Towards a Diagnosis of International Cooperation on Social Protection in the Region

Cases of Brazil, Chile, Colombia and Mexico

Preliminary Reflections

Workshop on Social Policy
and International Cooperation:
The Challenge for Social
Development Ministries
and the Inter-American Social
Protection Network

Brasilia, July 15-16, 2010

Organization of
American States

Inter-American Social
Protection Network

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Towards a Diagnosis of International Cooperation on Social Protection in the Region

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Preliminary Thoughts

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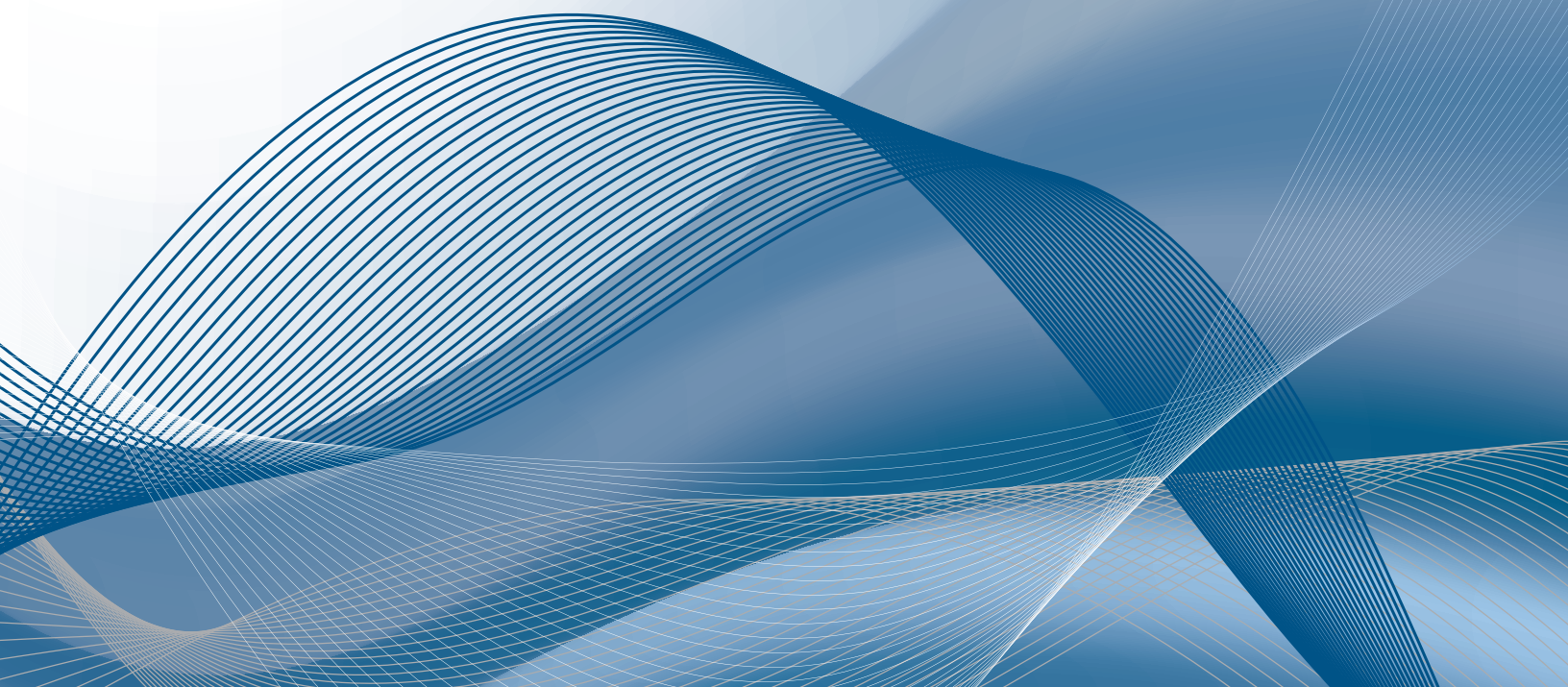
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Introduction

The aim of this document is to provide a first approach to a diagnosis of international cooperation on social policy in specific reference to the social protection programs and policies being implemented by some of the region's social development authorities. This exercise will facilitate an analysis of regional trends and lessons learned as well as a closer appreciation of the major challenges facing government institutions in terms of knowledge and experience transfer, all of particular relevance in the promotion of institutional strengthening and enhancing social protection programs aimed at the poor and vulnerable.

This approach will also serve towards refining the work currently being carried out by the Organization of American States (OAS) within the framework of the Inter-American Social Protection Network (IASPN). The IASPN is a mechanism for cooperation, exchange and learning by the region's social development authorities and their counterparts in the implementation of social policies, addressing the specific priorities and needs raised by the network's members.

