on this journey and on the results achieved in these decades. This conference also provides an opportunity to identify challenges and opportunities in this new phase, both to achieve

This tenth edition of the Report on South-South Cooperation in Ibero-America includes a reflection of the countries facing a scenario that combines the relevance of the BAPA and the new Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development

the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and build an international cooperation architecture that complies with the “leave no one behind” principle of Agenda 2030.

countries, and between Ibero-American countries and their partners in other developing regions, it can be asserted that Ibero-American countries participated in 1,475 South-South Cooperation initiatives in 2015.

Nearly 1,500 South-South Cooperation initiatives were launched in 2015

The next chapters focus on the systematization and analysis of nearly 1,500 South-South Cooperation initiatives that Ibero-American countries implemented in 2015. Indeed, according to the following table, and taking account of the three modalities accepted in our space, the different means of instrumentalization (programs, projects and actions) and the total initiatives exchanged between Ibero-American

In 2015, Ibero-American countries participated in 1,475 South-South Cooperation initiatives. As is customary, most initiatives (8 out of 10) were bilateral cooperation

South-South Cooperation in Ibero-America. 2015

Initiatives (units)

		Forms			Total
		Bilateral SSC	Triangular Cooperation	Regional SSC	
Instruments	Programs	n/a.	n/a.	44	44
	Projects	992	99	57	1,148
	Actions	214	69	n/a.	283
Total		1,206	168	101	1,475

Note: n/a. Not applicable.

Source: SEGIB, based on reporting from cooperation agencies and/or bureaus.

Ibero-America and Bilateral South-South Cooperation in 2015

The second chapter focuses on the 721 projects and 155 actions exchanged between the nineteen Ibero-American countries in 2015 under Bilateral South-South Cooperation. The characterization of these close to 900 initiatives reveals the following notable facts:

- a) On the one hand, seven countries in the region accounted for 90% of the 721 Bilateral South-South Cooperation projects in 2015: Argentina, the top provider with 180 projects; followed by Mexico and Brazil in relative importance with 125 and 110 projects, respectively; Chile and Cuba, with 80 and 59 initiatives, equivalent to 20% of the total; and Uruguay and Colombia, with a remarkable 40 to 50 projects. Ten countries are responsible for the remaining 10% of the cooperation: Ecuador and Costa Rica (about 25 projects each); Peru (14); and seven traditionally recipient countries (Bolivia, El Salvador, Guatemala, Panama, Paraguay, Dominican Republic and Venezuela) that this time acted as providers with 1 to 3 projects. Honduras and Nicaragua did not register any project.
- b) On the other hand, all 19 Latin America countries, without exception, were active as recipients of Bilateral SSC projects. El Salvador, in particular, was the top recipient in 2015 with 98 projects, equivalent to 13.6% of the total. It was the only country with more than 10% share, given that the second and third largest recipients in 2015, Bolivia and Argentina, received 68 and 57 projects each (9.4% and 7.9%, respectively). Meanwhile, five countries – Mexico, Honduras, Costa Rica, Cuba and Uruguay – accounted for just over 30% of the projects, in each case with 40 to 50 initiatives. Six countries (Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, Guatemala, Peru and the Dominican Republic) registered between 20 and 36 projects each. When added to the previous eight countries, this accounts for nine of ten projects in 2015. Lastly, Brazil, Nicaragua, Panama and Venezuela were active, respectively, in 11 to 17 projects.
- c) In terms of the capacities strengthened in the region through Bilateral SSC, most projects (more than 250, or 40.1% of the total) were geared towards the economic area: eight of 10 strengthened productive sectors, while the rest focused on creating national economy-supporting infrastructures and services. Meanwhile, about 215 projects (one-third of the total) sought to improve social welfare. Another one hundred (15% of the 721) were aimed at strengthening government institutions and civil society. Finally, the remaining 11.6% of the projects were geared towards the environment and other multisectoral areas, primarily culture, in a ratio of 6:4.
- d) In terms of economy-oriented projects, Agriculture was the most prominent sector. Indeed, it was the second most important sector in 2015, accounting for 16% of all projects (only topped by Health with 17.8%). Additionally, another one hundred projects (14.7%) focused on institutional strengthening, in particular, governments. The shares of the remaining economic sectors were less than 10%. Worthy of note are the projects aimed at strengthening public services and policies (7.0% of the total), environmental protection (6.7%), and industry (5.9%).

