

South-South and Triangular Cooperation and Indigenous Peoples

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



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Publication general coordination:

Martín Rivero Illa and Rocío Rodríguez Cáceres
SEGIB Social Cohesion and South-South Cooperation Division

Author:

Gerardo Zúñiga Navarro with the participation of Valentina Raurich

Collaborations, SEGIB South-South Cooperation team

Cristina Xalma Mellado

Natalia Vargas Talero

María Dutto Piaggio

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Acronyms

CAOI (by its Spanish acronym)	Andean Coordinator of Indigenous Organisations	IPCC	Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change
CICA (by its Spanish acronym)	Indigenous Council of Central America	UN	United Nations
COICA (by its Spanish acronym)	Coordinator of the Indigenous Organisations of the Amazon Basin	OECD	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development
COVID-19	Coronavirus disease 2019	IOM	International Organisation for Migration
SSC	South-South Cooperation	ILO	International Labour Organisation
SSTC	South-South and Triangular Cooperation	WHO/PAHO	World/Pan American Health Organisation
TC	Triangular Cooperation	ORDPI (by its Spanish acronym)	Regional Observatory for the Rights of Indigenous Peoples
ECMIA (by its Spanish acronym)	Continental Network of Indigenous Women of the Americas	PIFCSS (by its Spanish acronym)	Ibero-American Program for the Strengthening of South-South Cooperation
MS	Member State	SEGIB (by its Spanish acronym)	Ibero-American General Secretariat
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations	SIDICSS (by its Spanish acronym)	Ibero-American Integrated Data System on South-South and Triangular Cooperation
FILAC (by its Spanish acronym)	Fund for the Development of the Indigenous Peoples of Latin America and the Caribbean	UNESCO:	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation
IIALI (by its Spanish acronym)	Ibero-American Institute of Indigenous Languages Initiative		

Introduction

This document presents a summary of the main results of the *Study on South-South and Triangular Cooperation and Indigenous Populations* commissioned by the Ibero-American General Secretariat (SEGIB). The study is part of the project *An Innovative Triangular Cooperation for the New Development Agenda*, co-financed by the EU Regional Facility for Development in Transition, whose general objective is to contribute to the joint creation of an innovative model of EU-Ibero-American Triangular Cooperation, aligned with the 2030 Agenda and within the framework of Development in Transition. This text should contribute to building the foundations of a strategy that would include a definition of basic instruments for working in Triangular Cooperation with indigenous peoples and communities.

In conducting the research, we adopted a mixed methodology, combining a review of primary and secondary sources with interviews with Amparo Morales and Ricardo Changala, Chief of Staff and Coordinator of the Regional Observatory on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, respectively, and with the design and administration of a questionnaire targeted at key informants, including those responsible for cooperation in the countries of the Ibero-American community, and another intended for government representatives before the FILAC.

The study, conducted between the months of October 2020 and May 2021, is structured in three parts. The first, called *The institutional structure and management of matters of concern to indigenous peoples in the Ibero-American system*, sets out and examines the background that explains the current institutional framework in which the management of indigenous affairs functions in the Ibero-American sphere; the second is titled *The Status of South-South and Triangular Cooperation for and with indigenous peoples in Ibero-America*, which, on the one hand, evaluates SSC for and with indigenous peoples and, on the other, describes the South-South and Triangular Cooperation initiatives carried out over the past 20 years. Based on the information presented in the first two parts of the document, the third part develops proposals for guidelines and directives for the structuring, development and/or strengthening of South-South and Triangular Cooperation with and/or for indigenous peoples. It is on this third part that we focus in this executive summary.

PART ONE:

The institutional structure and management of matters of concern to indigenous peoples in the Ibero-American system

One of the first conclusions of the study is confirmation of the existence of a gap between discourse and practice, between the widespread recognition currently enjoyed by the rights of indigenous peoples in national and international regulatory frameworks and their systematic violation in practice. Indeed, the author's historical review of indigenous institutions enables us to see how, even though significant progress has been made in the field of constitutional and legal recognition of the rights of indigenous peoples in the region, the need is evidenced for states to develop measures

to protect and effectively guarantee their full enjoyment and exercise, a situation that was confirmed in 2004 by the delegates participating in the First Intergovernmental Meeting of the Indigenous Fund (Brasilia, 2004), and which is reiterated in other instances. This constitutional and legal recognition can be summarised as:

- Majority adherence to international standards on the rights of indigenous peoples: ILO Convention 169, the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (2007).



- The incorporation of international standards into internal regulatory frameworks at the constitutional or legal level.
- The existence of state institutions to manage the institutional structure and public policies on indigenous peoples in most of the countries in the region.

At this time, there is a strategic horizon in place that can guide the practical enforcement of the rights of indigenous peoples and communities marked by:

- The Ibero-American Action Plan for the Implementation of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, approved by the Meeting of High

Authorities of Indigenous Peoples, and endorsed by the 26th Summit in 2018. (Its general objective: To generate conditions for the effective realisation of the individual and collective rights of indigenous peoples).

- The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.
- El Buen Vivir or “Good Living”.

PART TWO:

The Status of South-South and Triangular Cooperation for and with indigenous peoples in Ibero-America

Since there has been a record in the Ibero-American sphere, **only 1.2% of SSTC initiatives have been specifically aimed at indigenous peoples or communities** (96 out of 7,967 initiatives implemented between 2000 and 2019).

