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**ELABORATION OF A MANAGEMENT
PROPOSAL FOR INTERNATIONAL
COOPERATION WITH AN ALTERNATIVE
APPROACH TO LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FOR
THE DECENTRALIZED AUTONOMOUS
GOVERNMENT OF THE AZOGUES CANTON**

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DEDICATIONS

This degree work is dedicated to those who have contributed to my personal growth as a professional. To my parents and aunts, for their teachings, love, patience and unconditional support. To my friends inside and outside the university, for the trust they have placed in me, for all the support, laughter and advice that made the career and my university life a full place for my student development.

Mateo Calle

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I dedicate this qualification work to my family, in a very special way to my parents Edgar and Mayra, for having given me their unconditional support and deep love; to my brothers, for being the constant source of inspiration and affection. Also, to the memory of my grandfather Florencio who taught me the enormous value of the word and commitment of good people.

Edgar Castro

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ABSTRACT

The following degree work aims to generate a comprehensive management proposal for international cooperation for the Decentralized Autonomous Government of Azogues with an alternative approach to local development. This based on a theoretical review of international relations, of liberalism and realism; of the different concepts of international cooperation and its various modalities, in particular, decentralized cooperation; and, an analysis of GAD management experiences in the southern region of Ecuador and other South American references. Then, an analysis of the national legal framework is carried out, which regulates the competence of the IC; and, a diagnosis of the context of the Azogues canton and its Head of External Cooperation, determining its institutional weaknesses. Finally, a public policy model is drawn up aimed at establishing the principles and guidelines that will guide IC in the canton, and an ordinance that regulates the exercise of said competence. This, accompanied by a management model, with a view to strengthening institutional capacities to improve IC management.

Keywords: international cooperation, decentralization, local development, public policy.

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INTRODUCTION

According with the constitution of Ecuador, the Decentralized Autonomous Government (or in its acronym in Spanish GAD) has exclusive jurisdiction over the management of International Cooperation; however, there is a misconception and a generalization that prevents IC from becoming an alternative source of development in the national territories. The case of Azogues' local government is similar to the vast majority of municipalities in the country, where the lack of resources, strategic orientation and political will do not allow an efficient management.

Applying the knowledge acquired in the career of International Studies, it is possible to carry out a critical analysis of International Cooperation and the way in which it has been applied in Ecuador, in which it is evident that IC, by itself, does not mean development but rather it is an adequate, programmatic and result-focused management. In this context, the key element is that small municipalities focus on the improvement of their institutional capacities for strategic management of IC. The multidisciplinary nature of the International Studies career facilitates the construction of a model that enables the proper exercise of the mentioned competence, as an alternatives tool focused on development.

The first chapter of the next pre-degree work involves the Theoretical Framework and State of the Art, that shows the beginning of a theoretical analysis of International Cooperation, becoming the basis of the investigation. This is related to the following specific objective: to carry out a critical analysis of International Cooperation, following the Sustainable Development Goals and "El buen vivir" as alternatives for local development. The study will be complemented with practical cases of IC that have resulted beneficial or pernicious for it.

The second chapter begins with a review of the national legal framework that regulates International Cooperation and the specific competence of the GAD. Once the normative aspect is understood, a diagnosis is carried out on the local government of Azogues and its jurisdiction over IC, which allows us to achieve the following specific objective: identify the

existing development model of the local government of Azogues; taking into account the previous experiences of the Department of International Relation and Cooperation of the local government of Cuenca.

The last chapter goes beyond the specific objective of generating an appropriate management model of International Cooperation for the local government of Azogues; rather, it develops a comprehensive proposal, which extends to the creation of a public policy and ordinance that seeks to perpetuate over time the exercise of the specific competence related to IC. Which means that this model grants a legal bases (ordinance) and the citizen participation (public policy) to the management of the IC. Also, it allows the formation of multidisciplinary teams that contribute to the transformation of this management into a tool that enables development processes in the territory of Azogues.

CHAPTER 1: Theoretical Framework and State of Art

1.1. Theoretical Framework

1.1.1 Theoretical review of International Relations

The actors of the International Community have been increasing, leaving begin the exclusive leading role of the States with no purpose of generating a greater complexity in international relation, but rather in order to recognize the existence of diverse actors for a great variety of relations that arise form a coexisting world, where interdependence is increasingly important to sustain a global community. Thus, the evolution of international relation has always been linked to the evolution of societies, which with its own new dynamics, have tried to externalize them with other societies, and these to others, generating an endless cycle of experience exchange and a new notion on how human relations should be conceived. This is what has been shaping international relation.

Nevertheless, in a world that lacks central authority and anarchy is always around the corner, it is necessary to find a cornerstone that will support the entire International Community. This is possible by analyzing the different relationships between the actor in the international community. There are international relations theories that try to explain, not only the nature of the interaction between these actors, but also try to give direction to the International Relations. In this context, with the main currents of study and thought at the international level, Realism and Liberalism, have the purpose to make sense of International Relations.

1.1.1.1. Realism

Realism explain the zero-sum game theory, where the power struggle always involves the gain of one over others, this Is one of the theories that has dominated the study of IR. “Realism analyses how world politics are driven by self-interest and competition; where the decisive dynamic between countries is a struggle of power in an effort to presser or, preferable, improve their military security and economic well-being in a competition with

other countries” (Rourke, 2007). Within this vision of the world and the international system, the State is the main actor because of how the power is institutionalized, this means, that the power is represented in a single entity before the other members of the international system (other States) and the its actions are guided by the national interest.

Considering the different approaches that various intellectuals give to this theory, from classic realism to neorealism, there can be established three characteristics of visions of IR: 1) the human nature; 2) the internal organization of the States and; 3) the anarchy in the international system. These characteristics of elements are essential to understand in a general way how realists perceive the world. (ibid)

As for human nature, quoting Thomas Hobbes (1980) “Homo homini lupus, a man is a wolf to another man”. Realists see in human nature the need to compete and win by acting in a selfish way to peruse their own interests at the expense of others. Although, it is true that the States are the main actors of the international community, they are led by people and their emotions, therefore “the conflicting nature of man” often determine and condition the IR, generating a conflictive scenario driven by nationalism, political or religious affiliation and even cultural matters. (Hobbes, 1980)

Another fundamental aspect of IR is the way in which its protagonists, the States, are organized. In Hans Morgenthau’s view, the way in which the States are organized is a historical product, in other word, it has changed and will continue to change. In this context, the foreign policy of today’s Nation-State must evolve over time to protect the new organization that represents power in the international system. Then, it could be said that the international system will evolve the same measure as the internal organization of the States. (Morgenthau, 1986).

For realists, the international system is anarchic because it lacks a central authority that maintain order among the States; there is no global government. Then, when the State seek to increase their power against others, they would have no limit on their action and there would be no consequence against them. This gives the international system a conflictive character where the State of war is in permanent latency.

With this established background, will International Cooperation be able to find a place in a realistic vision of IR? From a realistic perspective, IC would be an illusion since States, in their relentless search for power, cannot trust another State; and trust would mean letting the guard down, which is dangerous in a system of ruthless competition where the action of states is driven by selfish interests.

1.1.1.2. Liberalism

Unlike realism theory, liberalism does not consider International relations as a struggle for power, but it does consider it as an important factor that adds morality, ideology, emotions, cooperation habits and even, altruism. “Liberalism maintains that the people and countries that represent them are capable of finding mutual interests and cooperate with each other to achieve them by working through international organizations, respecting international law.” (Rourke, 2007). Therefore, there is no zero-sum game within this vision; rather, it emphasizes the possibility of a win-win situation, where States obtain benefits from their own cooperation, without affecting the other States.