Geographic distribution of cooperation projects, by provider. 2015

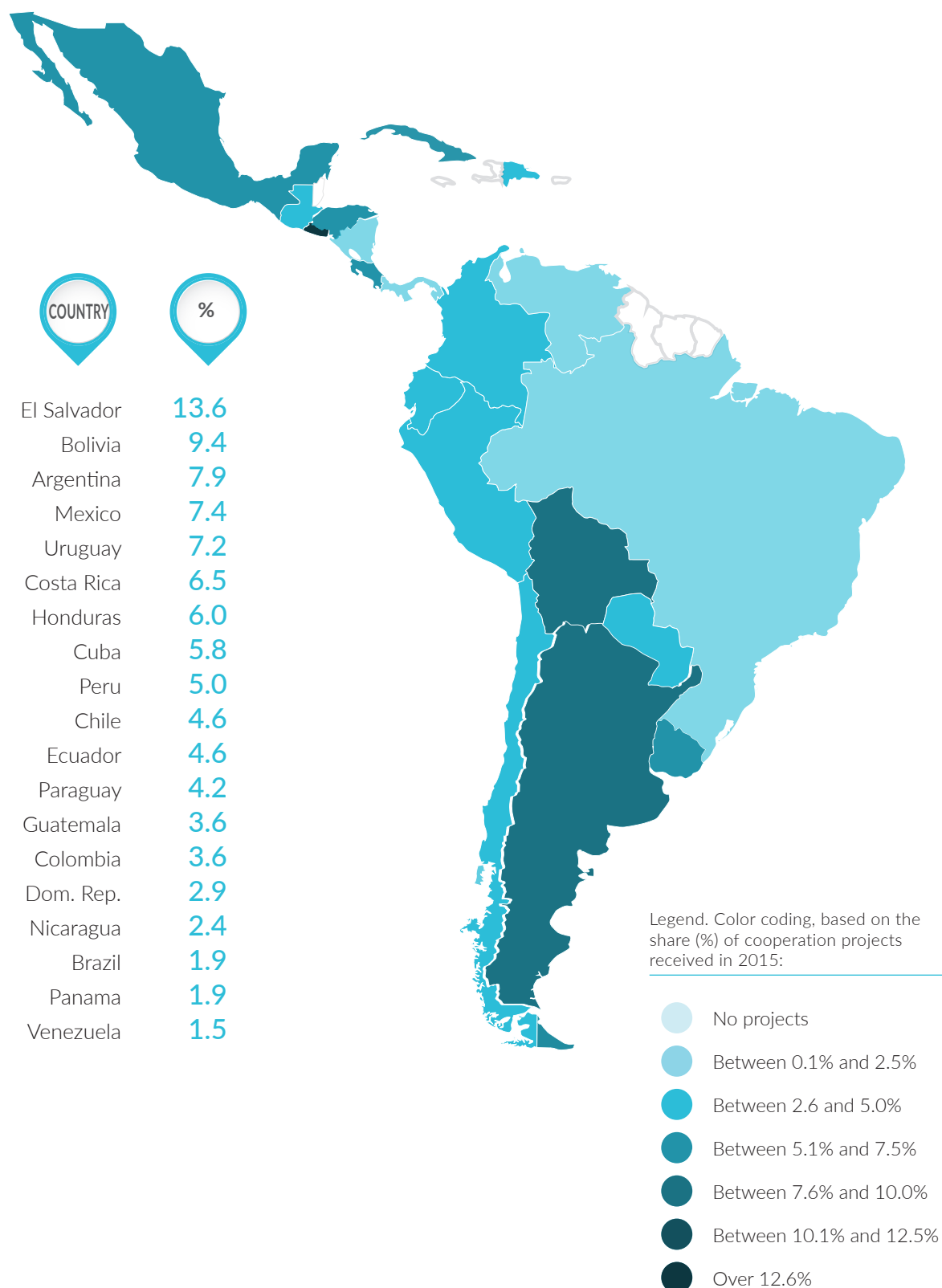
Share (%)



Source: SEGIB, based on reporting from cooperation agencies and/or bureaus.

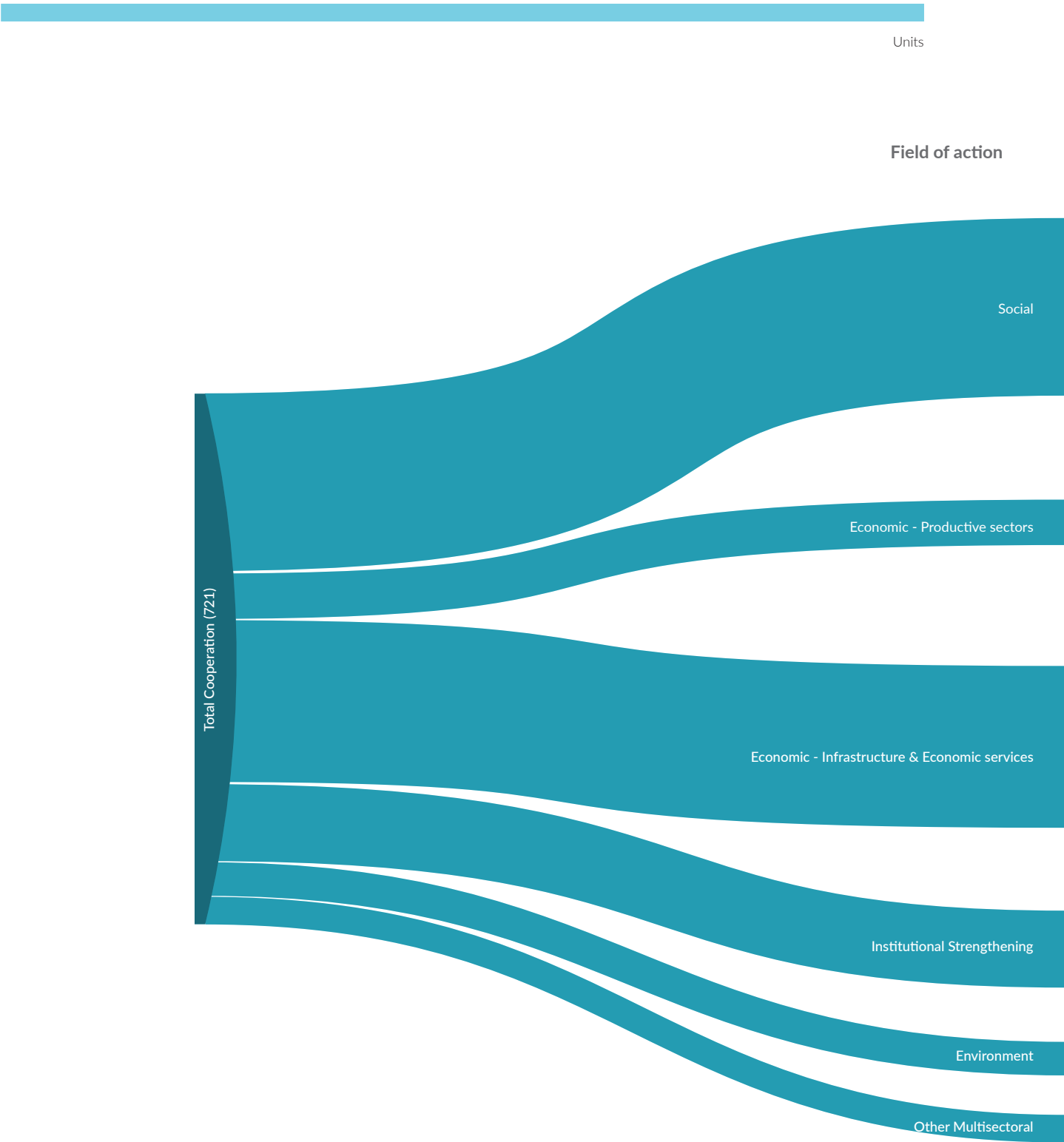
Geographic distribution of cooperation projects, by recipient. 2015

Share (%)