The first step towards a diagnosis of international cooperation in the area of social protection in Latin America involves creating linkages with those countries in the region that have shown progress, developed approaches and acquired experience in the field. An initial input into this diagnosis, of great relevance to the strategic consolidation of the IASPN, was the Seminar on "Social Policy and International Cooperation: the Challenge for Social Development Ministries and the Inter-American Social Protection Network", organized by the OAS jointly with Brazil's Ministry of Social Development and Fight Against Hunger and held in Brasilia on July 15-16, 2010. Prior to the event a questionnaire was distributed to each of the participating countries[1], the results and analysis of which will also be covered in this working document, serving as a guideline for an initial diagnosis of international cooperation in the area of social protection in the region.

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1. The following countries/institutions received and responded to the questionnaire: Ministry of Social Development and Fight against Hunger (Brazil), Planning Ministry and Solidarity and Social Investment Fund (Chile); Presidential Agency for Social Action and International Cooperation (Colombia); Social Development Secretariat and Oportunidades Program (Mexico).

The issues covered in the questionnaire sought mainly to establish in each country: a) the role played by Social Development Ministries in terms of social protection and their links with other public institutions; b) the forms of cooperation implemented; c) technical areas of exchange; d) methods of collection and transfer of learning; e) monitoring and evaluation systems for cooperation experiences; f) obstacles and constraints; and g) the outcomes of the experiences.

The aim of the questionnaire was: to formulate an initial diagnosis and systematization of cooperation modalities in the area of social protection in the participating countries; identify the main achievements, obstacles and challenges to cooperation; and provide a first mapping of the institutions and stakeholders involved in these cooperation initiatives. The material gathered will help to orient IASPN strategy and actions under the coordination of the OAS so that the network reflects the interests and needs of its member countries.

Section 1 includes a description of the outcome of social protection cooperation from the point of view of the four responding countries that participated in the seminar. This will enable a critical review of the different results and their respective categorization, as well as a first attempt to identify trends in the transfer of knowledge and experience in this field among countries, both at the regional and inter-regional level.

Section II describes the obstacles faced by countries in implementing international cooperation initiatives and defines the major challenges to be addressed in the context of the continuous learning triggered by these processes, while contributing to defining the role to be played by the IASPN in this regard.

Section III identifies the forms of cooperation and technical areas involved in the cooperation initiatives of the social development Ministries or Agencies of Brazil, Chile, Colombia and Mexico. The information gathered will be used to define a possible cooperation matrix.

Finally, section IV presents a summary table showing the countries with which the participating social development agencies of Brazil, Chile, Colombia and Mexico cooperate on social protection and a list of the government agencies, international agencies and institutions involved in the cooperation. All this information will help draw up a first regional cooperation map, identifying regional trends in social protection cooperation, showing the connections between institutions and the stakeholders participating in the cooperation actions and initiatives. The questionnaire distributed among participating institutions is attached for reference.

Section I

Outcomes of International Cooperation on Social Protection

Countries in the region –and in this particular case Brazil, Chile, Colombia and Mexico- have been sharing their social protection programs and experiences through a variety of cooperation mechanisms. Through their engagement in cooperation, these countries have accumulated a broad range of achievements which serve to encourage the regional exchange of social protection-related knowledge and learning experiences within the framework of the IASPN.

The chart below summarizes some of the outcomes and achievements of the participating social development agencies from Brazil, Chile, Colombia and Mexico in relation to international cooperation on social protection.

Table 1
Outcomes

Outcomes
Social policy as a cooperation framework · Greater importance attached to cooperation on social issues as a foreign policy component in line with the growing demand for international cooperation in social issues.
Mutual learning · The exchange of experiences at the international level facilitates the learning and dissemination of best practices and the acquisition of technical inputs to enhance public policy formulation and implementation and to strengthen institutional capacity in the countries involved. · Identifying gaps and weaknesses in the design, implementation, evaluation and monitoring of social programs helps donor countries improve on their poverty and vulnerability reduction schemes.

- International cooperation and international forums on social development issues –as well as the resulting declarations and conventions - have played a leading role in the design, orientation and implementation of public social protection policies in donor countries.
- Donor countries also benefit from cooperation: encountering realities similar to their own provides technical staff with food for thought, often helping them find viable solutions to unresolved problems.

Internal coordination

- Generates links across the various stakeholders involved in the design, implementation, evaluation and control of social policy and social programs at the national and local level.

International support

- Donor countries and international agencies provide ongoing support for the implementation of programs and projects to strengthen social protection systems.

Successful transfers

- Development of successful technical transfers to countries which contribute their own resources and mobilize other sources of cooperation to continue developing the transfers.

Willingness to cooperate

- Great willingness on the part of donor countries to provide cooperation. The social protection experiences of these donor countries have in many cases gained worldwide recognition.
- Strong potential for south-south cooperation on social issues based on shared language and common codes.

Management model

- In response to the need for consolidated management of international social cooperation, several countries have already started working towards the development of a management model.

Networking potential

- Importance of recognizing the role of networking, and to consider networks as communities of learning and interchange. A networking framework facilitates the generation of new products which go beyond the sum of acquired experiences.