Also worthy of note is the absence of indigenous institutions among the cooperation actors registered in the SIDICSS.

The foregoing can be explained by a lack of public policy for SSTC for and/or with indigenous peoples, which materialises in:

- Few instruments to support SSTC processes and initiatives with or for indigenous peoples.
- Little information on the supply of indigenous capabilities and cooperation opportunities.
- Very limited participation of indigenous peoples in the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of SSTC initiatives.
- Of the 20 international organisations analysed, none had programmes, lines of action or specific instruments to support SSTC for and/or with indigenous peoples.

PART THREE:

Guidelines and
Proposals for
the Structuring,
Development or
Strengthening of
South-South and
Triangular Cooperation
with and/or for
Indigenous Peoples

The data analysis performed enables us to confirm that SSTC initiatives for or with indigenous peoples have been few and far between over the past 20 years: only 96 of the 7,967 initiatives registered in the SIDICSS for the period studied. This coincides with the lack of specific cooperation frameworks that address matters of concern to indigenous peoples or the promotion of South-South and Triangular Cooperation.

Similarly, it has been observed that indigenous peoples continue to be conceived as vulnerable groups, and although they have been recognised as peoples in the vast majority of national regulatory frameworks, their rights continue to be violated.

It is, then, possible to build a picture of SSTC and indigenous peoples and suggest the need for new frameworks of understanding, guidelines and instruments so that these cooperation modalities serve the challenges and problems and, in general, the matters of concern to indigenous peoples. These include their low participation; the non-existence of safeguards—such as consultation and consent—in any initiatives of general interest or which may jeopardise their interests or threaten the exercise of their rights; the non-existence of policy guidelines for public institutions for conducting their actions in the field of cooperation in general and SSC in particular and the matters of concern to indigenous peoples, and the non-existence of specific instruments that serve to drive initiatives of this type for or with indigenous peoples. We are, therefore, in fertile ground for optimisation of the potential of these cooperation modalities and for ensuring the realisation of the social objectives pursued by the indigenous peoples themselves, as well as those of the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs.

This third part presents a set of recommendations and proposals to contribute to the process of dialogue and forging of agreements on the contents and scope of SSTC that can be placed at the service of indigenous peoples.

3.1. General guidelines

a) Building and focussing on what we already have

The Ibero-American community has successfully faced the arduous task of equipping itself with “...common criteria for Triangular Cooperation which, from recognition of the diversity of the countries, allow more organised

and harmonised management between all partners”¹.

This effort has been made within the framework of a process of political and technical dialogue at the highest level, with the support and mentoring of the SEGIB and the PIFCSS, and has resulted in:

- The adoption of strategic definitions regarding the vision and horizon of target results, aligned with the global development agenda and at the service of the 2030 Agenda.
- The definition of basic notions of SSTC conceptual architecture: modalities, instruments, activity sectors, actor roles, the relevant information fields to be reported in the SIDICSS as well as acceptance of the yearly commitment to report these data.
- Consensus on a limited set of SSTC operating principles and criteria “*which are regarded as common minimums that may be accepted by PIFCSS member countries, without contradicting the consensus already reached on the topic*”².

The Ibero-American Summits of Heads of State and Government, as well as other regional and global mechanisms for dialogue and agreement, have also been the space where declarations and a certain doctrine have been forged over time on matters of concern to indigenous peoples, most especially on the recognition, respect for, protection and promotion of their rights, and where mechanisms have been put in place for this purpose, which include the creation, operation and strengthening of the FILAC and the explicit inclusion of indigenous peoples among the recipients of some Ibero-American programmes and initiatives managed by the SEGIB.

In other words, although the reaching of agreements and commitments with respect to SSTC initiatives for or with indigenous peoples is a process that does not start from scratch, it is necessary in order to continue incorporating the issues of concern to indigenous peoples into the agenda of these cooperation modalities.

1 PIFCSS, 2015, p.16. Management Guidelines for Implementing Triangular Cooperation in Ibero-America, Working Document No. 8. PIFCSS. <https://www.segib.org/wp-content/uploads/doc-8-PIFCSS-guia-ct-2015.pdf>

2 PIFCSS, 2015, p.16.

b) Difference, diversity, adaptation and relevance

A total of 58.2 million indigenous persons (2018); more than 800 different indigenous peoples; 19 countries from Latin America, 3 from Europe; a large number of international cooperation organisations and platforms; a diversity of approaches, regulatory frameworks, policies and programmatic offerings, and a multitude of actors, interests, priorities and political processes.

This enormous diversity, while challenging public policy and cooperation processes and straining efforts to reach agreements and commitments for dealing with topics of common interest—represented today in the 2030 Agenda—, also entails a formidable opportunity for SSTC, in the form of a varied and vast reservoir of capabilities, knowledge, experiences, world views, cultures and resources that can be placed at the service of regional and global challenges.