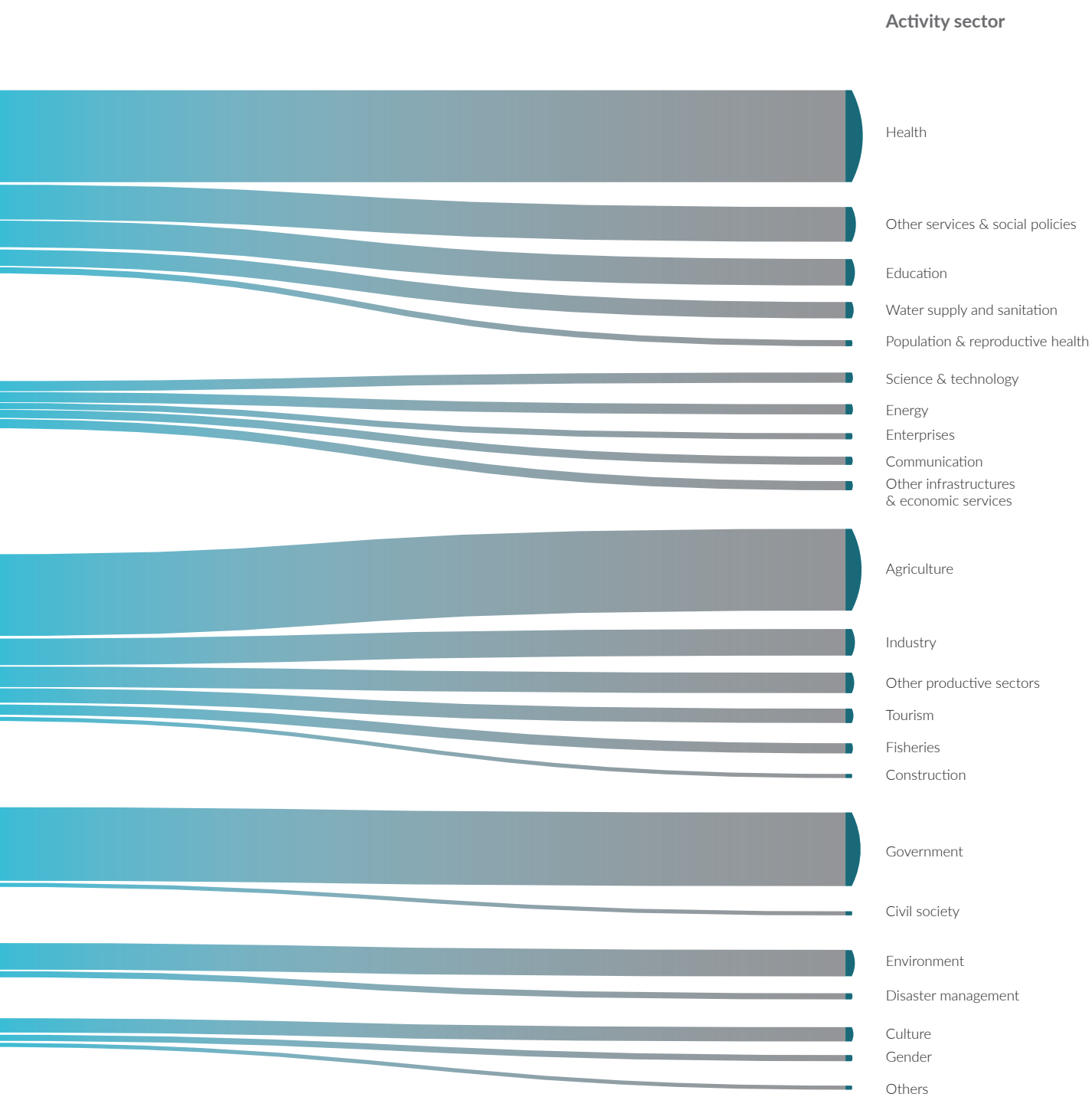


Source: SEGIB, based on reporting from cooperation agencies and/or bureaus.

Distribution of Bilateral SSC project flows, by activity sector and area of action. 2015



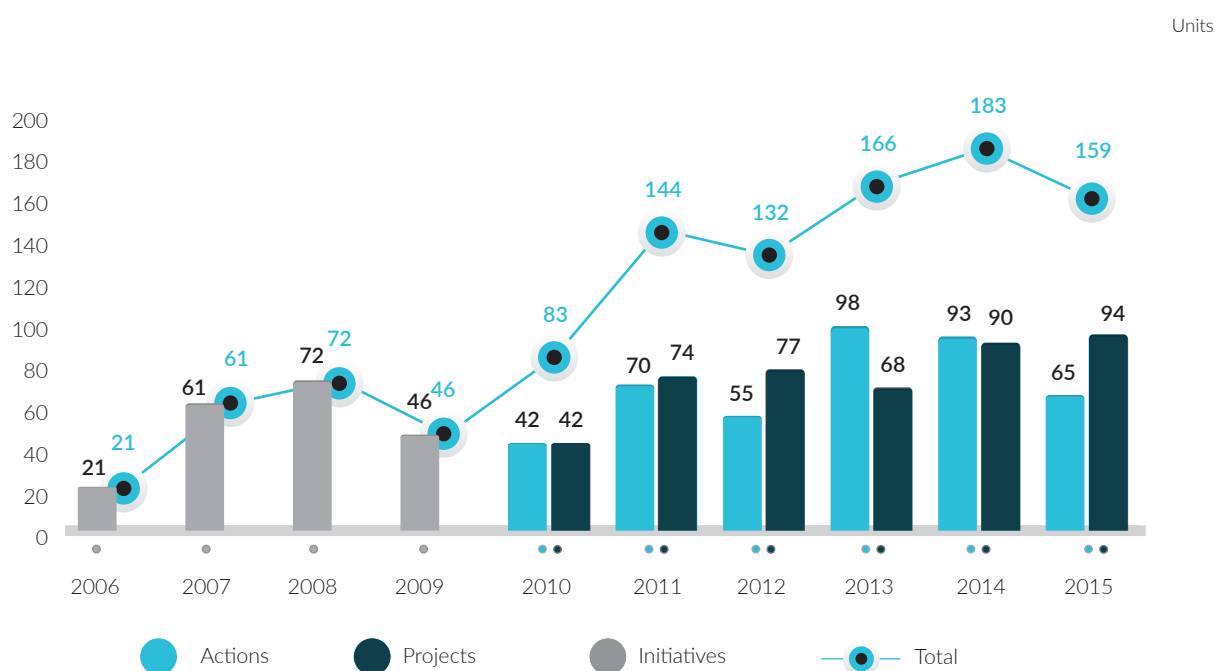
Source: SEGIB, based on reporting from cooperation agencies and/or bureaus.