The above reflects a regional trend of increased international cooperation in social policy and underlines the role played by social policy in the foreign policy of the countries concerned. The achievements attained so far respond in part to the growing demand in countries within and outside the region for the transfer of experience, knowledge, data and other elements related to the social protection programs. Nations such as Brazil, Chile, Colombia and Mexico are at the leading edge of social policy in the region in terms of various types of social protection programs which have been widely evaluated and disseminated, triggering interest in other countries in learning from these experiences and adapting relevant elements for their own programs.

Matching the growing demand for cooperation in the region, there is also a varied offer in the area of social protection programs: countries with accumulated experience are showing a strong interest in sharing their expertise and knowledge with others. This has led to the development of institutional capacities and mutual learning. In turn, the volume of demand has led countries to consider the need for developing a management model for this international cooperation. It is considered important to register this as progress: the fact that several countries have already taken steps in this direction is an indication of their commitment and of the efforts they are making to formalize the process and give it a sound methodological base.

The outcomes described by the participating countries basically reflect three types of learning: internal, external and projective (see Figure 1).

Figure 1
Lessons learned

| Internal	External	Projective
From a donor country's perspective, the cooperation experience is an opportunity to review implemented programs and incorporate adjustments or improvements before they are offered to others. Cooperation experiences generate inter-institutional coordination and consolidate management models for further developing the cooperation experience.	The country's experience gains international visibility and recognition from multilateral organizations and international agencies. The country's image acquires a new dimension by becoming positioned as a donor in the area of public management of social protection policies.	Mutual learning with the recipient country generates potential new cooperation scenarios, making it possible to set up exchange and learning networks. In turn, this creates new opportunities for institutional strengthening.

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Section I
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Within these three types of learning the outcomes identified by countries offering cooperation fall into two categories: first-order and second-order lessons. First-order lessons are internally triggered processes such as program adjustments, generation of expertise in technical transfer, etc. Internal and external learning belong in this category.

Projective-type learning can be classified as a second-order lesson, where a process of joint feedback and critical reflection is triggered.

The presence of a counterpart reinforces the learning process and a two-way relationship is established, fostering the exchange of thoughts and opinions on the guiding principles and values in the design and implementation of social policies and discussions on the pertinence of alternative approaches in line with differences in social protection in the region. The resulting circular feedback process generates learning in the sense that at any point the donor may become the recipient and vice versa. The figure below illustrates this circular feedback process.

Figure 2
Feedback Process

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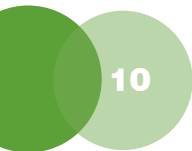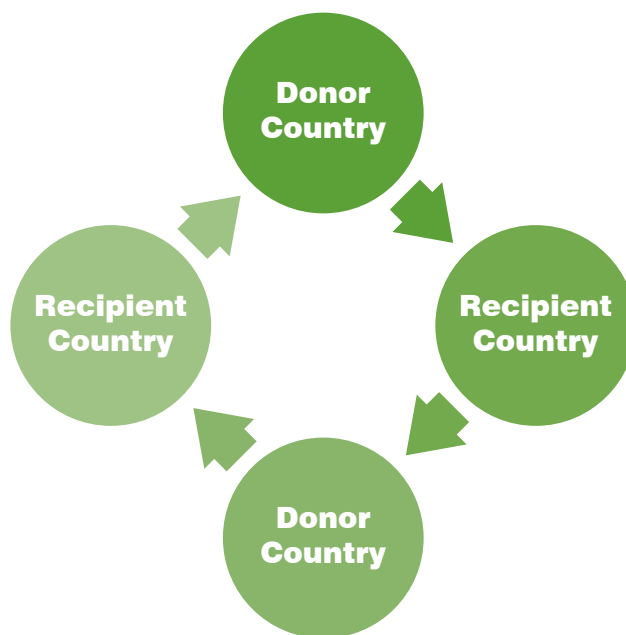
The transfer of programs within the framework of south-south cooperation has enabled the countries involved to make use of the experience of others, and even to advance in defining legal and institutional frameworks for the implementation of successful experiences adjusted to the their own realities and needs. This has occurred when a relationship of horizontal exchange has been established between countries.

Another outcome listed in Figure 1 is recognition of the importance of networking and the value of communities conducive to learning and exchange. This refers to the possibility of generating new products instead of just basing proposals on

already existing programs. It also underlines the important role of the Inter-American Network in facilitating this type of exchange, adding value to the learning and putting forward tools and products encompassing those elements considered important by the countries concerned.

It is evident from the questionnaire that countries recognize the need to advance further with the evaluation and monitoring of international cooperation and to implement some sort of instrument or mechanism to this effect. However, as brought out in the section on challenges, the type of monitoring instruments mentioned relate more to the results of cooperation projects and

initiatives than to the cooperation processes itself. Another point to be taken into consideration is that already existing mechanisms appear to be more geared to monitoring and assessment than to impact evaluation.