Both the strategy and the SSTC instruments with and/or for indigenous peoples designed must start from a recognition and implementation of such diversity and be flexible enough to enable them to be applied and adapted to a variety of situations, while:

- Recognising the value of the capabilities, wisdom and resources of the indigenous peoples and their enormous potential to address the complex problems facing the Ibero-American community and the planet.
- At the same time, having mechanisms in place that make it possible for them to participate in SSTC initiatives, both those that are specifically targeted at them and those that deal with topics of general interest.
- Considering, on the one hand, the preparation of proposals and recommendations for the design and implementation of SSTC initiatives that are specifically aimed at indigenous peoples and, on the other, guidelines that serve to enhance the relevance of SSTC initiatives linked to universal social policies, such as health and education, in all matters concerning their application to and with indigenous peoples.
- Establishing strategic navigation rather than plans or instruments constituted once and for all.

c) A rights-based approach

Indigenous peoples are holders and subjects of a set of rights that are recognised in various regulatory instruments, both international and national. It will be of special interest to SSTC policies and instruments for or with indigenous peoples to contribute to the recognition, protection and enjoyment of their rights and to the strengthening of their capacity, as holders of such rights, to assert and exercise them and, on the other hand, for them to underline the role of States as duty bearers, to protect, enforce and promote those rights.

The **collective nature of the rights of indigenous peoples** must be taken into account in determining the ownership of these rights and be reflected in the design and implementation of the dialogue process with cooperation actors.

On the other hand, the cycle of SSTC initiatives that are not specifically targeted at indigenous peoples should foresee an early evaluation stage in order to determine any eventual repercussions on their rights and interests.

d) Participation

Participation is a right of indigenous peoples and there are five levels at which it should be protected:

- It is essential for the strategic definitions, the conceptual architecture, the policy definitions and principles, and the operational criteria of SSTC for or with indigenous peoples to be the outcome of a process of political-technical dialogue analogous to the one that has made it possible for the current consensus among the countries of the Ibero-American community to be achieved.
- The participation of indigenous peoples in dedicated SSTC processes and initiatives, at least on two levels: in the political-technical dialogue processes leading to the building and adoption of the cooperation frameworks in which such initiatives are registered, and in the negotiation, design and implementation of their policies, strategies and instruments.
- The participation of indigenous peoples should make it possible for the contents of SSTC processes and initiatives “of general interest and indigenous impact” to be consistent with their socio-cultural singularities, needs, problems and development priorities, “indigenising” initiatives

that involve general interest. Their participation should also be guaranteed in relation to “SSTC initiatives with indigenous repercussions” in order to protect the exercise of their rights and safeguard their interests.

- Indigenous peoples, in the exercise of their self-determination, must grant or withhold their consent to the use and interchange of capabilities, knowledge, wisdom, practices and resources over which they hold rights, within the framework of these modalities’ initiatives.

e) Recognition of the full exercise and enjoyment of the rights of indigenous peoples

Even though significant progress has been made in the field of constitutional and legal recognition of the rights of indigenous peoples in the region, it is necessary for states to develop measures to protect and effectively guarantee their full enjoyment and exercise.

SSTC must serve to overcome this implementation gap, which can be verified, with nuances, in all the countries of the Ibero-American community. The Ibero-American Action Plan is structured around this objective, *“To create conditions for the effective realisation of the individual and collective rights of indigenous peoples”*.

f) Indigenous peoples: collective right subjects and cooperation actors

As beneficiaries of institutions and public policies, indigenous peoples, communities and/or populations are frequently conceived and treated as a population that is vulnerable (along with women, children and the disabled) and poor, as beneficiaries and recipients of a public offering intended for disadvantaged sectors, devoid of their own capabilities. Meanwhile, state and cooperation agencies are seen as providers or donors of said goods and services and as operators of the programme offering through which they are channelled.

This approach, predominant in traditional North-South Cooperation schemes, appears very eloquently, for example, in some definitions that are part of the consensus reached in the Ibero-American space for the analysis of SSC, in which the word “indigenous” is mentioned in the descriptions of the activity sectors recognised in the Ibero-American space. Along these lines, it is also worthy of note

that, among the institutions participating in the 96 SSTC initiatives for or with indigenous peoples registered in the SIDICSS, there is not one single indigenous institution or organisation.

For some time now, however, as a result of the struggles for recognition, space has begun to open up for this population, an approach according to which indigenous peoples are holders and subjects of a set of rights and not just beneficiaries or recipients of the actions of state and cooperation agencies, which should guarantee the exercise of rights by these peoples. It would seem necessary to adopt strategies and courses of action that serve to overcome the simple logic of intervention based on the relationship between the donor and the resource applicant/user/recipient or beneficiary, in addition to conceiving indigenous peoples as participating actors in the process of establishing partnership and cooperation relations and, subsequently, in SSTC initiatives.

g) The consideration and protection of general interest

There are numerous matters relating to the recognition and exercise of the rights held by indigenous peoples and to their particular concerns that are also issues of interest to the population as a whole, such as the management and protection of water resources and biodiversity in the Amazon basin, and the monitoring of hurricanes and storms and the management of their impacts on the population living in hard hit areas.