A clear difference between realism and liberalism is their vision of human nature. As Jean-Jaques Rousseau said in his work “The Social Contract”, the human being seeks to live in societies since it is the easiest way to improve his existence, in other words, cooperation over competition. Which is a positive vision of human nature that encompasses the possibility of avoiding conflict through cooperation. This can be applied at the level of a global society, in which, nationalism is relegated before the very existence of human being, that is the key factor for the cohesion of people from different parts of the world, in order to improve the living condition and promote a peaceful society across the globe.

Taking a step forward, neoliberals as well as neorealist consider that the world is anarchic, however, the former consider that this is not absolute, since this depends on a complex interdependence between actors and International Community. This means that the countries are linked or depend on each other on various levels: political, economic, cultural, etc. This also generates and intensive use of international law that increases the importance of

International Organizations. As a result, anarchy will decrease as interdependence between States grows.

However, sovereignty in a realistic perspective is taken for granted, meanwhile, liberals and neoliberals differ. Classic liberals argue that states can learn to cooperate without giving up their independence or sovereignty; while neoliberals believe that as interdependence increases, States will have to give up a part of their sovereignty to international organization to promote cooperation; which means, that the States will lose some sovereignty every time they cooperate with another.

1.1.2. International Cooperation

Etymologically, to cooperate is “to work together with one or others to achieve a common goal” (RAE, 2019); in the international field, cooperation can be understood as the collective work or the actions taken by two or more States to achieve mutual benefit. However, it is not possible to establish a simple concept due to the complexity of IR, that, over time, has evolved and transformed to reach and achieve different needs of a great variety of actor in the international community context. For this reason, the next section will analyze the different concepts of IC over history.

In addition, the analysis will focus on the importance of international cooperation for the development of decentralized IC, as well as its different concepts and notions. Also, it will consider the importance of the different types of cooperation and its sources.

1.1.2 Background

The area of International Cooperation has been relegated in the IR, due to its emphasis on the study of conflicts that has raised in the world. However, IC is equally important because it allows an alternative to the development of relations between States of the International Community. In this sense, it is important to review the historical events that have influenced IC, starting in 1945 after the Second World War, when this concept arise thanks to the birth of the United Nations and the commitment of the founding member to promote IC for development and reduce inequality between States. In the 1960s, there were two key elements that marked the evolution of international cooperation: 1) the division of the world into the

Western and the Soviet pole. And, 2) the decolonization process of the African continent. This led the appearance of the Official Development Assistance, as a strategy of the world powers during the Cold War, to reinforce the lost ties with their former colonies. Also, the Regional Banks are formed, and with this, the signing of economic integration agreements. The 1970s also suffered the impact of the transformations that happened to International Cooperation. The Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries, where Ecuador is an active member since 1973, played an important role when solving international crisis due to the prices of crude oil. The economic crises worldwide and the rise of dictators in Latin America, created political instability, which were events that diversified International Cooperation and its actors. (Correa, 2017).

In the 1980s, the IFI (International Financial Institutions) played an important role in International relations and International Cooperation. This institution oversaw the formulation and appliance of economic policies issue by the Washington Consensus in countries that were in crisis because of the external debt payment, especially developing countries. However, International Cooperation underwent its greatest modification with the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989 and the subsequent dissolution of the USSR in 1991. In this context, the geological interests change, and western hegemony grew; the world took a liberal and open economic model, modifying the relation dynamic between the different States of the world. (ibid)

In the current millennium, in less than two decades, there have been four events that have changed International Cooperation in terms of its objectives and forms. In the 2000, the United Nations Millennium Declaration established the Millennium Development Goals, which were to be achieved in 2015. After a year of the declaration, the World Trade Center of United States was attacked by terrorists on September 11th, this led to rethink the way in which the declaration implemented its assistance and cooperation plans by adopting the establishment of democracy throughout the world as the maim axis of foreign policy.

In 2008, the global financial crisis caused developed countries to reduce the amounts destined to international assistance and cooperation that was focused on Africa and Asia. Since 2015, the Sustainable Development Goals were given to shape and determine the global agenda of

most of the countries that belong to the United Nations, which means, a new uncertain stage in the history of International Cooperation, but that gives hope for global change.

1.1.2.2. Conceptualization of International Cooperation

According to Rafael Calduch (1991:), International Cooperation is “any relationship between international actors, oriented at the mutual satisfaction of interests or demands, through the complementary use of their respective powers towards the development of a coordinated and/or solidary action.” Specifically, we can define this as the actions that are carried out by the “Nation-State, their organizations, subnational actors or NGOs of a country with other(s), to achieve common objectives at the international/national level of one or more actors involved.” (Chiani, 2009). However, these concepts have some limitation when it comes to explaining the diverse ways in which International Cooperation develops. The first concepts, defines a scenario of absolute equality between cooperating actors, and it also proposes an absolute inequality when speaking of solidarity action, though in reality, relations between cooperating actors are more complex. The second concept is more specific and recognizes the important of other actors such as sub-national, it does not consider the countries which are obligated to cooperate with other.

Other concepts that are more precise on the relations derived from cooperation, are included in the conception of the Mexican Foreign Chancellor’s office:

The term International Cooperation, refers to the set of actions that derive from the exchange of flows that take place between different national societies in the search of shared benefits in the areas of economic development and social well-being, or that are derived from the activities of International Organizations, which form part of the United Nations System, as well as those of regional, intergovernmental or non-governmental nature, that are carry out in compliance with particular defined international interest. The [CI] described, is understood as the mobilization of financial, human, technical and technological resources to promote international development. (Secretaría de Relaciones Exteriores de México , 2019)

This concept, from a State perspective, is boarder and it encompasses the different situations in which cooperation can take place. However, it must be recognized that international cooperation can be considered as a form of soft power, in which the most powerful states can

have an indirect impact on the least developed countries, it is a way of perpetuating domination systems. Likewise, it is important to highlight the benefits that IC can bring in terms of development, specially, the cooperation that is developed from local governments. In this context, it is also important to make a brief overview of the different types of international cooperation that exist.

To begin with, the first type is technical cooperation which focuses on the transfer of one (or more) technical, administrative or technology-related capacity; it is generally given through training of experts and the provision of tool to enhance the knowledge acquired by the donor. (Correa, 2017, pág. 134).

Financial cooperation is mainly presented in three types: 1) repayable funds, with interest and favorable time for the economic development of an activity; 2) non repayable funds, that basically consists in the donation of cash funds, and; 3) soft loans, with almost a zero interest rate and a long amortization period for the implementation of development oriented programs. (Correa, 2017, pág. 127;128).