Triangular Cooperation: a decade of continuous growth

The third chapter systematizes the Triangular Cooperation in which Ibero-America engaged in 2015: 94 projects and 65 actions. This means that the number of initiatives has increased eightfold with respect to 2006 (159 initiatives in 2015 compared to 21 a decade ago). This analysis highlighted the following:

Evolution of Triangular Cooperation records analyzed in each edition of the Report on South-South Cooperation in Ibero-America. 2006-2015



Source: SEGIB, based on reporting from cooperation agencies and/or bureaus.

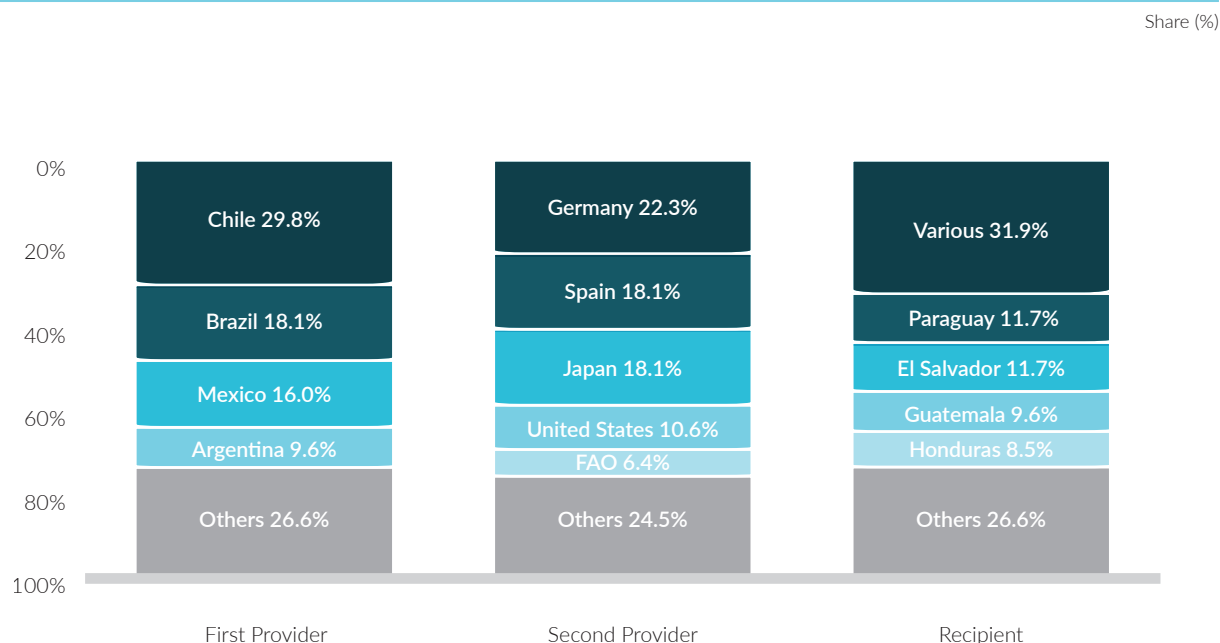
The number of Triangular Cooperation initiatives in the region increased eightfold in a decade: from 21 in 2006 to 159 in 2015

- a) Only 12 of the 19 countries in the region were involved in capacity transfer as first providers. Four countries accounted for almost three-fourth of the 94 projects provided: Chile, 29.8% of the projects; Brazil, the first provider in 18.1% of the initiatives; and Mexico and Argentina, with relative shares of 16% and 9.6%, respectively. Other countries in the region that also occasionally transferred their capacities were Uruguay, Peru and Costa Rica (five times each); Colombia (four); El Salvador (two); as well as Panama, Ecuador and the Dominican Republic (one).
- b) In 2015, more than twenty actors supported Triangular Cooperation financially, technically and institutionally. Indeed, in the role of second provider, Germany stood out with more than one fifth of the projects; Spain and Japan, with 17 projects each accounted for 36.2% of the cooperation; and the United States was the fourth most active country, present in 7 out of 10 initiatives. Multilateral agencies of the United Nations System, several Development Banks and some subregional institutions (e.g. OAS) also played a prominent role.
- c) Several countries often acted as recipients at the same time (in virtually one-third of Triangular projects in 2015). Worthy of note at the individual level were Paraguay and El Salvador (23.4% of the remaining initiatives), Guatemala (9.6%) and Honduras (8.5%).
- d) As to capacity building, 30.9% of Triangular Cooperation projects in 2015 had an economic purpose. Of these, 9 out of 10 supported the productive sectors. Likewise, Social was the second most relevant area, accounting for 25% of the projects. The remaining 40% of Triangular Cooperation projects in 2015 were divided, almost equally, between environment and institutional strengthening.



Spain-Costa Rica-Latin America and the Caribbean Triangular Cooperation Program Support Project for the Environment and Climate Change.

Top actors' share (%) of Triangular Cooperation in each role 2015



Source: SEGIB, based on reporting from cooperation agencies and/or bureaus.

- e) By sectors, 20% of the projects were aimed at institutional strengthening of recipient countries' governments. Another one-third of Triangular Cooperation was geared towards supporting the conservation and protection of the environment and agricultural activity (around 16-17% of the total, respectively). Social services and policies (10.6%) and health (8.5%) accounted for close or equal to 10% of projects.