Hence, the consideration and protection of general interest should be expressed in two complementary dimensions: on the one hand, in the nature and breadth of the dialogue and reaching of agreements process regarding the contents and management of SSTC initiatives to or with indigenous peoples; and, on the other, in the reaching of agreements enabling alternatives to be adopted that have the potential to contribute to fulfilment of objectives that represent everyone’s interests. Indigenous peoples have resources and alternatives to contribute in this regard.

h) The mainstreaming of indigenous issues

The early 21st century saw the beginning of the setting of the trend to incorporate the management of issues of concern to indigenous peoples across the board in all public institutions, including it in the design and execution of sectorial policies, up until now aimed at the whole of the general population.

These dynamics and trends occur in the manner in which management of these issues is conceived in the domain of international cooperation and, in what concerns us, of SSTC.

Hence, along with moving forward in the design and implementation of SSTC tools and initiatives especially targeted at indigenous peoples, it is essential that these succeed in permeating and are duly considered in sectorial SSC and TC initiatives that have as their target all or broad sectors of the population.

3.2. Strategic definitions: Why SSTC for, with and between indigenous peoples?

We can make a distinction between four levels of objectives whose fulfilment should be furthered by SSTC that addresses matters of concern to indigenous peoples:

- *El Buen Vivir or Good Living*: SSTC must promote the development priorities of the indigenous peoples concerned and drive their realisation by exercising their values, norms, institutions and world views.
- *The 2030 Agenda and the SDGs*: SSTC should foresee initiatives to provide the necessary institutional spaces and conditions so that proposals for the implementation of the SDGs are adopted with the widespread participation of indigenous peoples and their own perspectives and development priorities are included in a relevant way.
- *The Ibero-American Action Plan for the Implementation of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples*: SSTC should contribute to fulfilment of the objectives agreed by the governments of the countries of the Ibero-American community, the indigenous peoples and regional and global organisations with a presence in the region, around which they have agreed to articulate their efforts, resources and capabilities with a 10-year horizon (2018-2028).
- *Objectives for change*: the joint efforts of cooperation actors should help to define operational mechanisms for the design and implementation of SSTC that contributes to:
 - The amendment of cooperation frameworks so that they incorporate matters of concern to indigenous peoples and include SSTC mechanisms

among the strategies and procedures for dealing with them.

- The reaching of consensus on the contents, principles, policy criteria, strategies, instruments and initiatives of SSTC and indigenous peoples.
- The design, financing and implementation of instruments, programmes and initiatives to support SSTC and indigenous peoples.
- The allocation of resources to finance SSTC initiatives and indigenous peoples.

The advances made in developing and strengthening the institutional ecosystem geared towards facilitating and promoting SSTC and indigenous peoples should be expressed, in turn, in:

- A significant increase in these initiatives *for* indigenous peoples.
- Intensification of the impact of indigenous peoples on the content and scope of these initiatives *for or with* indigenous peoples.
- The creation of the necessary conditions for developing initiatives *between* indigenous peoples.
- The gradual, sustained incorporation of issues of concern to indigenous peoples in *initiatives of general interest and indigenous impact*, often relating to public interest sectors or universal social policies that also include the indigenous population, to enhance their relevance and applicability with respect to their interests and perspectives.

3.3. The creation and/or amendment of cooperation frameworks

An issue of primary importance is the amendment of existing cooperation frameworks to enhance their relevance and capacity to drive SSTC with and/or for indigenous peoples.

Although there is a dense, extensive network of joint work agreements between countries and international organisations, these do not necessarily contemplate indigenous issues or come to fruition in SSC or Triangular modalities. Even so, they are a basis and essential condition for driving and moving forward in the development of these collaboration and interchange modalities.



In addition to the above, by the same token, through the coordinated leadership of the SEGIB and of the FILAC, efforts should be invested in making headway in:

- The inclusion of contents on joint lines of action throughout the public institutional structure for or with indigenous peoples, as well as the possibility of driving SSTC initiatives within framework agreements and other instruments that formalise cooperation between countries of the Ibero-American community and with other actors.
- The United Nations Cooperation Frameworks for Sustainable Development are the most important instrument for planning and executing United Nations development activities at the country level to effectively support national implementation of the 2030 Agenda. They determine the coordinated response of all the UN agencies operating in each country to achieve the 2030 Agenda. Hence, it seems highly relevant that, in a coordinated effort, the governments of the member states of the Ibero-American community and the agencies of the United Nations System:
 - Foresee, as part of the UN's collective support for achieving the 2030 Agenda, those matters of concern to indigenous peoples in planning and executing UN development activities at the country level.
 - Consider the articulation of capabilities and resources around the design and implementation of SSTC initiatives aimed at addressing matters of concern to indigenous peoples.
 - Incorporate the actors and representative institutions of the indigenous peoples into the process of preparing or adapting the Cooperation Frameworks in order to channel their approaches, priorities and visions.
- EU roadmaps, whose aim is “[...] to develop a common strategic framework for engagement of EU Delegations and the MSs with civil society in the member countries, in order to improve the impact, predictability and visibility of EU actions”, should:
 - Incorporate matters of concern to indigenous peoples.

- Consider, among the implementation mechanisms, SSTC initiatives that can be supported by the EU.

- Consider and incorporate into their preparation processes dialogue with indigenous peoples' actors in order to channel their approaches, priorities and visions.

- The incorporation of the objectives and goals of the Ibero-American Action Plan for the Implementation of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and the SSTC strategies and the means or initiatives to achieve them—at the level and in the aspects that are pertinent—into the deliberations of joint commissions or into countries' cooperation agenda, into the cooperation frameworks of the United Nations System in each country and into the EU roadmaps in each country.