Some of the existing instruments and mechanisms include:

- Implementation of a questionnaire to evaluate cooperation projects by finding out the recipient country's opinion of the monitoring carried out by the counterpart and whether the desired results and impact were achieved.
- Inclusion of final reports which contribute to project evaluation.
- Hiring consultants to evaluate the cooperation initiatives with some countries.
- Incorporation of periodic monitoring and evaluation mechanisms in the projects implemented, focusing on decision-making with respect to contributions, activities, achievements and impact. Recent incorporation of ex-post evaluation and monitoring mechanisms in cooperation programs.

- Implementation of a bilateral evaluation system with international cooperation agencies based on outcome indicators that enable a systematic evaluation of the programs developed by each country and their contribution to national development targets.

In the particular case of Chile, the country's cooperation agency is working on the implementation of a Cooperation Information and Statistics System, which will be harmonized to a certain extent with the Mexican and the Colombian systems. Chile is also currently implementing follow-up mechanisms in south-south cooperation programs with Mexico, Brazil and Argentina. Similarly, Mexico's Foreign Relations Secretariat is developing the Mexican Information System on International Cooperation for Development (Sistema de Información de México sobre la Cooperación Internacional para el Desarrollo, SIMEXCID), an online platform with a complete record of international cooperation actions.

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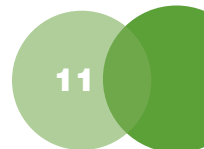
Major Obstacles and Challenges to International Social Protection Cooperation

In addition to achievements, the four countries that participated in the seminar on social policy and international cooperation also identified a number of obstacles and impediments to the planning and implementation of international cooperation programs. In general the concerns in this respect seem to be quite similar and are described below:

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Table 2
Major Obstacles

International Cooperation Policy	· The lack of an agreed cooperation policy in some countries gives rise to different cooperation modalities or to a lack of linkage with the country's political-strategic process. · There may be several internal government agencies devoting part of their efforts to international cooperation. Although most of them liaise with the country's Ministry of Foreign Affairs, there is still a lack of adequate coordination. · There are asymmetries among the various government agencies in terms of implementing cooperation transfer models or methodologies and this impacts on the country's internal coordination.

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Human Resources	· Problems of availability of technicians to implement cooperation activities. The technical professionals involved have to juggle their responsibilities in cooperation programs with their routine daily work load, often giving rise to a series of problems and complications. · Lack of human resources trained in international cooperation issues. · Language barriers faced by Spanish-speaking countries engaged in cooperation operations in English or Portuguese add complexity to the exchange and impose high translation / interpretation costs.
Sustainability and Replicability	· The acting counterpart in the recipient country does not always succeed in eliciting the necessary degree of commitment on the part of national stakeholders, thus jeopardizing the continuity and sustainability of the knowledge transferred. · Barriers are encountered when trying to expand a pilot experience or replicate it at the national level. This requires political will and agreements that often lie beyond the scope of the cooperation. · The political changes involved in the democratic process may hamper the sustainability of the experiences transferred if a different focus in cooperation for social policy is implemented. · Not all successful programs are transferrable: in some cases it is better to concetrate on selected components , thus facilitating replicability.
Evaluation and Monitoring Systems	· Lack of or insufficient instruments for evaluating cooperation both in terms of results and expected impact. · The sustainability of technical transfers from one country to another has not been sufficiently evaluated owing to the lack of proven tools for comparative analysis and the failure to clearly define at the design stage, what exactly is to be evaluated and how. · Currently, cooperation and technical transfer evaluations are more results- than process-oriented.

Transfer Methodology	· Lack of a methodology for designing cooperation projects responding to the demands and operational capacity of the recipient country. · Reduced capacity to screen demands, resulting in projects that lack clarity and precise objectives. In order to devise cooperation projects with real potential it is necessary to identify not only what can actually be done to meet the demand but also what the expectations are at the receiving end. · Lack of methodological tools to assess demand and supply and to facilitate the establishment of agreements taking into account the level of expectations. · Need to design and agree on instruments or procedures to clearly establish the aimed at results of the cooperation process. Only in this way is it possible to go beyond a mere exchange of experiences. · Limited range of cooperation agreement modalities or inflexible agreements which fail to transmit the wealth and diversity that these cooperation processes have to offer from the point of view of the roles, responsibilities and limitations of the countries involved.

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The challenges cited by the countries clearly indicate the need to consolidate transfer methodologies through a management model and the importance of strengthening the institutions involved in providing and receiving cooperation. There is also a clear role for transfer monitoring and evaluation systems and for well-defined mechanisms to follow-up on cooperation initiatives. This is crucial not only for the countries currently engaged in cooperation efforts but also for the overall functioning of the network, so that the experiences and lessons learned have a demonstration effect for all IASPN members, acting as a catalyst to more innovative undertakings.

There is also a clear need to systematize the achievements so far and the tools used to address the challenges mentioned above. This will contribute enormously to the success of the network in meeting the growing demand for cooperation and exchange of experiences and information on social protection programs,

foster the continuity of the feedback and learning process, and strengthen the institutional capacity of the participating social agencies.