Humanitarian and emergency aid includes all kinds of assistance, like financial support for technical equipment or infrastructure reconstruction, in a delimited area that has been affected by warlike conflict or a natural catastrophe, in order to reestablish the conditions of the population or correct consequences of said scenarios. It is a temporary help, since it is an immediate response to catastrophes, but it must be finalized once the primary objective is reached. (Correa, 2017, pág. 135)

Triangular cooperation “implies partnerships promoted by the South between two or more developing countries, with the support of one or more developed countries or one or more multilateral organization to implement development cooperation programs and projects. (Comité de Alto Nivel sobre la Cooperación Sur - Sur, 2012)

South-South cooperation, according to the United Nations, is a process in which two or more developing countries seek to achieve individual or shared objectives to promote national capacity through different modalities, including collectives regional and international initiatives, that articulate various actors, from States themselves, to companies and academic institutions in order to seek their own or mutual benefit. (ibid)

Finally, decentralized cooperation is implemented by sub-national governments (local or regional), excluding the central state and multilateral organization as intermediaries. This process occurs through calls made by regional agencies, twinning with other cities or through networks that integrate experts or cities around the world. This category is born by recognizing the autonomy of local actors to establish and implement the different projects that aim at promoting development. (Monje, 2014)

1.1.3 Territorial Development

According to the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (or CEPAL in its acronym in Spanish), territorial development is understood as “a process of social construction of the general environment, driven by the interaction between geophysical characteristics, the individual and collective initiatives of different actors, and the operation of the economic, technological, socio-political, cultural and environmental forces in the territory”. On a national perspective, territorial development for Ecuador aims to strengthen the national structure of human settlements, articulating a polycentric and complementary way in accordance with the national plan of *Buen vivir*. In other words, it is sought that public services and development reach all the territories of the country (Maldonado A. L., 2019). Territorial Development is based on local realities, seeking the capacities that these have to undertake, innovate, solve, manage and articulate the problems that appear in the institutional context and in the market of a national, regional or global scale; it also tries to strengthen the capacities of the territory to use its resources and improve the quality of life of the community that inhabits it.

The authors Francisco Albuquerque and Sergio Pérez Rozzi (2008, pág. 3), have established four territorial dimensions:

1. Social and Human Development:

- Access and educational improvement, training, nutrition and health
- Improvement on the distribution of outcome for social inclusion and the strengthening of the internal market
- Improvement of work quality relations
- Development of forms of social and solidary economy

2. Institutional and Cultural Development

- Mobilization and citizen participation
- Strengthening of local governments
- Coordination of public institutions
- Public-private cooperation
- Social articulation, creation of networking and local capital
- Creative promotion of solidary culture

3. Economic Development

- Promotion of the diversification and productive quality in the territory
- Basic infrastructures for territorial development
- Support services for MSMEs and local cooperatives
- Specialization in the financial sector of the territory
- Fiscal system and appropriate legal and regulatory framework for promoting Territorial Development
- Promotion of territorial systems for innovation

4. Sustainable Development

- Valorization of natural and cultural heritage as development assets
- Promotion of renewable energy
- Efficient use of resources, water, energy and material
- Promotion of organic production and eco-efficient production
- Promotion of local production and forms of sustainable consumption

1.1.4. Local Sustainable Development

The United Nations Sustainable Development Summit of 2015, in a systematic way, says that sustainable development seeks an integral balance between economic, social, cultural, political and ecological factors. Based on this approach, it is necessary to constructively articulate criteria that address development in a vertical way, from top to bottom and vice versa, taking into account local and global aspects how these are reciprocally related. In this way, it is proposed an expansion of the spatial and temporal horizon to adjust the need for an intergenerational and intergenerational equity (Gallopín, 2003). Another definition of sustainable development that is frequently cited, is the one proposed by the United Nation

Commission on Environment and Development, in its report to the United Nations General Assembly entitled “Our Common Future”, that defines “Sustainable development is a development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.” (Naciones Unidas, 1987), this focuses on the observation where resources and the capacity of ecosystems are limited, therefore it is necessary to consider the limits of sustainability.

Taking into account the term of sustainability as such, it is necessary to differentiate whether it refers to the sustainability of a system in general (for example, maintaining the ecosystem) or to the sustainability of a product (for example, the impact of agriculture on the ecosystem) which is within the system, but it does not intend to maintain its totality. These variables are important when talking about sustainable development because each of these implications may vary the purpose or the improvement that it wants to achieve. In certain occasions, the aim is to improve the system in general, while in other, it is necessary to change a system in its total to improve the products within, depending on the approach and context when applying sustainable development (Naciones Unidas, 1987). The “locality” of sustainable development is understood when a local territory is responsible for assuming the management of sustainable development. This means that, local sustainable development is managed by the local government or municipality of each *canton*, which are in charge of implementing programs and plans for a process of growth and structural change in the economy of a city, and the general development of its territory (García Jurado, 2004, págs. 1-5).

Focusing on a sustainable development model may be better than in the traditional one, mainly because this sustainable “new model” leaves aside the traditional reductionist definition of development, that only focuses on economic improvement and a Keynesian stance that focuses in the increase of the material capital, based on income or per-capita products as an indicator of a country’s development (Ortiz Motta & Arévalo Galindo, 2009). While sustainable development addresses environmental dimensions, social equity, and poverty eradication, altogether with the increase and improvement of the economy of a certain country. Therefore, sustainable development is against the indiscriminate use of resources (proposed by the traditional model) and it seeks a rational and conscious

management of them, to meet the current needs without compromising the ability to solve future ones, and thus obtain an optimal management of natural resources, maintaining the balance and a decent condition for the development of the local territory and the human being itself (Vázquez, 2006).

1.1.5. International Development Cooperation

International Development Cooperation (IDC) can be understood as the actions carried out by “governments and their administrative bodies, as well as civil societies from a given country or group of countries, that aimed to improve living conditions and promote development processes in countries that exhibit social, economic or political vulnerability and do not have sufficient capacity to improve their situation on their own.” (Ayllón, 2007). The countries that carry out actions of cooperation belong to the “developed” category, and those that receive it belong to the “developing” category (undeveloped, emerging, etc.). It must not be ignoring the integrative and positive nature of an IDC correctly oriented to satisfy the needs of countries which are in the most precarious conditions; and it is precisely this nature of international development cooperation, that has led to Galán and Sanahuja to talk about an **International System of Development Cooperation** characterized by:

- The absence of obligation to offer development aid, which means, it has a discretionary nature based on the will of donors (developed countries).
- Its plural character due to the wide spectrum of actors in the international community.
- When focusing on specific population sectors, IDC allows countries to acquire a degree of specialization, although the goal is to achieve general development.
- It is decentralized because in this system, there is no central body that exercises authority so that can sanction cooperation when this is not done or fulfilled. If a central body existed, it would lose its discretion.
 - This system is a historical product, it has a historical character, because it is undoubtedly linked to the predominant discourse of the time in which it is developed; it can be said, that the context of its emergence and development is associated to the very evolution of International Relations. (Galán & Sanahuja, 2001)

1.1.6. Localization

According to Amitav Acharya (2004, págs. 244-250) localization is a process where an idea is transmitted, which was a practice of Southeast Asian countries. They took foreign ideas of authority and legitimacy and coupled them to their own practices and traditions from their culture. These ideas could be reconstructed to adapt and create new cultural traditions, which had a greater impact and acceptance among the population. Also, localization can be defined as “an inversion of characteristics from one particular place to another.” Acharya (2004) also mentioned that localization is an active construction (through discourse, adaptation of context and cultural selection) of foreign ideas taken by local actors, to obtain as a result a significant and consistent formal development through the combination of beliefs and local practices.

With this, three key points are born about how and why ideas travel and produce important changes between cultures and regions:

1. Local Initiative: which is explained by how the cultures of Southeast Asia took the initiative to adapt to other cultures such as the Hindu (politics and religion), so they believed that there were certain ideas that could increase their legitimacy and improve their politics, religion and moral authority for the development of their culture.
2. Adjusting local ideas to foreign ones, to improve the consistency and acceptance of new practices and beliefs: This starts from choosing those foreign ideas that can be beneficial and that can increase the prestige of local ideals, by adjustments and adaptation of the foreign idea to local practices and beliefs.
3. The effect of foreign ideas on the locality: This refers to how foreign ideas can improve the profile and the prestige of local actors and beliefs, rather than extinguish them. It is not about eliminating a belief or practice but expanding and improving it with new ideas.