3.4. Types of SSTC initiatives and indigenous peoples

Based on the current consensus on the framework of SSTC definitions and operational criteria, some distinctions can be introduced that serve to project the role played in these by the indigenous peoples, communities and/or populations concerned. In this way, we can make a distinction between:

- **SSTC initiatives for indigenous peoples:** initiatives that address matters of specific concern to indigenous peoples, communities and/or populations and which have them as the sole, exclusive recipients, users or beneficiaries.

- **SSTC initiatives with indigenous peoples:** initiatives that address matters of general interest and which explicitly include indigenous peoples, communities and/or populations, together with other groups or sectors, in their target population, recipients or beneficiaries.

- **SSTC initiatives of general interest and indigenous impact:** initiatives that address matters of general interest and which, being targeted, in principle, at the majority of the population or groups or sectors thereof without ethnic or other distinctions, also have indigenous peoples, communities and/or populations as beneficiaries of outcomes.

- **SSTC initiatives with indigenous repercussions:** initiatives that do not include indigenous peoples, communities and/or populations among their recipients, but whose execution may result in

eventual repercussions on or violations of their rights and interests.

On the other hand, moving forward in the adoption of new, innovative forms of SSTC should mean the generation of more categories that express new realities and possibilities and recognition of the role played by indigenous peoples and their agents.

Thus, we would have the following two other types of initiatives:

- **SSTC initiatives by indigenous peoples:** initiatives in which required capabilities are offered and contributed freely and voluntarily by indigenous peoples who are their owners and holders and who perform in them the role of "indigenous provider".

- **SSTC initiatives between indigenous peoples:** initiatives in which two or more indigenous peoples exchange capabilities and share and perform the roles of "indigenous provider" and "indigenous applicant" of capabilities, or both.

These types of initiatives could be applicable in bilateral, triangular and regional SSC modalities.

3.5. Indigenous agents and their role(s) in SSTC

"The message we have been giving since last year, as peoples of the Amazon Basin, is that we no longer want to be beneficiaries. We want to be partners."

(José Gregorio Mirabal, General Coordinator of the COICA, January 2021)

As has already been pointed out, one of the most important features of SSTC that aspires to incorporate matters of concern to indigenous peoples is their recognition as legitimate actors, vested with the capacity and right to represent themselves. The actions of these agents should materialise in the performance of various roles:

In accordance with the definitions of the previous section, indigenous peoples would share the following roles that would be exclusive to them, depending on the type of SSTC initiative in question:

- **Indigenous provider:** indigenous peoples, communities and/or populations that act as transferors/contributors of capabilities, knowledge, wisdom or practices.

- **Indigenous beneficiary:** indigenous peoples, communities and/or populations that act as recipients, beneficiaries or users of the initiatives.
- **Stakeholder indigenous peoples, communities and/or populations:** those potentially affected or eventual recipients of the effects or impacts of SSTC policies, strategies, instruments or initiatives of general interest. Also those at whom the policies, strategies, instruments or initiatives of these modalities are specifically targeted and who, as such:
 - i. *Participate* in the different stages of the initiatives' life cycle, in the depth and modalities agreed by the actors.
 - ii. Are *consulted* to identify, mitigate, eliminate or manage possible risks that may affect their interests or violate their rights as a result of the implementation of an initiative.

3.6. Principles and criteria for SSTC with and for indigenous peoples

Coupled with the diversity of strategic and practical approaches for addressing SSTC are processes and institutions, including policies, strategies, the programme offering and capabilities for managing matters of concern to indigenous peoples. We also confirmed a lack of strategic and operational guidelines that include matters of concern to indigenous peoples and international consensus in the management of SSTC.

The principles and criteria for SSTC for or with indigenous peoples should be the outcome of a dialogue process between cooperation partners in association with indigenous peoples. The study makes an attempt to convey the approaches, regulatory standards, policies and doctrine that have developed over time regarding the rights and treatment of matters of concern to indigenous peoples, which would be applicable to the abovementioned different types of initiatives.

3.7. Topic areas for an Ibero-American SSTC agenda for and/or with indigenous peoples

3.7.1. Core structuring elements

The current agenda of topics of interest to indigenous peoples is based on three fundamental pillars that structure an inventory of topics that

can be addressed through the interchange of capabilities, wisdom, resources and practices within the framework of SSTC initiatives to, with, by and/or between indigenous peoples:

a) The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development as a strategic horizon: SSTC strategy and the instruments designed should foresee initiatives to provide the institutional spaces and conditions so that the SDGs are implemented with widespread participation of the indigenous peoples and include, in a relevant manner, their own perspectives and development priorities.

b) *El Buen Vivir* or Good Living as a philosophy and approach: the notion of *El Buen Vivir*, as a philosophy and approach, highlights the idea that indigenous peoples have their own ideas about well-being and the ways to achieve it. A dedicated SSTC agenda should promote initiatives based on such ideas and perspectives. Although currently referred to generically as the paradigm of *El Buen Vivir*, in every indigenous people it has different scopes and meanings; in this way, the Guaraní speak of *Yandereco*, the Aymara of *Sum Qañama*, the Achuar of *Shiir Káusi* and the Garífuna of *Areini*.