Taking into consideration the obstacles and weaknesses described above and the obvious room for improvement, there are a number of challenges that the IASPN could address under OAS coordination. These challenges are linked to five priority areas where the OAS can play a major role:

1. Political, technical and administrative support
To enable exchanges between countries based on successful experiences, verifying that these are viable and feasibly applicable. Support and follow-up for the development of transfer and cooperation agreements and arrangements which ensure governmental commitment and provide for the sustainability of the actions initiated.

2. Systematization and research
Providing a supportive role as observers of ongoing cooperation actions and by arranging partnerships

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with academia to carry out research and action systems, helping to re-think the issues at stake and build on already acquired knowledge.

3. Education and training
Disseminating lessons learned among various public and private agents (government agencies, NGOs, civil society); fostering the creation of a shared language and the discussion of social protection and poverty reduction approaches in the region.

4. Interactive networks
Using available technology to socialize the systematized information and knowledge and develop it further. Make the existing horizontal cooperation available to all stakeholders and provide tools to develop an agreed-upon cooperation matrix (demand and supply).

5. Evaluation and monitoring
In collaboration with academia, provide adequate assessment and follow-up mechanisms to monitor cooperation experiences.

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Section III

Cooperation Modalities and Topics

An important issue covered in the questionnaire relates to the different forms of international cooperation (prospecting mission, technical assistance, internships, field visits, etc.) Countries were also asked to specify the technical areas in which international cooperation exists, such as policy-making, institutional and inter-sectoral issues, national poverty analysis systems, single registry of beneficiaries, training of government officials, evaluation, monitoring and implementation, among others.

The cooperation modalities[2] being implemented by the responding countries in the social arena include:

- Prospecting mission
- Technical assistance
- Internships
- Field visits / Field coordination agreements
- Training / education courses and seminars in the donor or beneficiary countries
- Knowledge exchange / workshops and working meetings

- Exchange of strategic planning instruments
- Development of information, training manuals and special materials to ensure that the transfer becomes a true learning process
- Monitoring visits during and after each program
- Expert visits
- Working with international delegations interested in learning about the social programs on site
- Comparative and research studies
- Follow-up videoconferences

The description of the cooperation modalities in the social policy area--specifically in social protection—is very varied, and comprises a wide array of relations, ranging from very formal cooperation links to more sporadic or spontaneous arrangements which do not necessarily imply long- or medium-term continuity in the relations with counterparts (in the case of seminars, meetings or visits of officials). The existence of such a wide variety of forms of cooperation is undoubtedly due to the growing demand for the transfer of social policy experiences, and the various degrees of involvement and commitment called for by these cooperation relations.

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2. In this first data gathering exercise, it was decided to leave the concept of cooperation actions open; for this reason, the answers denote a varied range of modalities. At a later stage, the OAS will outline the range and definition of cooperation typologies in the field of social protection.

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An analysis of the type of cooperation practiced in some of the countries reveals a similar trend to that found at the international level in terms of the increased demand and supply of horizontal cooperation. In all cases vertical cooperation still exists, whereby countries are recipients of cooperation, but it is evident that a new role is emerging for these countries in providing social policy cooperation through mechanisms of horizontal and triangular cooperation.

In the case of Brazil, such agreements are at the ministerial level, signed with the support of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs as memorandums of understanding, letters of intent, cooperation agreements; or signed by the Brazilian Cooperation Agency (ABC), as in the case of technical cooperation projects. Chile, on the other hand, carries-out inter-institutional agreements and arrangements, and in the cases where the International Cooperation Agency (AGCI) is involved, these become Government-to-Government Agreements, integration treaties and strategic partnership agreements.

In Colombia the agreements are normally formalized through the Presidential Agency for Social Action and International Cooperation; and in the case of Mexico, SEDESOL agreements are signed by the Secretary, the Under-Secretaries, the Directors General, or the Heads of the Secretariat's Units. Usually, General Agreements serving as a general framework for specific cooperation agreements or related working programs or plans are signed. SEDESOL has also provided technical cooperation to other countries, both with the involvement of international agencies and through the Foreign Affairs Secretariat.

The topics identified by the countries involved in cooperation activities, whether supply or demand, include:

- Improving the design of social protection policies/strategies.
- Providing support for the implementation and functioning of social programs.
- Supporting institutional strengthening in the

recipient countries. Inter-institutional/inter-sectoral issues.
- National poverty analysis systems.
- Single registry of beneficiaries.
- Strengthening information systems.
- Training civil servants / public institutions in recipient countries on social issues.
- Support in staff evaluation.
- Evaluation and monitoring /methodologies for public investment project evaluation.
- Basic investment statistics systems.
- Areas of disability.
- Neighborhood improvement.
- Income distribution and distributional impact of social expenditure.
- Social rights guarantees for persons in vulnerable situations.
- Regional and local development planning and decentralization.
- Design and improvement of management tools (for example, family mentoring materials).
- Complementary actions focusing on beneficiary families
- Urban development and spatial planning.