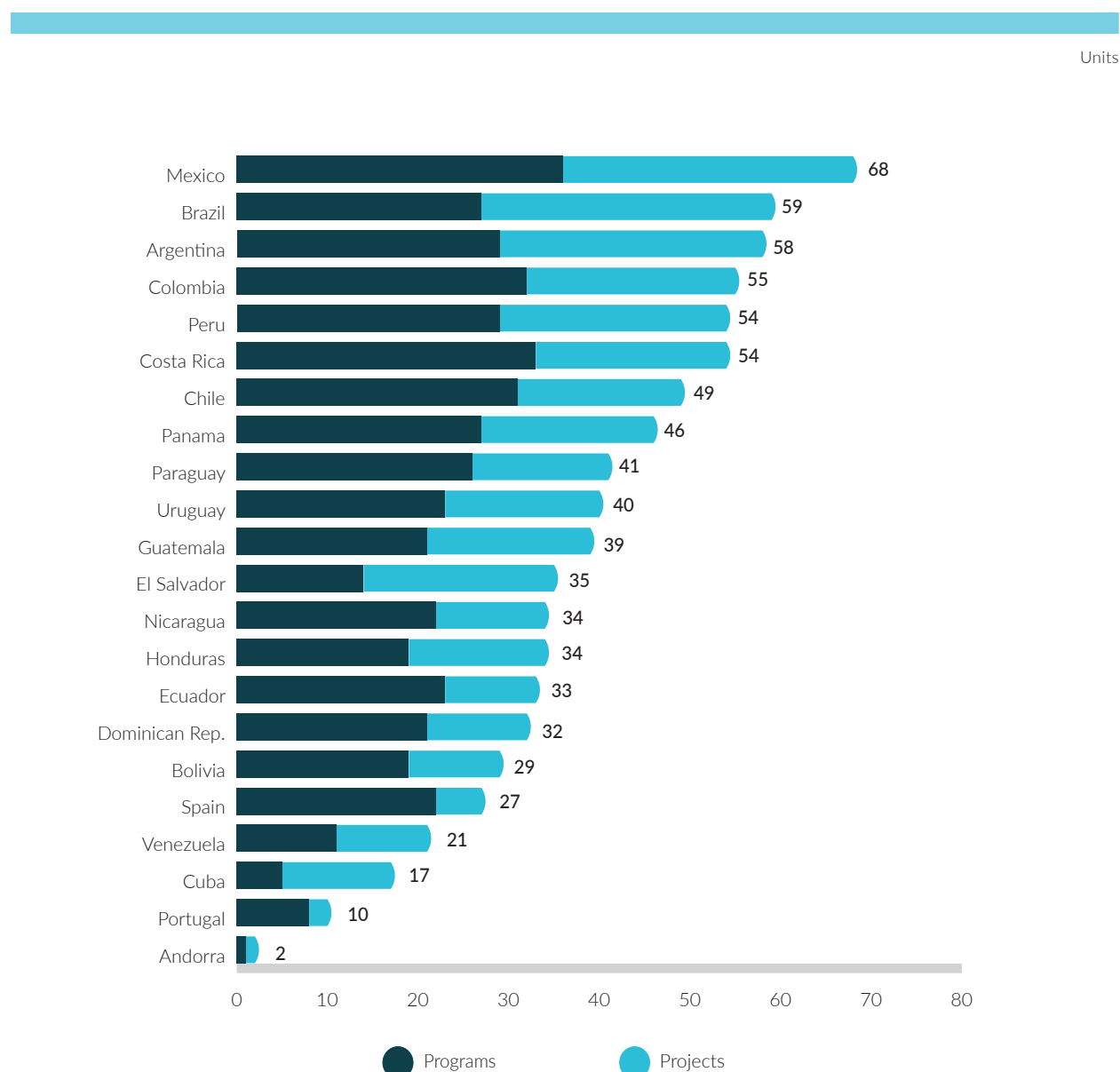
South-South Cooperation geared towards the strengthening of economic capacities prevailed in 2015. This activity accounted for 40.1% of Bilateral projects, 30.9% of Triangular projects and 26.7% of Regional initiatives

Regional SSC: Ibero-America in the quest for shared solutions

Chapter IV focuses on the 44 programs and 57 projects under Regional South-South Cooperation in which Ibero-American countries engaged in 2015. The most striking results are summarized below in terms of who participated and what type of regional problems were addressed collectively through this form of cooperation. In particular:

- a) In 2015, Mexico was the country involved in a larger number of Regional South-South Cooperation initiatives (68), followed by Argentina, Brazil, Colombia, Costa Rica and Peru, with between 50 and 60 programs and projects. Chile, Panama, Paraguay and Uruguay composed the group of countries that participated in 40 to 50 Regional SSC experiences. Guatemala, Ecuador, El Salvador, Honduras, Nicaragua and the

Countries' participation in Regional SSC Programs and Projects 2015



Source: SEGIB, based on reporting from cooperation agencies and/or bureaus.

Dominican Republic engaged in 30 to 40 initiatives. Meanwhile, Bolivia, Spain and Venezuela were involved in 20 to 30 programs and projects. Though Cuba and Portugal had relatively lower shares (17 and 11 initiatives), it was still significantly higher than Andorra (2).

- b)** Multilateral bodies were also relevant players in Regional South-South Cooperation in

2015, participating in 89 of the 101 registered initiatives. The role of Ibero-American bodies, which were active in 26 programs and projects, should be noted. Next was the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), which sponsored 13 projects under its ARCAL Program. The Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) and MERCOSUR participated, respectively, in about ten exchanges. Though more modest, the OAS

(7 initiatives), SICA (7), Pacific Alliance (4), ECLAC (3) and ILO, ACTO and FAO (2 each) also had a noteworthy participation. IMF, CAN and PAHO engaged in one program or project each.

- c) More than half of the Regional South-South Cooperation programs and projects under way in 2015 focused on social (26.7%) and economic problems (another 26.7%, namely generation of economy-supporting infrastructures and services). A notable 16% were initiatives aimed at institutional strengthening of the region's governments. Another 15% were geared towards other areas of action, in which culture had a significant share. The remaining 16% of initiatives were equally divided between environmental conservation and productive sectors.
- d) From a disaggregated perspective, the most relevant sector in 2015 did not have an economic or social orientation, but rather, focused on institutional strengthening of the region's governments (15.9% of the 101 initiatives). Culture accounted for about 14% of Regional SSC in 2015. Meanwhile,