Some authors have wondered whether it is possible to propose a development based on their own options and ideas in the wake of their culture's degradation process, which they have suffered and continue to suffer as a result of centuries of domination. This is a question they face permanently and to which they have not stopped looking for answers, digging into their historical experience. This search represents all the creative capacity and historical drive of peoples who were stripped of part of their symbolic and material heritage but who, even so, have had the ability to recreate and rebuild themselves by reinventing tradition and culture, surviving plunder, violence and domination.

c) The protection and exercise of the rights of the indigenous peoples as a strategy and as a means for its realisation: the majority of Latin American countries have ratified ILO Convention 169, they participated with their votes in the approval of the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and are signatories to other international regulatory instruments that set down and recognise their rights. However, their rights continue to be violated.

Overcoming this implementation gap is a fundamental goal of the cooperation partners.

3.7.2. Topics for an agenda

The topics and issues that concern indigenous peoples today and which seem relevant to discussion within the framework of SSTC initiatives include the following:

a) The COVID-19 pandemic and the management of its impacts on indigenous peoples: this pandemic has caused a planetwide health crisis, with impacts on very diverse areas of indigenous peoples' life, such as health, economy and food security, sometimes creating favourable scenarios for the violation of their rights due to the relaxation of safeguards in relation to industrial and extractive activities in their territories. But during the pandemic, indigenous peoples have also brought their own wisdom, resources and decisions into play to prevent the spread of contagion (by adopting self-isolation measures and other protocols that have proven highly effective), dealing with its consequences (through care protocols based on their traditional practices) and also deploying widespread cooperation efforts, articulating and channelling the joint work of extensive collaboration networks that are serving to help communities that are at a serious disadvantage and hard hit by the pandemic.³

b) The environment, the climate emergency and the protection of biodiversity: the environment and climate change are central issues on the current global agenda and for indigenous peoples, since their link with ecosystems is dual. On the one hand, their subsistence depends on the conservation of their habitat and, on the other, their traditional way of life is strongly linked to the territory and its diversity, not only in economic terms but also in symbolic and spiritual terms. Both the special report *Climate change and the land* by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC, 2019), and the most recent one prepared jointly by the FAO and the FILAC in 2021 titled *Forest governance by indigenous and tribal peoples. An opportunity for climate action in Latin America and the Caribbean*, highlight the crucial role of the contribution of indigenous peoples and their knowledge systems to the practical implementation of the goals of the Paris Agreement.

³ Such as, for example, the Emergency Fund for the Amazon, promoted and led by the COICA. See: Amazon Emergency Fund, 2020.

Based on ample evidence, the 2021 FAO and FILAC report proposes the adoption of a series of measures, investments and policies by climate financers and government decision-makers in association with indigenous and tribal populations in five areas, which could materialise in the form of SSC and TC initiatives for or with indigenous peoples:

- Strengthening of the collective rights of indigenous peoples over land;
- Compensation to indigenous and tribal communities for the environmental services they provide;
- Enabling of community forest management;
- Rekindling of traditional cultures and knowledge;

And the strengthening of territorial governance and indigenous and tribal organisations.

c) Extractive activities, large-scale projects and the threat to indigenous lands and territories: the current regional scenario, marked by the COVID-19 pandemic and the crisis suffered by national economies—based on several cases in extractive industry dynamism—, paints a complex picture in which some foresee a weakening of social and environmental safeguards, including those set down in ILO Convention 169 and the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, which operate as guarantees for the exercise of these indigenous peoples' substantive rights, such as consultation and free, prior and informed consent.

This may result in even greater pressure on indigenous peoples' lands and territories, the alteration and degradation of their traditional habitat, reducing the quality and availability of natural resources and the biodiversity on which their livelihood systems are based, and end up causing, in some cases, forced migration to urban centres or other areas, the abandonment of their systems and ways of life and, in many cases, the undermining and deterioration of their well-being and community *Buen Vivir*.

Furthermore, indigenous organisations are claiming compensation for the criminalisation of their protest against and objection to the implementation of investment projects on their lands and in their territories. Along these lines, on April 14, 2021,

the COICA launched the Emergency Declaration of Human Rights for indigenous defenders, noting that, as of April 2021, nineteen indigenous leaders had been murdered.

d) Indigenous women and the struggle for their rights: a review of the proposals made by indigenous organisations, such as the Continental Network of Indigenous Women of the Americas (ECMIA), the recommendations made by government representatives before the FILAC and the contributions of various actors set down in the regional report *Rights of indigenous women on the 25th anniversary of the Beijing declaration*, prepared by the FILAC-ORDPI in partnership with UN Women, serves to pinpoint a series of matters whose exploration may be of great interest through the interchange of capabilities, wisdom and practices, both with regard to institutional development and public policies, as well as cooperation and interchange initiatives between indigenous peoples, in this case, indigenous women.

e) Indigenous youth: indigenous youth have become increasingly important actors in the management both of topics and problems that are generationally their own, as well as matters of general concern to indigenous peoples. Their presence is more and more active in local, national and international spheres and they have formed extensive work networks that are enabling them to intervene, proactively, in the creation of indigenous peoples' agenda and to influence the spaces where courses of action are discussed and adopted at varying scales, such as the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues and intergovernmental organisations, such as the FAO, among others.

f) Knowledge, wisdom and the cultural heritage of indigenous peoples: article 31 of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples sets down, *"Indigenous peoples have the right to maintain, control, protect and develop their cultural heritage, traditional knowledge and traditional cultural expressions, as well as the manifestations of their sciences, technologies and cultures, including human and genetic resources, seeds, medicines, knowledge of the properties of fauna and flora, oral traditions, literatures, designs, sports and traditional games, and visual and performing arts. They also have the right to maintain, control, protect and develop their intellectual property over such cultural heritage, traditional knowledge and traditional cultural expressions"*.