The above list gives an idea of the broad range of topics involved in international cooperation on social issues and which are considered to be key components of social protection programs in the region. In many cases they not only cover the technical components of social protection programs but also focus on processes and models of social policy administration and management. The topics described provide the OAS with a base on which to develop, within the framework of the IASPN, a matrix of supply and demand of elements or components of social protection programs in accordance with the needs, priorities and comparative advantages or added value that some of these countries have succeeded in developing in specific components.

As was discussed at the Seminar in Brasilia, among the wide array of topics observed in international cooperation there are certain common themes that could contribute to the construction of a cooperation matrix. Figure 3 represents a first draft of such a matrix.

Figure 3
Cooperation Matrix
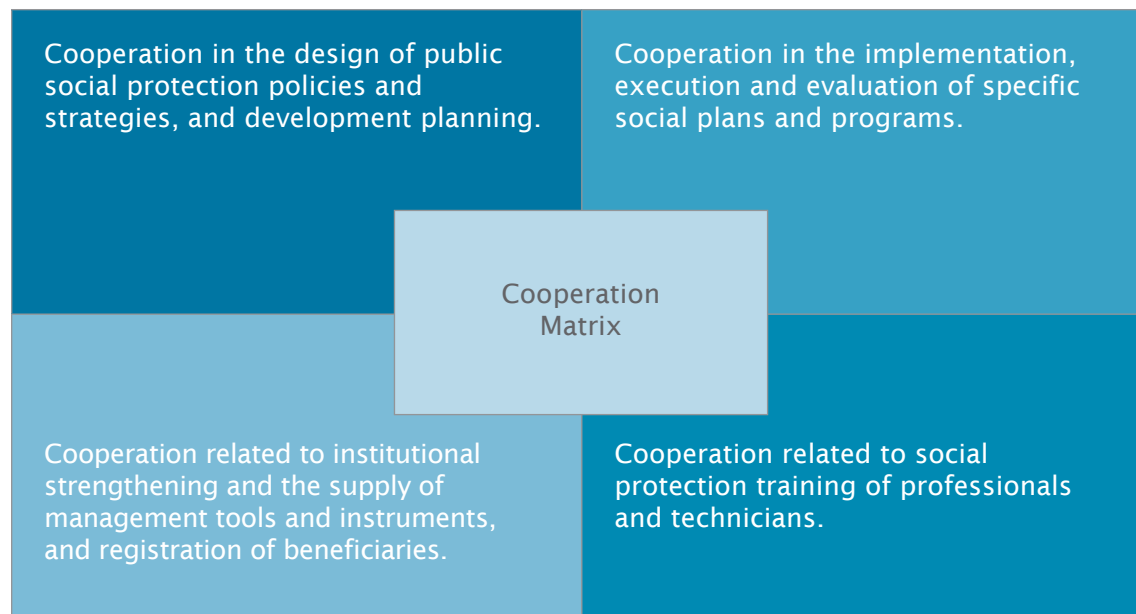
This matrix would be of assistance during the process of identifying the most pertinent mechanisms, instruments and tools to be used to carry out a certain type of cooperation, at the same time posing a challenge with respect to defining the profiles of the professionals who will be leading these processes and exchanges. In some cases, professionals closely related to public policy design and strategic planning will be required, while in others it would be preferable to involve professionals or technicians who are in charge of the direct management and/or execution of a plan or program.

The aptitudes and skills of the officials involved in cooperation actions in the respective countries are also important to take into account when organizing the supply of cooperation. If the emphasis of the demand for cooperation is on education and training, for example, adequate teaching skills and competencies will be required to successfully transfer knowledge and methodologies.

In the context of the IASPN the matrix could serve to match the supply of cooperation with demand: countries could select the field in which they have gained comparative advantages or design cooperation missions involving two or more countries when the demand involves several quadrants of the cooperation matrix.

Proceeding in this manner makes it possible to target cooperation management modalities, identify specific cooperation profiles, assess requirements for international expertise and determine the need for evaluation and monitoring systems. The exigencies, requirements and working modalities are different for each quadrant of the matrix. This goes beyond the competencies of the teams involved in cooperation initiatives and requires that certain preliminary agreements of a political and technical nature be in place with the recipient countries.

For example, if the demand for cooperation relates to the strategic design of social policies or installing social protection systems, simply transferring the methodology is not sufficient. It might be necessary to engage more government stakeholders and ensure that the necessary

political conditions prevail in the country. If, on the other hand, the demand relates to a specific program with the intention of implementing it after incorporation of any necessary adjustments and adaptations, then the nature of the cooperation is more technical and its successful implementation does not necessarily depend on prior macro agreements.

The matrix format has the advantage of offering modular cooperation products or services which are useful for building a cooperation portfolio.

A country´s demand for cooperation will need to be analyzed to help clearly define the areas in which cooperation would be most pertinent and timely, based on the country's characteristics and interests. Implementation will then require a jointly defined time-frame of actions.

In this context the IASPN could contribute to the monitoring, evaluation and completion of a cooperation portfolio, including any necessary studies and applied research to optimize the circuit.