Localization must be considered mainly by the constant creation of new standards demanded by the international system where the countries are located. This creation and adjustment in the norms can take place due to the changes that occur within the States when they face security or economic crises, which can be solved by questioning the existing norms and

looking for new ones that can solve the crisis. This can also occur when a new distribution of power emerges in the international system, such as the case of the end of the Cold War which led to the creation of new standards on security and cooperation proposed by Europe, and adapted by other regions in the world. Likewise, when there is a domestic political change, such as the adaptation of the ideas about human rights within the new democratic regimes as the basis of their foreign policy, to legitimize their identity and authority. Finally, it occurs when there is an emulation, imitation or contagion through the international or regional demonstration of positive effects by the creation of new standards (ibid).

1.1.7. Endogenous development processes with territorial development approach

The Word “endogenous” can be defined as those processes that are originated from the inside to the outside. In a concrete way, endogenous development is the capacity of territories to develop from the inside, starting from their material and immaterial resources and from the “base” of a territory upward, in order to face the challenges that may rise from the globalization, such as interregional inequality, divergence of territorial units, poverty and increase of the unemployment rate (Pérez Balcázar & Salazar Paredes, 2013). On the other hand, the author Sergio Boisier considers that endogenous development is based on an “emergent property of complex, interconnected, adaptive systems and with an operation similar to capillarity, practically adapted to global complexity”, which means, a process of territory development that emerges from intangible capital factors in a complex context, where this factors interact as a synapse, and expand from bottom to top and from one side to another, allowing the territory to adapt to the complex context in which is located; thus, facilitating the reduction of the complexity or difficulty within the territory, through the use of intangible capitals, the potential of the territory and the dynamics of the development process of the communities at the local level (ibid).

Local development, according to endogenous processes, is based on transformations driven by creativity, innovation capacity and entrepreneurship of a territory and its resources, therefore, it can be said that endogenous development processes cannot be explained through fully external mechanism, but through the capacities of a certain territory, by the use of mechanisms and forces characterized by the processes of capital accumulation, which facilitate economic and social progress. (Baquero Vázquez, 2007).

Other authors such as Van der Ploeg and Long (1994), define endogenous local development as a determination of locals to take control of the development processes and retention of benefits that is provided from the configuration of the region, which remains in the hands of the same inhabitants. On the other hand, Boisier (2005), argues that, first of all, endogenous processes must be sustained on the local political level, this must start from the capacity to adopt and adapt development policies in the community, against other alternatives or solution. Secondly, the author proposes that the economic sphere should be based on the appropriation and reinvestment of the marginal surplus of local productive capacity to vary and diversify its economy. Third, it states that technological and scientific capacities are the engines of development to achieve the qualitative modification of the locality. Finally, the author bases endogenous development on culture to generate a “socio-territorial identity”, where local culture is simultaneously built and recovered, but redirected towards endogenous local development (Meza & J, 2018).

The application of local endogenous development could have several implications in a country and its people such as: greater territorial control, non-abusive and conscious use of natural resources, protection of cultural values, regulation of economic exchange within the community, greater organization and socio-productive administration, and, finally, impact on the construction of public policies and political control at the hands of the community and based on the aforementioned implication (ibid). This means that, development would be oriented from the population or community towards their own wellbeing, using new strategies with the help and integration of different local actors, who will be in charge of determining the necessary actions so that the endogenous development of the locality is optimum.

There are solo political implications and recommendations for both local government and international institutions, given by the Lezasjk Declaration on Endogenous Development and Biocultural Diversity, in Poland, September 27, 2006. Which are:

1. International and national organizations involved in development policies must incorporate programs and projects that defend collective rights, support the revaluation and revitalization of wisdom and forms of knowledge of indigenous and

its traditions, and the non-commercialization of local natural resources and knowledge.

2. National governments must recognize traditional institutions and organizational systems.
3. The global and national policies must strengthen local economy systems, giving priority to local production and markets, sovereignty and food safety.
4. An increase in the distribution of resources for research and development of knowledge and traditional sciences of indigenous peoples.
5. Training of students and professionals committed to the values and principles of traditional indigenous peoples in:
 - Development, update and improvement of their theories and practices.
 - Establish standard assignments for students and professionals.
 - Evaluate the prevailing knowledge and practices from traditional perspectives.
 - Enrich the foundations of traditional indigenous science.
6. The incrementation in intra and inter scientific cooperation for mutual learning and the co-evolution of the predominant and local sciences (eg in health and agriculture), in addition to the interaction between indigenous sages and western scientists, to increase the symmetry in the position of power and access to resources for both types of sciences.
7. The recognition and respect for the opinions of territorial occupation by people and communities.
8. Recognition and support for indigenous traditional cultures, nations, and peoples in order to protect their health systems and medical resources, including their material, spiritual, mental, and social aspects. (Tapia & Nelson, 2008)

1.1.8. Decentralization of the State

Centralism in the Latin American Region has made it impossible to generate more democratic development processes and programs for the needs of localities, which means that the processes of development in this region, has been limited and ineffective. In the international field, centralism has greatly affected the resources from international cooperation since they are distributed from the central power, without consideration of the

reality of regional or sub-national governments. Furthermore, public policies, plans and projects are designed from the top to bottom, without an adequate analysis or study of the realities and specificities of the localities.

The decentralization of the State refers to the redistribution of power; in other words, it means to grant a leading role to local governments that, in theory, are capable of an adequate and a better understanding of the needs and the possible solutions of different localities within the country. Furthermore, a good local government can give practical alternatives of management practices with collaborative methods: “democratic leadership of local authorities, development of human resources and teamwork, public-public cooperation, public-private alliances, citizen participation and institutionalization of models of governance; that is a collaborative networks of self-governments.” (Rosales, 2009).

In this context, the decentralization of the State is closely related to the development of localities, considering that this approach can help to achieve a suitable, fair and balanced process between the central and local governments. The financial issue is a key point within a decentralize State because most of local governments lack of resources to carry out projects that benefit communities; or, if they have the resources, they are conditioned by dispositions of a central State. Therefore, to achieve a greater development of the living condition within a territory, it is necessary to facilitate the fiscal year and improve the autonomy of local governments, under well-defined rules. (ibid)

Another important aspect is the association and networks between local municipalities, which allows that different local governments with similar problems or resources, can come together to empower and improve the effectiveness in the application of development-oriented programs and policies. Ecuador’s constitution proposes the creation of regions and other forms of associations between local governments; however, there are no regulations that allow the effective creation of these forms of government.

1.2. Estate of Art

1.2.1 International Cooperation in Ecuador in the last decade

The international cooperation in Ecuador is managed by the Ministry of Foreign Relations and Human Mobility, which exercises the national administration, planning, regulation, control and management of this activity, based on current national regulation in accordance with the National Development Plan (2009). International Cooperation, in accordance with the Presidential Decree no. 1202 published on October 13 of 2016, seeks to develop an effective coordination between state institutions so that programs, projects and initiatives are capable of contribute to sustainable development and the strengthening of national capacities in order to generate and implement public policies, related to the objectives proposed in the national plan (Correa, 2016).