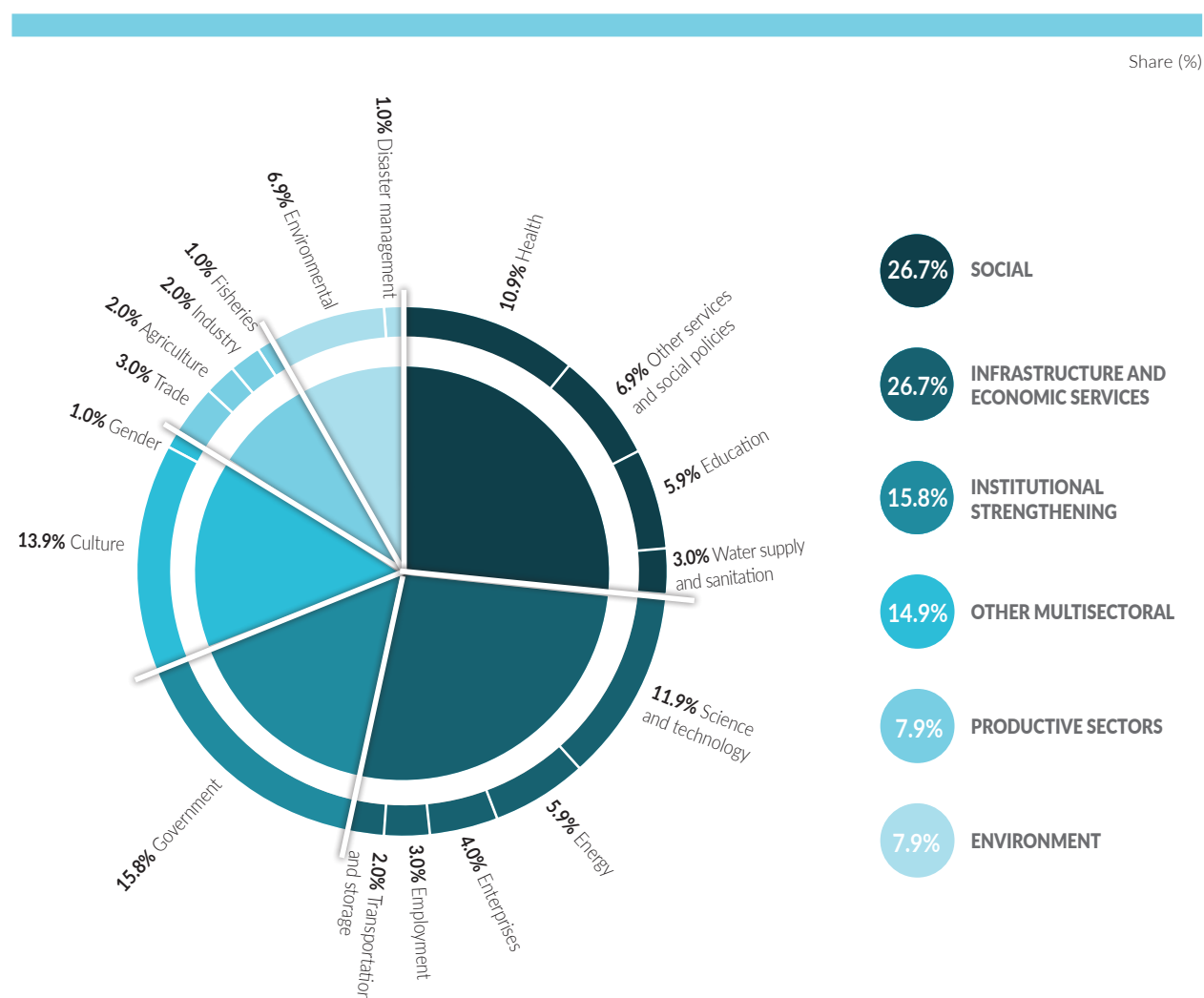
programs and projects geared towards promoting and developing science and technology represented another 12% of this form of cooperation. Health was the fourth most important sector, with one in ten initiatives. Noteworthy among the initiatives with shares lower than 10% were those aimed at strengthening social services and policies (almost 7% of the total), conservation and care of the environment (6.9%), education systems (5.9%) and energy (another 5.9%).

**Ibero-American countries
participating in a 44 programs
and 57 projects under Regional
South-South Cooperation**



Ancestral Knowledge Project between Colombia and Cuba.

Profile of capacities strengthened by Regional SSC, by sector of activity and area of action. 2015



Source: SEGIB, based on reporting from cooperation agencies and/or bureaus.

Ibero-America: strengthening South-South Cooperation with other developing regions

The fifth chapter introduces an analysis of the nearly 400 South-South Cooperation initiatives in which Ibero-America engaged in 2015 with other developing regions. About 90% of these (330) were Bilateral South-South Cooperation exchanges. The rest, in similar proportions, were implemented under Triangular Cooperation (21 initiatives) and Regional South-South Cooperation (27 others).

- a) Ibero-America participated as provider in the bulk of Bilateral South-South Cooperation initiatives (292). Two thirds of these took place in the non-Ibero-American Caribbean (104 projects and actions) and in Africa (another 102). Additionally, one in four initiatives (73) were aimed at strengthening capacities in an Asian country. The experiences in the Middle East (9) and Oceania (4) were occasional and barely accounted for 5% of the total. Meanwhile, Asia was the provider of about 80% of the 38 initiatives in which Ibero-America was the recipient. The remaining 20% originated in Africa (15.8%) and the Middle East (5.3%).

- b)** In the case of the 21 Triangular Cooperation initiatives in which Ibero-America and other developing regions participated, Chile (11 initiatives, equal to more than half of the total), Argentina (5) and Mexico (3) were the first providers, while Germany, Canada, Spain, the United States, Japan and UNASUR acted as second providers. The preferred destination for this cooperation was the non-Ibero-American Caribbean, which participated in all three variants: single recipient country (Haiti or Belize); group of countries; or shared with other Ibero-American partners. Two ad-hoc experiences involved less frequent partners, Africa and Asia, rather than the Caribbean region. These Triangular Cooperation initiatives involved, on the one hand, Costa Rica, Germany and Tunisia, and, on the other hand, Paraguay, Japan and FAO, as well as Indonesia.
- c)** Regarding the 27 regional SSC programs and projects in which Ibero-America engaged alongside other developing regions, the non-Ibero-American Caribbean appears as the only partner. There is no record, however, of the participation of African, Asian, Oceanian or Middle Eastern countries. Moreover, multilateral bodies participated in about 75% of these 27 programs and projects. The influence of CARICOM (who sponsored one of the few experiences that involved all its member countries); SICA and the Mesoamerican Program; ECLAC, IDB and OAS; as well as FAO and ILO should be underlined here.



Honduras Ecological Blue Flag Program Implementation Project between Costa Rica, Spain and Honduras.