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Mapping of Countries and Agencies Involved

This final section provides a first analysis of the countries involved in social protection cooperation, as well as the agencies and institutions involved in such actions. Table 3 includes the countries with which the institutions from Brazil (Ministry of Social Development and Fight against Hunger), Chile (Planning Ministry and Solidarity and Social Investment Fund), Colombia (Presidential Agency for Social Action and International Cooperation) and Mexico (Social Development Secretariat and Oportunidades Program) carry out some form of social protection cooperation.

In most cases, the cooperation relations mentioned in this section correspond to the period 2005-2010, although in the case of Colombia, they include cooperation agreements and frameworks dating back to 1969.[3] The cooperation relations cover a broad range of

activities such as: working visits, cooperation projects and programs, internships, advisory services, information gathering missions and information and materials exchanges, technical assistance, exhibitions and participation in international meetings and forums, reception of delegations and reception of cooperation.[4]

The information included in this section shows that the institutions responsible for social development in the area of social protection maintain an active international cooperation agenda, visible in diverse forms. It also shows that certain countries in the region are leaders in this respect and are at the forefront of certain social policies, in particular those relating to cash transfer social protection programs with co-responsibility and comprehensive social protection systems.

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3. In the particular case of Colombia, the information provided refers to cooperation agreements and strategies which include social promotion support.
4. The cases cited by Colombia, in particular the Social Action project, are south-south cooperation frameworks, regional cooperation strategies and technical assistance strategies on various topics which include a social policy component.

Table 3

Breakdown of International Cooperation on Social Protection by Country[5]

Partner Countries	Brasil MDS	Chile MIDE-PLAN	Chile FOSIS	Colombia Social Action	México SEDESOL & Oportunidades
Americas and Caribbean					
Argentina				x	x
Barbados			x		
Belize				x	
Bolivia	x	x	x	x	x
Brazil		x	x	x	x
Canada					x
Chile	x			x	x
Colombia	x	x	x		x
Costa Rica		x	x	x	x
Cuba	x			x	
Ecuador	x	x			x
El Salvador	x	x	x	x	
United States					x
Guatemala	x	x	x	x	x

5. This information has been validated with the countries/institutions that participated in the cooperation meeting and provided the information elicited in the questionnaires.

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Section IV
Mapping
of Countries
and Agencies
Involved

Guyana				x	
Haiti	x				x
Honduras	x	x	x	x	x
Jamaica			x	x	
Mexico		x	x	x	
Nicaragua	x			x	x
Panama	x		x	x	x
Paraguay	x	x	x	x	x
Peru	x	x	x	x	x
Dominican Republic			x	x	x
Saint Lucia			x		
Saint Kitts & Nevis			x		
Saint Vincent and the Grenadines			x		
Suriname			x		
Trinidad & Tobago			x		
Uruguay	x	x	x	x	x
Venezuela	x	x	x		
Subtotal	15	13	21	19	18

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Africa					
Angola	x				x
Burundi					x
Cameron					x
Ghana	x				
Guinea Bissau					x
Kenya	x				
Mozambique	x		x		
Namibia					x
Nigeria					x
Senegal	x				
South Africa	x	x	x		x
Subtotal	6	1	2	0	7
Asia					
Bangladesh				x	
China		x			x
Philippines				x	
India	x				x
Japan			x		x
Pakistan					x

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Vietnam	x				x
Subtotal	2	1	1	2	5
Middle East					
Egypt	x				x
Lebanon	x				
Morocco					x
Palestine	x				
Subtotal	3	0	0	0	2
Europe					
Germany			x		
Spain			x		x
France					x
Sweden			x		
Subtotal	0	0	3	0	2
TOTAL	**26**	**15**	**27**	**21**	**34**
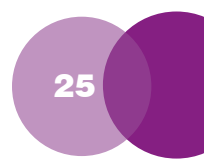
The data show that cooperation relations extend beyond the region of the Americas and include countries in other continents interested in exchanging knowledge and experiences. Of the 57 countries[6] with which there is cooperation on social protection, 54% are in the Americas, 19% in Africa and the rest in Asia, the Middle East and Europe. This is probably in line with the foreign policy of these countries and with cultural and socio-economic affinities, but also undoubtedly reflects the demands and particular requirements for exchanging and transferring social policy elements.

The OAS has accumulated vast experience in articulating cooperation on social policy and in implementing and refining inter-American mechanisms for the transfer and exchange of best practices and knowledge and is thus in a position –through the IASPN—to facilitate cooperation

6. This figure shows the countries surveyed (Brazil, Chile, Colombia and Mexico).

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Section IV
Mapping of
Countries
and Agencies
Involved

among countries in the region in the field of social protection programs. The OAS can also assist in identifying a country's needs and particular comparative advantages in order to match demand for social protection cooperation with supply portfolios.

The fact that such a broad range of stakeholders is involved in the cooperation initiatives carried out by social development ministries and other official bodies points to the need to implement inter-ministerial and inter-sectoral coordination mechanisms and seek complementarities. The table below provides information on the institutions and agencies involved in social protection cooperation in the countries that responded to the questionnaire.