In the last years, Ecuador has sought the implementation and inclusion of new actors apart from the traditional ones (state actors), as well as the transformation of modalities towards the predominance of refundable, non-refundable and combined financial mechanisms, in order to face the problems of the region, that are imposed by the variation of the income within the countries, which implies a decrease and lack of support regarding international cooperation. In this context, the country has set a new vision and understanding towards south-south cooperation, with no intention of replacing the traditional one, but as an alternative with a horizontal and sovereign form of cooperation to strengthen capacities and find common solutions to similar problems of development within the regional context and its integration. This alternative approach of cooperation has the objective of creating consensus platforms and promoting the positioning of the interest of South American countries in the international framework (ibid).

The evolutionary phases of international cooperation that had an impact in Ecuador are:

The II High Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness of 2005, which approved the Paris Declaration and that recognizes the lack of coincidence between the practices of the donor countries and the national priority development needs of recipient countries, which is a key factor in understanding the difficulties of achieving effectiveness in the results of international cooperation as part of development. This declaration established five principles for both,

donor and recipient countries, the same that were ratified by Ecuador and are: Alignment, Appropriation, Harmonization, Management for Results and Mutual Responsibility, that are principles created to promote a greater impact on IC, by improving relations based on conditionalities and recognition of the problems derived from the proliferation of donors and fragmentation of aid; that also allows to set goals and indicators to monitor the application of the principles for both, donors and recipients.

In 2008, the III High Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness implemented the commitments in the Accra Action Program, where civil society organizations and local governments were incorporated into the agenda of effectiveness of cooperation, as well as actor of the private sector. This forum emphasized the harmonization of aid, the predictability of aid in the medium term, the use of national systems and the strengthening of impact on actions between donors and partner countries. Which also gave a more inclusive character to global development associations, and above all, a greater respect for new donors or middle-income countries, global funds, private sector and new modalities such as South-South Cooperation and triangular Cooperation.

The IV High Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness of 2011 where the “Busan Alliance for effective development” is established, proposed to boost effectiveness by focusing on fragile states, fighting corruption, illicit flows and financial aid regarding climate change. This alliance was also of great importance because the term “effective aid” was left aside, to focus on “cooperation for effective development”, by strengthening state institutions to facilitate issues such as leverage and management of resources for cooperation, considering local realities, stages of development and the international context.

In 2015, the II Conference on Financing for Development adopted the 2030 Agenda and the Addis Ababa Action Agenda, creating a global commitment to promote sustainable and inclusive development in the social, economic and environmental dimensions, that concern International Cooperation. This new development agenda is proposed thanks to the participation and open negotiation of States, civil society, private sector and international organizations.

In 2016, the Global Partnership for Effective Development Co-operation, set two essential objectives for the evolution of International Cooperation; 1) monitoring that aid workers

reach the commitment of 0.7% of Official Development Assistance (ODA) with respect to their GDP; and, 2) ODA recipients improve in the execution of these resources.

Finally, the Ecuadorian approach to South-South Cooperation was born as a tool to share knowledge and experiences for national and collective benefit and self-sufficiency; as well as to increase the confidence in technical capacities of countries and to coordinate the regional and interregional interests. For Ecuador, this as an opportunity to multiply South-South relation and ties, diversify its cooperative actors and apply a “double role” of a country that can be a donor and a recipient of international cooperation to demonstrate its experiences and capacities, in order to propose solutions to improve development in the regional context. Undoubtedly, this country’s approach to IC, creates a process of continuous learning and exchange of knowledge and experience with countries that share similar challenges to development, which can also be taken as a tool to promote and strengthen regional integration.

1.2.2. USAID-Ecuador case

Although international cooperation is designed to incentivize development and eliminate the gap between developed and developing countries, it can also be considered as a tool to fully reproduce a polarizing logic through the interests of the world capitalist system (Marinez, 1999). A clear example of this statement is the case of development cooperation through the United States Agency for International Development or USAID, which works for national security and economic prosperity, with the purpose of providing assistance to the development of recipient countries (USAID, 2019).

USAID invested around \$700 million for general education and the eradication of illiteracy in Ecuador through the implementation of a new educational model. This was based on the technification of the students, in order to provide technical knowledge and the necessary conditions to improve the production of raw materials destined for export. Due to this production-based model to improve the country's economic development, the results of general education were not very encouraging nor tangible.

In 2019, the Ministry of Education showed that illiteracy was over 11% of the population and that the educational level only increased by 2% (Soto, 2011).

With these given results, it can be pointed out that the execution policies in this case of cooperation, were the ones that caused its failure. Generally, the development of cooperation policies are conditioned by the logic of demand and supply within the international market, and it is imposed by a central or developed country, in this case of study, The United States. This means that these policies do not consider the reality, structure, strengths and culture of the beneficiary country, but rather they consider an external system that, in most cases, cannot be adapted to the capacities or needs of the recipient country, in this case, Ecuador (ibid).

An effective international cooperation should consider the internal criteria and the general context of a recipient country, in order to use and redirect its unique capabilities and characteristics for its own benefit. At the same time, the participation of local actors such as civil society, should be implemented to develop public policies that adapt to the needs of the country and that can serve as a starting point for IC programs aimed at a real development. This change of perspective must start from the interior to the exterior of the countries, so that it can generate a true and effective analysis of the proposals and strategies that could potentiate and empower the efficiency of international cooperation.

1.2.3. PGA-Embassy of Israel Case

An effective international cooperation is not always most publicized worldwide. In the province of Azuay, a project of irrigation was developed in 2019 through cooperation between the Provincial Government of Azuay (PGA) and the Embassy of the Republic of Israel in Ecuador. Although the total amount of dollars invested in this project was not significant, the results of it were beneficial to more than 150 families in the rural area of the province.

This successful case of cooperation did not only mean the installation of drip irrigation systems (Family DRIP System), but also it meant a technical and comprehensive

training of the local people. In 2017, an employee of the PGA obtained a MASHV scholarship, which is the same as the Agency for International Development Cooperation that is attached to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the State of Israel, to specialize students in the issues of technical irrigation systems, horticulture, water resource management and management of the agricultural sector. Thanks to the studies and the knowledge transfer that the public employee was able to access, it was possible to apply the new techniques learned to the reality of the province, and a project called "Promotion of technified horticulture with low pressure irrigation systems" was presented to the State of Israel. (Gobierno Porvincial del Azuay , 2019)

The government of the State of Israel was involved in the project and destined around 10,000 dollars for the acquisition of 20 machines for the drip irrigation systems. For its part, the PGA through its mixed economy company, AGROAZUAY, allocated an amount of \$ 7,000 for training and specialized technical assistance for one year, for 20 associations of small horticulturists who received the irrigation systems and which contributed with an amount of 2,500 dollars to complement the installation of the irrigation systems. According to the PGA, the results that have obtained in the more than 150 families and the 20 associations are:

- Better management of water for agricultural purposes;
- Improvement of diversified agricultural production;
- Production assurance throughout the year,
- Strengthening of environmental awareness among producers, and;
- Strengthening of agricultural organizations.

This case of IC for development allows us to observe the articulation of a whole set of actors with the goal of improving the living conditions of rural communities in Azuay. This shows how the International Development Cooperation System works through the different modalities, from international scholarships, knowledge transfer (technical and scientific cooperation) and the donation of the necessary equipment to execute the project; the same that was not designed on a desktop by foreigners, but by people who knew the reality and needs of Azuay widely. It could be said that projects like these are

those that allow the IDC to mark a real and tangible beginning of a change in the least favored localities in the world. (Gobierno Porvincial del Azuay , 2019)

1.3. Territorial model for local sustainable development according to the Sustainable Development Goals, the National Development Plan and “El Buen Vivir”

To establish a territorial model for local sustainable development, it is necessary to establish the foundations that it will present as well as the essential characteristics that must be adopted to represent a real and viable alternative to the current development processes that occur in sub-national governments; the same ones that usually, due to their misconception and negligent application, perpetuate the systems of underdevelopment and poverty.