This demand is an increasingly important issue in the discourse and agenda of indigenous organisations. Already 20 years ago, in the Declaration of Atitlán (2002), in the context of a Consultation with Indigenous Peoples on the right to food, it was noted, *"The extension of intellectual property rights in favour of multinational corporations has increased biopiracy and the illicit appropriation of our biological diversity and traditional knowledge; and the introduction of genetically altered food, which is causing the loss of our traditional foods, of our health, of our relationship with Mother Earth, of our traditional plants and medicines, and of our very cultures"*.

g) Recognition, protection and promotion of indigenous languages: at the present time, this is a matter of special importance thanks to the UN General Assembly declaring 2022-2032 the International Decade of Indigenous Languages in January 2020. Since then, the UNESCO has coordinated actions to move forward in defining a Global Action Plan of the International Decade of Indigenous Languages which should allow governments, indigenous peoples, international cooperation organisations and other stakeholders to agree upon and implement actions in a coordinated manner, where SSC and TC are the modalities in which cooperation and the interchange of capabilities should come to fruition in a privileged manner.

The topic considerations agreed upon at the High-Level Event *Making a Decade of Action for Indigenous Languages* are a reference framework for defining areas of action of this Global Action Plan currently in progress, namely:

- Inclusive and equal education and learning environments for the promotion of indigenous languages.
- Indigenous languages in justice and public services.
- Indigenous languages, climate change and biodiversity.
- Digital empowerment, language technology and indigenous media.
- Indigenous languages to improve health, social cohesion and humanitarian response.
- The protection of cultural and linguistic heritage: indigenous languages as a vehicle of living heritage.



- The creation of employment opportunities under equal conditions in indigenous languages and for the users of those languages.
- Indigenous languages at the service of gender equality and the empowerment of women.

For its part, the Ibero-American Institute of Indigenous Languages (IIALI), an initiative approved by the 27th Ibero-American Summit of Heads of State and Government held in Andorra in April 2021, was declared by the Summit itself as the “*first regional initiative*” within the framework of the Decade of Indigenous Languages 2022-2032⁴. The Institute will

⁴ 27th Ibero-American Summit of Heads of State and Government, 2021, paragraph D.18

organise its work around four core aspects: raising awareness of the current situation of indigenous languages; promoting the transmission and use of indigenous languages; driving technical assistance between countries to share successful language policy experiences, and providing knowledge and information on the use and vitality of indigenous languages.

h) Education, taking 5 aspects into consideration:

- i. the capacity and suitability of the education system to further the survival and reproduction of indigenous cultures and languages, through bilingual intercultural education and other policies and programme designs;
- ii. the ability of indigenous peoples to influence the education of their members;



- iii the definition and creation of conditions so that indigenous peoples can access formal education at all levels;
- iv the measures that can be taken at the education and teaching level for the prevention of forms of discrimination and the promotion of diversity-friendly societies;
- v the recognition, protection, and promotion of the social, cultural, religious and spiritual values and practices of indigenous peoples and their institutions.

i) Health: as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic and its impacts on the indigenous peoples of the region, health and traditional medicine are becoming more relevant and topical, in two aspects:

- i. The promotion, protection, advocacy and recognition of indigenous health and medicine practices and institutions, in accordance with the provisions of numerous recognition standards adopted by the States and, on the other hand, with the provisions of Article 5 of ILO Convention 169;
- ii The right of indigenous peoples to enjoy adequate conditions of access to quality health services and benefits, provided by the public health system.

j) Justice, in two complementary aspects:

- i. The recognition, rekindling and implementation of traditional law and of the forms proper to the administration of justice, as well as recognition of indigenous jurisdiction in certain matters.
- ii. Access to justice and the administration of justice with relevance, appropriateness and efficiency by the members of indigenous peoples, as well as the arbitration of protection measures that guarantee human rights, particularly among indigenous defenders of human rights and the environment.

3.8. Towards new support instruments for SSC and TC and indigenous peoples

The promotion and strengthening of SSTC and indigenous peoples requires the development and strengthening of an institutional ecosystem equipped with programmatic instruments that serve to:

- Provide access to information on cooperation possibilities for stakeholders.
- Share information on experiences, knowledge or other resources and capabilities that may be contributed/exchanged/received within the framework of SSTC initiatives.
- Enable the co-financing and feasibility of the actions, procedures and/or investments through which SSTC initiatives are implemented.
- Further the establishing, effectiveness and sustainability of relationship and dialogue processes between cooperation actors in order to agree upon and implement SSTC initiatives and provide resources and capabilities for this purpose.