Table 4
Institutions/Agencies involved in International Cooperation on Social Protection Issues

Countries which established cooperation initiatives	Agencies involved
Brasil MDS	National: Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Brazilian Cooperation Agency (ABC); other ministries (Health, Education, Labor and Employment, Agrarian Development, and others) International: UN and other international agencies.
Chile MIDEPLAN & FOSIS	National: International Cooperation Agency (AGCI), Ministries of Labor, Health, Education, Housing, Foreign Affairs, Universities, Agricultural Development Institute (INDAP), SENCE (Training and Employment Service) of the Labor Ministry, Youth Institute (INJUV), etc. International: GTZ (German International Cooperation Agency), JICA (Japan International Cooperation Agency), OAS, SEGIB, UNASUR and agencies in the UN system.
Colombia Social Action	National: Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Social Protection, other ministries with responsibilities in the framework of the Social Protection System, departmental and municipal governments and civil society organizations. International: International organizations and agencies and embassies (unspecified)
México SEDESOL & Oportunidades	National: Health Secretariat, Family Integral Development System (DIF), Education Secretariat, Foreign Relations Secretariat (General Technical and Scientific Directorate, among others). International: Spanish Agency for Development Cooperation (AECID), JICA, French Development Agency (AFD) and USAID, among others. There is also collaboration with the OECD, The World Bank, IDB, UNDP, ECLAC, FAO, UNICEF, SICA and the Meso-American Integration and Development Project.

*Cases of Brazil, Chile, Colombia and Mexico*

In addition to portraying an interesting picture of the diversity of players and countries involved in cooperation in this field, the above data also serves to lay the framework for the Inter-American Network, in particular with regard to synergies and complementarities among different stakeholders. It is the responsibility of the OAS to support and follow up on the political dialogue through ministerial forums and meetings of senior officials in key sectors for the region's development, playing a key role in articulating inter-ministerial and inter-sectoral coordination. In the particular case of social protection, through mechanisms such as IASPN countries have recognized the need to continue promoting such coordination and seeking synergies.
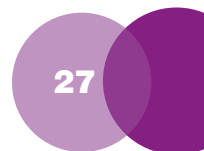
Section V
Conclusions

To conclude, there are three key points to underline:

1. The region has a strong interest in exchanging experiences and knowledge on social protection policies and programs. Many countries in the region are at the forefront in terms of social policy –in particular with reference to social protection programs and strategies—and there is a growing demand to learn about these and replicate some of their components. In turn, there is evidence that these countries are interested in improving their capacity to provide cooperation, and in enhancing their offer in this field through exchanges of this type.

2. The large volume of international cooperation on social protection appears to have had a positive impact both on the transfer of knowledge and experience and on the level of feedback achieved. However, these positive results give rise to a number of challenges that need to be addressed by the institutions responsible for the implementation of the policies in question.

3. All of the above highlights the need for a more systematic articulation of the demand and supply of cooperation on protection, the need to facilitate such cooperation, draw up methodologies for the transfer process, promote the exploitation of networking within the framework of the IASPN and generate evaluation and monitoring systems that contribute to the optimization of cooperation relations and provide transfer models that enable these experiences to be replicated, ensuring their sustainability in the context in which they are developed.

Section VI

Annex: Questionnaire

1) Please specify which agency/institution you represent.

2) What is the role of your agency/institution in international cooperation on social protection?

3) Which other agencies/institutions are involved in international cooperation in the field of social protection in your country (Ministry of Social Development, Ministry of Foreign Relations, Cooperation and Development Agencies, International Agencies and Organizations, Embassies, etc.)? Can you specify the role played by these agencies/institutions in the cooperation?

4) How long has your country engaged in international cooperation on social protection?

5) In which technical areas does the cooperation exist (policy-making, institutional and inter-sectoral issues, national poverty analysis systems, single registry of beneficiaries, staff training, monitoring and evaluation, implementation, etc.)?

6) What form does the international cooperation take (prospecting mission, technical assistance, internship, field visits, etc.)?

7) What type of cooperation does your institution maintain in the area of social protection (vertical, horizontal, triangular)? At what level are there technical cooperation agreements?

8) Which are the countries involved in your international technical cooperation (intra-interregional)?

9) Is there any type of evaluation and monitoring of the international technical cooperation provided?

10) Given that a mutual learning process takes place in technical cooperation with other stakeholders, how have the lessons learned been incorporated? What is the institutional feedback mechanism used once the technical cooperation is concluded?

11) Please identify issues and/or weaknesses in the technical cooperation being carried out (time dedicated by human resources, language issues, capacity to satisfy the cooperation demand, replicability and/or asymmetry issues, interagency cooperation, sustainability in the implementation of mechanisms acquired by the recipient country, etc.)

12) Please identify the strengths and outcomes of social protection cooperation transfers, as well as cooperation opportunities detected (both expected results and unexpected outcomes).

13) What is the approximate cost of your country's investment in technical cooperation in the area of social protection?

Inter-American Social Protection Network

Organization of American States