1.3.1. Sustainable Development Goals

The sustainable development goals were proposed on September 25, 2015 and approved in the same year by the 2030 Agenda on sustainable development, adopted by the UN General Assembly. These objectives are based on a common and universal commitment, depending on the specific challenges of each country and its search for sustainable development, in order to eradicate poverty, protect the planet, ensure the prosperity of human beings and nature, and fight against climate change. The agenda sets 17 objectives that have an integrated and indivisible nature, encompassing economic, social and environmental issues. It intends achieve the world development programs for the next 15 years, that is, until 2030 (United Nations, 2019).

The 17 proposed objectives are:

1. **End of poverty:** this objective promotes inclusive economic growth, creation of sustainable jobs, promotion of equality and elimination hunger, malnutrition, and the lack of decent living and limited access to basic services such as education or health. It also involves social protection systems, in order to mitigate the risks of disaster-prone countries and provide support in a situation of economic difficulties.

2. **Zero hunger:** It proposes a reform in the world agrarian and food system to feed the 815 million starving people that exist on the planet and the additional 2 million people who will live in 2050. To accomplish this, there are promotions in investments to increase the agricultural capacity and sustainable food production systems to mitigate hunger difficulties.
3. **Health and Well-being:** It guarantees a healthy life and universal well-being as a priority through an efficient financing health systems, improving sanitation, hygiene, increasing the access to medical services and providing advice on how to reduce environmental pollution, in order to make a significant progress and help to eradicate the wide range of diseases, and tackle various emerging issues that threaten people's health and lives.
4. **Quality Education:** this objective promotes access to inclusive and equitable education to provide the necessary tools for the development of innovative solution to the world's biggest problems. It also suggests a greater investment in education to provide educational scholarships, teacher training workshops, construction of schools, and better access to water and electricity for educational institutions, in the rural and urban areas of a country.
5. **Gender Equality:** this objective guarantee and promotes the equality for women in terms of access to education, health care, decent work, and representation in political and economic decision-making processes. It also aims to establish a new legal framework in the workplace for the equality of women and the eradication of harmful practices to end gender-based discrimination.
6. **Clean water and sanitation:** This objective promotes the obtention of water with no impurities and accessible to all through an adequate distribution of it, in order to avoid chronic and repeated shortages of fresh water, especially among local communities in several countries in development of Sub-Saharan Africa, Central Asia, South Asia, East Asia and South-East Asia.
7. **Affordable and Clean Energy:** It guarantees universal access to energy by supporting new economic and labor initiatives that ensure universal access to modern energy services, which must improve energy efficiency and increase

the use of renewable sources, in order to create a greater number of sustainable and inclusive communities, to face environmental problems such as climate change. This requires public and private investments in energy, higher levels of financing and policies with commitment and willingness of each country to innovate and adopt new technologies on a larger scale.

8. **Decent work and economic growth:** It set out a review of economic and social policies aimed to eradicate poverty and create necessary conditions for people to access quality jobs, while boosting the economy without affecting the environment. This will lead to increased job opportunities for the working-age population, with decent conditions, reducing the unemployment rate among young people and improving the access to financial services, in order to manage income, accumulate assets and make productive investment for growth and sustainable and inclusive economy.
9. **Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure:** This objective promotes investment in infrastructure (transport, irrigation, energy, information and communication technology), through technological progress and innovation based on the increasement of resources, energy efficiency and other environmental objectives.
10. **Reduction of inequalities:** It recommends the application of universal policies that prioritize the needs of disadvantaged and marginalized populations, by increasing the “tariff-free treatment” as well as continuing to favor exports from countries within the International Monetary Fund or IMF.
11. **Sustainable Cities and Communities:** This objective aims to promote and improve urban planning and management so that this spaces in general are more inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable. It also proposes the increasement of funds to provide basic services, implement appropriate policies on land, housing and deterioration of infrastructure.
12. **Responsible Production and Consumption:** The objective promotes the efficient use of resources and energy that are implemented in the construction of infrastructures, in order to conserve the environment, improve the access to basic services and the creation of ecological and remunerated jobs with good

working conditions. It also aims to achieve general development plans, improving the quality of life, reducing economic, environmental and social costs, increasing competitiveness and reducing poverty.

13. **Climate Action:** It proposes viable solution so that countries can have a more sustainable and environmentally friendly economic activities, using renewable energy, obtaining other solutions to reduce emissions and increase adaptation efforts. It also proposes the strengthening of the international community against the threat of climate change, through the Paris Agreement of November 2016. The implementation of the Paris Agreement is essential to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals and it provides a guide for Climate actions to reduce emissions and create resistance to climate change.
14. **Live Below Water:** It promotes a prudent management of the world's oceans to avoid the continuous deterioration of coastal waters due to pollution and acidification of the oceans that affect ecosystems, biodiversity, and small-scale fishing. It also promotes the effective management of marine protected areas and the improvement of resources and regulations that help reduce overfishing and general marine pollution.
15. **Life and Land:** This objective encourages all efforts to manage forests and combat desertification by implementing international agreements to promote the use of resources in a fair, equitable and conscious way, as well as promoting financial investments to maintain the existing biodiversity.
16. **Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions:** It fosters the creation of peaceful and inclusive societies by establishing efficient and transparent regulations, with comprehensive and realistic government budgets. The first step towards this goal is the implementation of the global birth registry and the creation of independent national human rights institutions around the world.
17. **Partnerships for the Goals:** To fulfill the sustainable development program, it is necessary to build alliances between governments, the private sector and civil society. These alliances must be created on principles and values, with shared vision and goals that put people and the planet in the center, to solve situations and problems globally, regionally, nationally and locally. (ibid)

1.3.2. National Development Plan 2017-2021

The “Plan toda una vida” is the national development plan of Ecuador, created in the presidency of Lenin Moreno, which presents the guidelines for planning at a national level. The Constitution establishes that this plan is the instrument that must be harmonized with: public policies, programs and projects; the programming and execution of the state budget; the investment and allocation of public resources; and coordinate exclusive powers between the central state and decentralized autonomous governments. This sets a standard model for the territorial development that must be harmonized with the country’s vision within this national plan.

The national development plan establishes 9 general development objectives that are grouped into three thematic axes: 1) rights for a lifetime; 2) economy at the service of society and 3) more society, better state.