South-South Cooperation between Ibero-America and other developing regions. 2015

Initiatives (units)

		Forms			Total
		Bilateral SSC	Triangular Cooperation	Regional SSC	
Instruments	Programs	n/a.	n/a.	15	15
	Projects	271	15	12	298
	Actions	59	6	n.a	65
Total		330	21	27	378

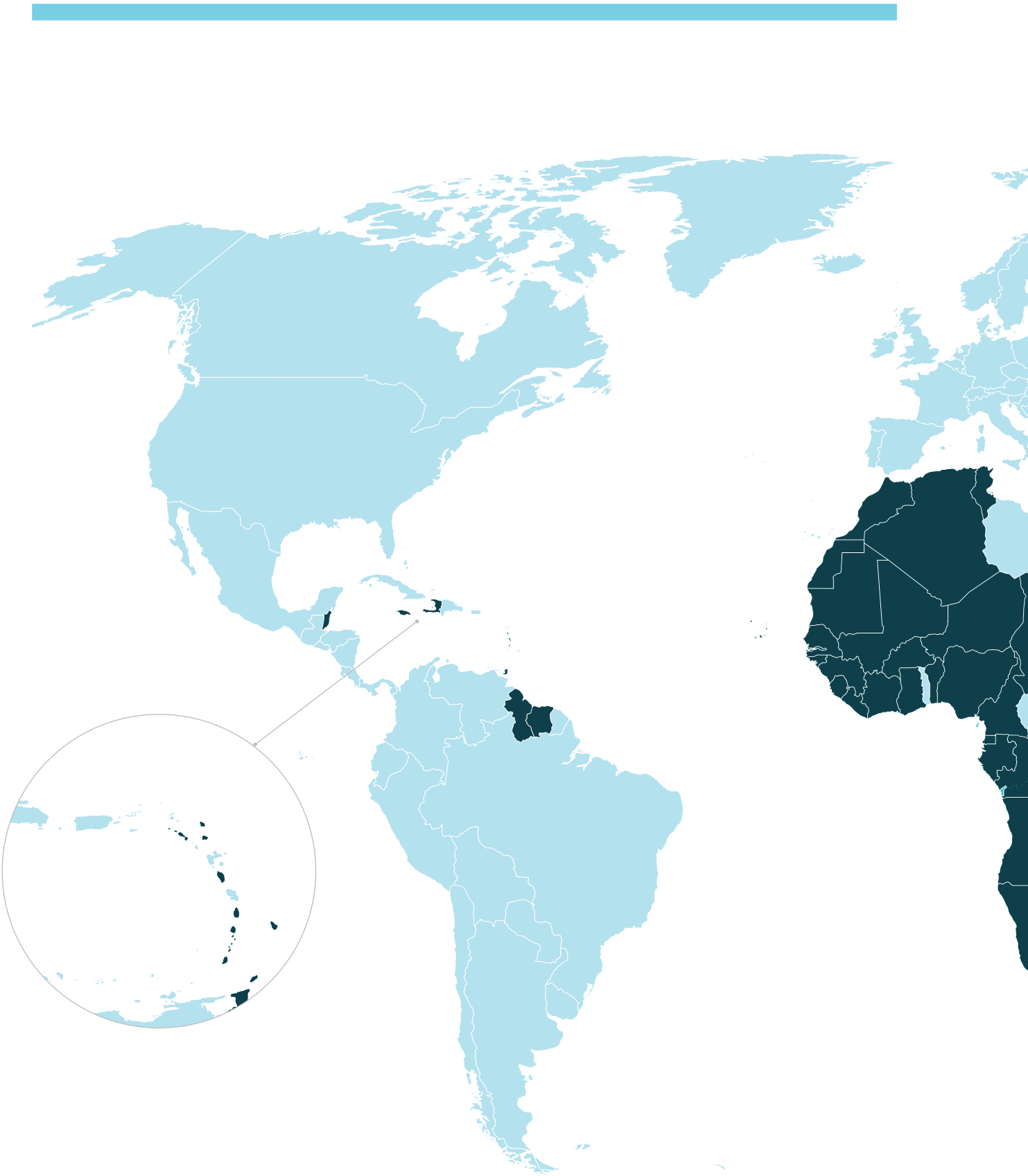
Note: n/a. Not applicable.

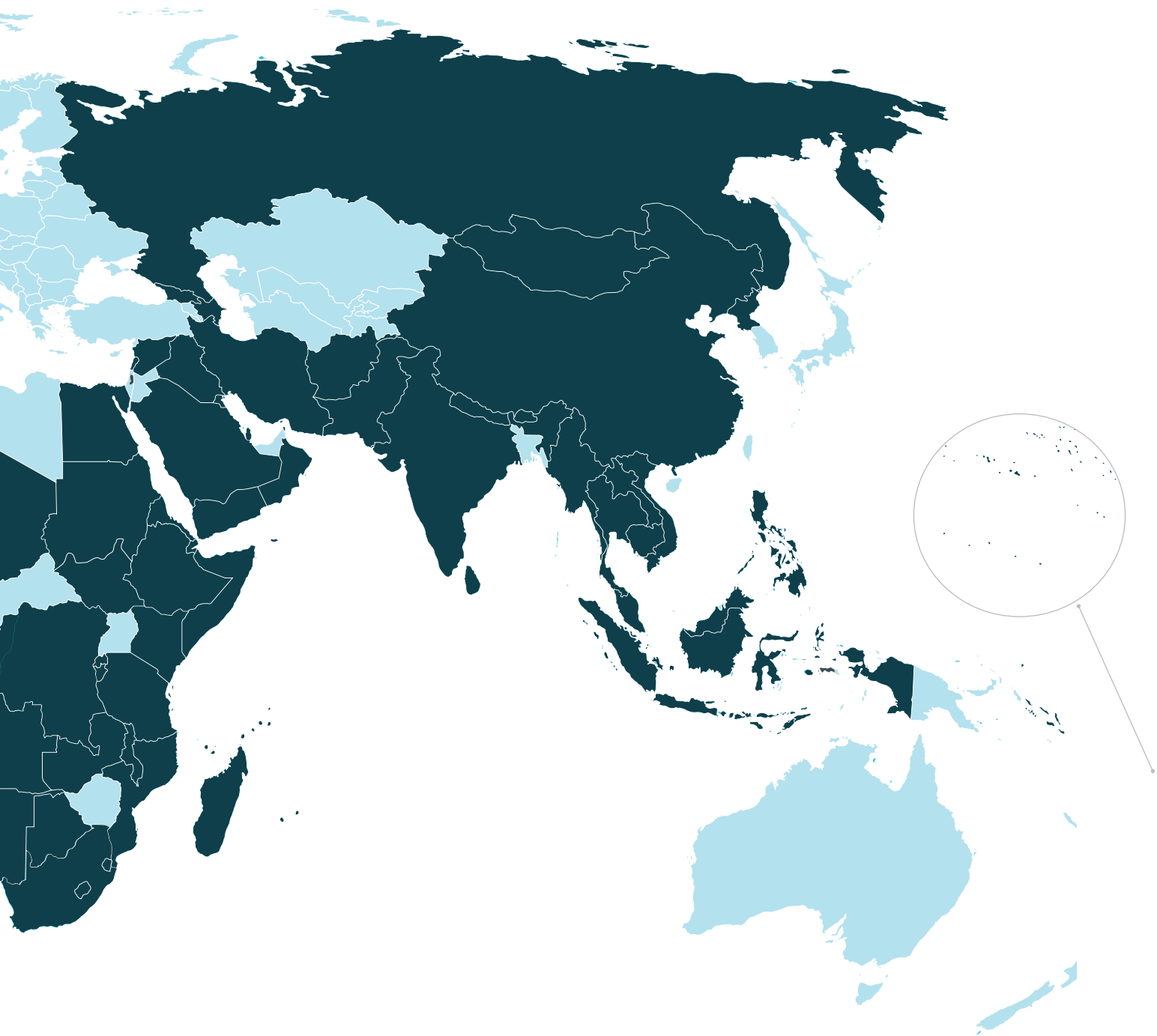
Source: SEGIB, based on reporting from cooperation agencies and/or bureaus.