In this respect, we propose:

a) Enabling relations and dialogue between cooperation actors

One criterion of TC is that *“cooperation is established voluntarily at the explicit request of the beneficiary partner, in accordance with its national priorities.”* Therefore, the desire to cooperate in a south-south and/or triangular modality regarding matters of concern to indigenous peoples must be built within the framework of that relationship, dialogue, knowledge and recognition process.

In this respect, the FILAC is a multi-stakeholder cooperation platform that represents the governments and indigenous peoples of the member countries and, as its governing and advisory bodies are formed on a parity basis, it constitutes a natural platform for this type of dialogue.

b) Registering, assessing and disseminating SSC and TC for or with indigenous peoples

Optimising current SSTC initiative assessment and registration systems is a priority in order to help to improve the registration and dissemination of initiatives for or with indigenous peoples in Ibero-America.

It would seem advisable to move forward in the systematisation and storage of updated information on SSTC for or with indigenous peoples, adding—in accordance with governments and in association with the representative organisations of the indigenous peoples of the region—distinctions in order to supplement those categories and fields of information in which the SIDICSS is currently structured. As we have seen, this process is not purely or exclusively technical but, above all, a process of political dialogue for the reaching of agreements and shared understanding.

In the same way, it seems highly advisable to consider—while the dialogue on the conceptual architecture and strategic definitions of SSC and TC for or with indigenous peoples is yielding results—the preparation of an evaluation and report on South-South and Triangular Cooperation with and for indigenous peoples. This, together with descriptive statistics and case studies, will allow, as of now, discussion on the guidelines, conceptual developments, approaches and other issues around which agreements must be reached in order to promote SSTC processes and initiatives

for or with indigenous peoples. This evaluation of SSTC with and/or for indigenous peoples may take the form of an independent report, an instalment or supplement of the SSTC report prepared by the SEGIB, a chapter or a section of it, or content developed within each section of the report.

c) Systematising and sharing the offering and cooperation opportunities

It is essential to move forward in mechanisms and instruments to systematise and share with SSTC actors—including indigenous peoples and their organisations—updated information on experiences that may be of interest and serve the design and implementation purposes of SSTC initiatives for, with, by and/or between indigenous peoples.

In this respect, it may be pertinent to make a distinction between:

- Information relating to capabilities, knowledge, practices, learning and resources in the sphere of institutions, policies, programme offerings and public management in all matters entailing issues of concern to indigenous peoples.
- The capabilities, wisdom and other resources available in the indigenous peoples themselves, insofar as they are of value for the understanding and treatment of topics and problems of general interest or for other indigenous peoples.

In this way, mechanisms could be implemented to systematise and share with actors information on the experiences and capabilities that may contribute to meeting the needs and challenges prioritised by governments and indigenous peoples, among which the following could be considered:

- Adaptation of the national catalogues of SSC capabilities and offerings, adding systematised information on the offers available in the sphere of policies, programmes and public management for indigenous peoples.
- The reaching of agreements and commitments with those responsible for cooperation and specialised institutions in the management of policies for indigenous peoples for the production of contents, the publication and distribution of specific catalogues on cooperation and capability offerings in the field of institutions and public policies for indigenous peoples in the countries of the Ibero-American community.

- The reaching of agreements and commitments between sectorial state actors for the production of contents, the publication and distribution of topic catalogues on cooperation and capability offerings relating to institutions, public policies and programme offers in specific areas and sectors of public management, coinciding with matters of concern to indigenous peoples. In addition to the more traditional sectors and topics, such as bilingual intercultural education and intercultural health, at the present time it may be of great importance to take advantage of the systematisation of capabilities relating to approaches, strategies and actions, procedures and investments to face the consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic among indigenous peoples.
- With the leadership of the FILAC and jointly with regional indigenous organisations (COICA, ECMIA, CICA, CAOI, Network of Indigenous Youth of Latin America, among others) and other cooperation actors, the design, implementation and maintenance of virtual platforms so that they are used to gather and share, in a systematic way, information resources from diverse sources and existing data in various governmental, non-governmental and indigenous media and from international development cooperation organisations to facilitate their access by any stakeholders.
- The systematisation and dissemination of lessons learnt with respect to capability interchange, mutual support and collaboration experiences between indigenous peoples, communities and/or populations, relating to topics, problems, needs and challenges and goals in the various spheres of these peoples' social and collective life, as well as their contribution to the management of the global development agenda and to addressing problems on a regional and planetary scale, such as the climate crisis, the protection of biodiversity and the various consequences resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic.

d) Financing or channelling resources to pay for actions, procedures and investments

Financing instruments may take the form of, for example:

- Mixed cooperation funds specifically earmarked for SSTC initiatives for or with indigenous peoples, including indigenous peoples' representatives in their governance structures.

- Guidelines specifically intended for SSTC initiatives for or with indigenous peoples in the mixed funds currently operating among countries of the Ibero-American community.
- A special fund for SSTC among indigenous peoples, which enables SSTC initiatives to be carried out, financing or co-financing pre-investment activities, such as preliminary studies and project design. Likewise, resources need to be leveraged from other sources and from the partners themselves in order to finance the actions, procedures and investments foreseen in these initiatives, or part of them.

South-South and Triangular Cooperation and Indigenous Peoples

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



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