The first axis, rights for a lifetime, deals with the importance of the human being as such and his condition of holder of rights that the Ecuadorian State must respect and protect; it also fully guarantees the rights enshrined in the constitution of Ecuador. Within this axis there are 3 general objectives: 1) the guarantee of a decent life with equal opportunities for all people; 2) affirm interculturality and plurinationality, revaluing diverse identities, and 3) guarantee the rights of nature for current and future generations. (Conejo Nacional de Planificación , 2017)

The second axis, economy at the service of society, affirms that the Ecuadorian economy is social and solidary, which is also established in the constitution. This economy system has three subsystems, which are: public, private, and social solidarity. These propose an incentive of productivity and competitiveness, as well as the promotion of environmental sustainability. The following objectives are established within this axis: 1) consolidate the sustainability of the social and solidarity economic system, and the strengthen of the dollarization; 2) boost productivity and competitiveness for sustainable economic growth in a redistributive and supportive way, and; 3) develop productive and environmental capacities to achieve food

sovereignty and rural Good Living. These objectives are intended to generate economic development through redistributive processes and social co-responsibility. (ibid)

The third and last axis is related to the notions of decentralization, which was already mentioned. More society, better state, represents a process of approach to the citizen through the decentralization of state services and functions, in order to achieve closeness and social cohesion. As in the previous axes, there are three objectives presented: 1) encourage a participatory society, with a State close to the service of citizens; 2) promote transparency and co-responsibility for a new social ethic, and; 3) guarantee sovereignty, peace, and a strategically position of the country in the region and the world. These objectives seek to ensure that the State has an image and an operation that is adequate for the requirements of citizens, in a domestic and international manner. (ibid)

1.3.3. *El Buen Vivir*

The system of development based on capitalism, which reigns worldwide, destroys, in a systematic manner, the nature by promoting the growth of economies by the rampant consumption of ecological goods. As an antithesis, *El Buen Vivir* offers an alternative to development where human and environment prevails in total harmony. The *Sumak Kawsay*¹ breaks the duality (separation) of the human being with nature; "That is why there is a symbiosis and not a separation between human beings and nature. It is a sacred relationship." (Houtart, 2011, pág. 67) This raises a conception of growth and production different from those that dominate the economies, so that the human being can obtain the necessary resources to live a full life and where nature can regenerate itself.

The *Sumak Kawsay* seeks a market for society that is dynamic and sustained by small-scale production and endogenous development processes. "The basic value of the economy, in a *Buen Vivir* regime, is solidarity. We are looking for a different economy,

¹ *sumak* [sumax, sumak, sumag, suma] adj. beautiful, pretty, cute, precious, delicious, distinguished; *kawsay* [kawsay] s. lifetime. 3. Live.

a social and solidarity economy...” (Acosta, 2010, pág. 23). *El Buen Vivir* conceives the popular and solidarity economy beyond a subsistence economy; it sees it as an opportunity for development from the local level. This is enshrined in article 283 of the Constitution of Ecuador where it is established that the solidarity economy creates an environment conducive for the generation of *El Buen Vivir*. In this sense, the economy must be at the service of society.

Finally, nowadays, the dynamics in global markets are aimed at for the benefit of transnational corporations, which leaves local economies aside. In addition, world trade is controlled by large financial capitals, and its free circulation around the world is prioritized. The countries base their market on imports and exports, establishing global trade agreements, attracting international investment, and competing with the neighboring country. This results in the abandonment of the local economy. The *Sumak Kawsay* proposes: "the search for a production model based mainly on local resources and less dependent on foreign trade." (Unceta, 2011, pág. 109). With this, it is possible to satisfy the basic needs of the populations with the use of local resources; also, it is a challenge to globalization, since it prioritizes needs and rejects sumptuous goods. In a few words, it could be said that *El Buen Vivir* promotes material sobriety, avoiding consumerism.

1.3.4. Territorial Development Model for sustainable local development

El Buen Vivir proposes a green economy in which human beings and nature can coexist in harmony. In this sense, the human is the main element of *pacha mama*, therefore, he must use it in a responsible way. Furthermore, in the face of a world economic system that places financial capital over people, *El Buen Vivir* proposes a popular and solidary economy that allows the development of populations, and also of small companies, in order to achieve a better standard of living and the well-being of human over money. Likewise, it proposes that the economies of poor countries emphasize the consumption of local goods in order to stop the dependence on imported products. For these reasons, *El Buen Vivir* is a viable alternative to capitalism.

For the creation of an ideal territorial development model, it is essential to take into account the Sustainable Development Goals, adapt them to the needs of the country

and articulate them in a complementary way with what is formulated in the National Plan and in *El Buen Vivir*. In other words, it is necessary to create a territorial plan within the municipalities, in which objectives, goals and actions are based on the axes of greatest importance and on the SDGs of greatest relevance for the municipal governments. In general, Ecuadorian municipal governments should adapt and structure projects that aim to propose inclusive economic growth, which fosters a sustainable agricultural and food system, in order to promote the integrity of human beings and nature, through responsible production and consumption, reducing environmental impact, economic costs and improving the quality of life of citizens. This should take as a base the fundamental SDOs for Ecuadorian territorial growth and development, in order to achieve the guidelines defined by the National Plan and *El Buen Vivir* mentioned above. This ideal model would be supported by citizen participation, intersectorality, intertemporality and the articulation between the different national and international actors that facilitate the link, sustainability, and transparency of the plan.

CHAPTER 2: Analysis of the local context towards international cooperation

2.1. National legal and regulatory framework

2.1.1. Hierarchical Pyramid in International Cooperation.

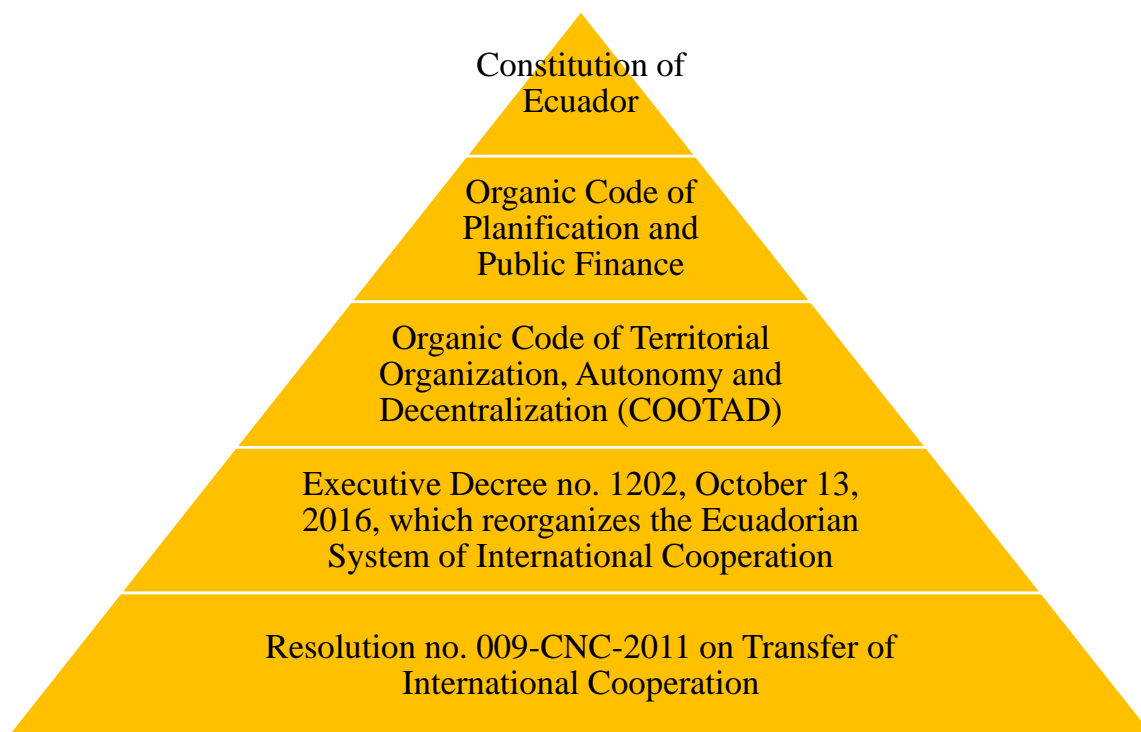


Figure 1 Hierarchy of the Norm on International Cooperation

Made by: Authors

2.1.2. Constitution of Ecuador

As established in the Ecuadorian Constitution of 2008, title V about territorial organization of the State, art 238, "decentralized autonomous governments shall enjoy political, administrative and financial autonomy, and shall be governed by the principles of solidarity, subsidiarity, inter-territorial equity, integration and citizen

participation.”² The art. 241 indicates that the decentralized autonomous governments (GAD) will have the duty and obligation to carry out the plans and necessary actions so that the territorial order is guaranteed. In addition, articles 262, 263, 264 and 267, it is determined that the municipal will have exclusive powers without prejudice of others that are determined by law, which allows to the municipal government to develop plans, determine, regulate and commit to the management of the international cooperation, projects and plans corresponding to territorial planning and development, in an articulated way with national, regional, cantonal and parish planning to achieve fulfillment of these competences.