In 2015, Ibero-America engaged with other developing regions in 378 initiatives. Again, about 90% were Bilateral South-South Cooperation exchanges



Map of countries in other regions that engaged in South-South Cooperation with Ibero-America. 2015



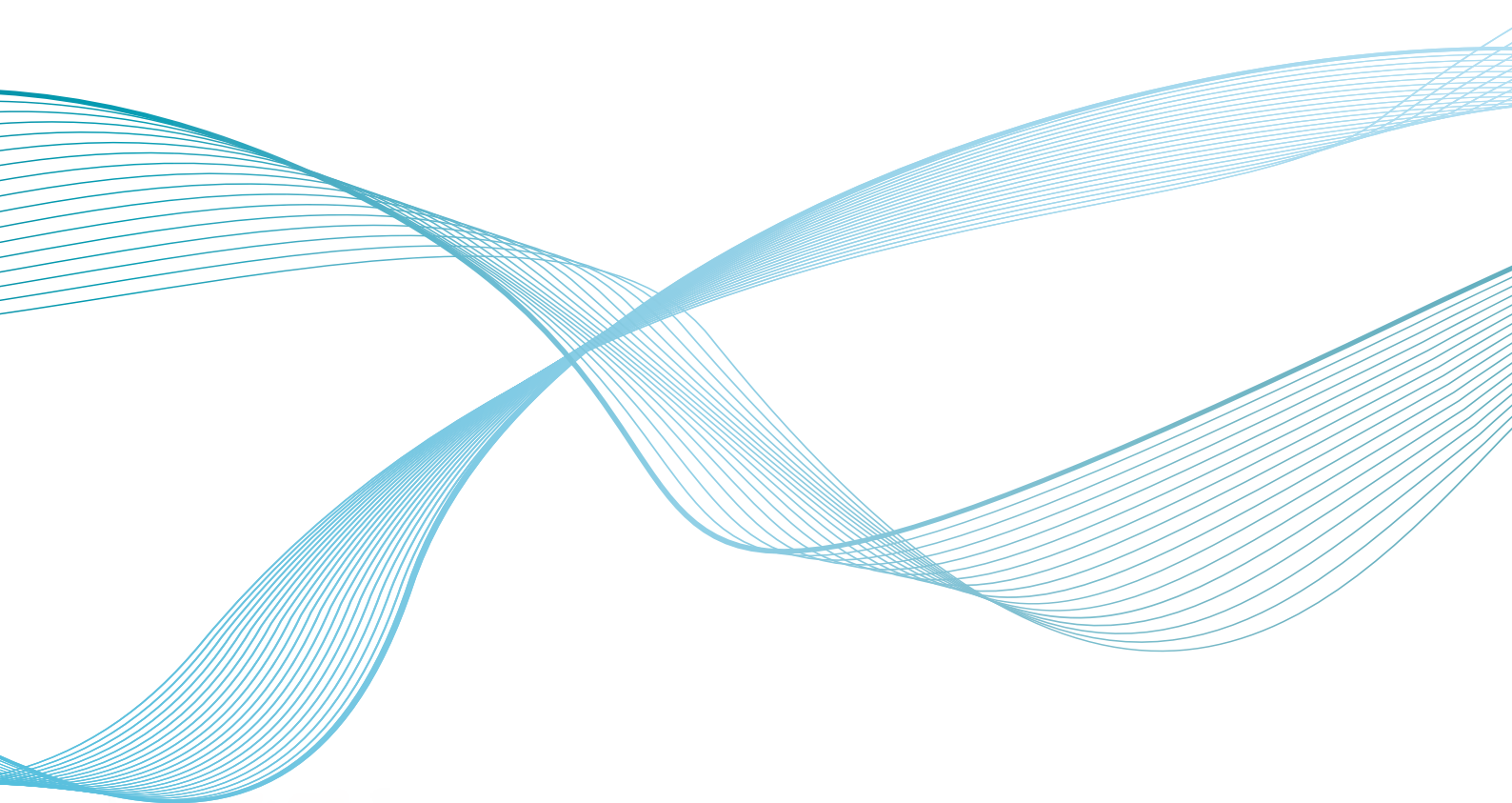




The *Report on South-South Cooperation in Ibero-America 2017* is the most comprehensive intergovernmental systematization of South-South Cooperation in a developing region. In the context of the new 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, this Report, which is the tenth edition, provides an international benchmark for understanding the role of our region in the future of South-South Cooperation.

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