According to the articles of the constitution mentioned above, decentralized municipal governments have the power and obligation to use these instruments to ensure the well-being and development of the Ecuadorian territory, based on a participatory and articulated planning, following the guidelines proposed by the National Development Plan mentioned in the chapter VI, articles 279 and 280.

2.1.3. Organic Code of Planning and Public Finance

From the planning of non-reimbursable international cooperation, the code is established as a mechanism by which “the Republic of Ecuador grants, receives, transfers or exchanges resources, goods, services, capital, knowledge and / or technology, in order to contribute or complement national initiatives to achieve planning objectives.”³ Furthermore, the diversity of its sources, public or private, are recognized.

It is important to refer to the principles of IC established in the article 66 of this code:

- Sovereignty;
- Independence;
- Legal Equality of the States;
- Peaceful coexistence;

² Art. 238 of the Constitution of Ecuador

³ Art. 65 of the Organic Code of Planning and Public Finance, Official Registry No. 306 of October 22, 2010.

- Self-determination of people;
- Integration;
- Solidarity;
- Transparency;
- Equity and;
- Respect for human rights.

Regarding to the municipal governments (GAD), the article 68 establishes the “Management of non-reimbursable international cooperation. - The management of non-reimbursable international cooperation, exercised by the decentralized autonomous governments, will be guided by national policies and the respective development and territorial plans.”⁴ It also indicates that the approval of non-reimbursable IC programs and projects will be carried out by the highest authorities of the GAD, in the framework of the national policy for IC. In addition, the registration to the Undersecretary for International Cooperation Attached to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Human Mobility will be mandatory, which is the competent technical body, and which will control and evaluate the programs or projects.

2.1.4. Organic Code of Territorial Organization, Autonomy and Decentralization (COOTAD)

COOTAD establishes a political-administrative organization of the Ecuadorian State in the territory, with a regime of different levels of decentralized autonomous governments and special regimes, in order to guarantee the political, administrative, and financial autonomy of said governments. Also, this code develops a mandatory and progressive decentralized model through the national system of competences, the institution responsible for its administration, the sources of financing and the definition of policies and mechanisms to compensate imbalances within the territorial development⁵.

⁴ Art. 65 of the Organic Code of Planning and Public Finance, Official Registry No. 306 of October 22, 2010.

⁵ Art. 1 of the Organic Code of Territorial Organization, Autonomy and Decentralization, Official Register Supplement 303 of October 19, 2010.

The article 4, literal g of this code, establishes that the purposes of the municipal government will be: “The participatory planned development to transform reality and promote the popular and solidarity economy with the purpose of eradicating poverty, distributing resources and wealth in an equitable way, and to achieve *El Buen Vivir*”⁶.

Regarding to IC, this code is harmonized with the Constitution and establishes:

Art. 131.- Management of international cooperation. -Decentralized autonomous governments may manage to obtain resources from international cooperation and technical assistance to fulfill their own competences within the framework of national objectives, their development plans and the principles of equity, solidarity, interculturality, subsidiarity, opportunity, and relevance. A record will be kept in the national system of international cooperation⁷.

2.1.5. Executive Decree no. 1202, of October 13, 2016, which reorganizes the Ecuadorian System of International Cooperation

The executive decree no. 1202 of October 13, 2016, reorganizes the Ecuadorian System of International Cooperation, suppressing the Technical Secretary for International Cooperation, in order to build a public institution to exercise the stewardship, planning, regulation, control and management of the national system of non-refundable international cooperation. These powers become the responsibility of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Human Mobility⁸.

This ministry will have the following attributions⁹:

1. Exercise the stewardship, regulate, organize, evaluate, supervise and articulate the operations of the SECI, by facilitating actors and processes in accordance with the objectives of the National Development Plan.

⁶ Art. 4 literal g of the Organic Code of Territorial Organization, Autonomy and Decentralization, Official Register Supplement 303 of October 19, 2010.

⁷ Art. 131 of the Organic Code of Territorial Organization, Autonomy and Decentralization, Official Register Supplement 303 of October 19, 2010.

⁸ Art. 1-3 of Executive Decree no. 1202, Official Registry no. 876 of November 8, 2016.

⁹ Art. 1-3 of Executive Decree no. 1202, Official Registry no. 876 of November 8, 2016.

2. Negotiate and sign, under the name of the Ecuadorian State, non-refundable international agreements.
3. Support and assist in the processes of formulation, negotiation, access, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of non-reimbursable IC programs and projects.
4. Evaluate and Organize the Non-Refundable IC Demand
5. Identify sources of financing and opportunities for the growth of non-reimbursable IC
6. Carry out monitoring and evaluation of non-reimbursable IC projects to achieve expected results in the performance of IC receiving entities.
7. Evaluate and coordinate the management of the non-reimbursable technical cooperation offer that Ecuador can grant to friendly countries
8. Sign, register and follow up on non-reimbursable IC agreements, programs and projects executed by the public sector
9. Coordinate with the decentralized autonomous governments and the corresponding entities, the execution of policies issued for the operation of the International Cooperation System
10. Guarantee the strengthening and maintenance of the Information System of the International Cooperation System

2.1.6. Resolution no. 009-CNC-2011 on Transfer of International Cooperation

Resolution no. 009 of October 27, 2011, issued by the National Council of Competences, establishes the creation of a political-administrative organization of the Ecuadorian State to consolidate a new development regime, based on *El Buen Vivir*, in order to increase the potency, capacities and vocations of decentralized autonomous governments through a model of autonomy and decentralization for a fair and balanced development of the country. This resolves that the powers of local stewardship, planning, regulation, control, and management of international cooperation will be the responsibility of the decentralized autonomous governments, this in accordance with

Chapter II, Section II, articles 11 to 16¹⁰. This resolution is in accordance with the provisions of the Constitution, which entrusts these parish, municipal, provincial and regional governments with the capacity to have the necessary competencies to manage international cooperation in an aligned manner with national planning and policy.

2.2. Institutional context of the Decentralized Autonomous Government of Azogues

2.2.1. General Data of Azogues

Azogues is located in the so-called austral part of Ecuador, specifically in the valley of the *Burgay* river in *hoya de Paute*, it is approximately 2500 meters above sea level. It is the capital of the province of Cañar and it was also declared Cultural and Urban Heritage of Ecuador by the Ministry of Education and Culture through the agreement No. 2829 of October 31, 2000. Its full name is *San Francisco¹¹ de Peleusí¹² de Azogue¹³*. It was founded by the Spanish conquerors on October 4, 1562 and became independent on November 4, 1820. However, it is a territory which has vestiges of cultural and human settlements that precede the Incas, which were the Cañarí nation that also developed in these areas.

Azogues is known as the “*Obrera del Sur*” and is characterized by its whimsical topography that gives it a unique landscape, allowing it to have countless natural viewpoints. Its traditions have pre-Hispanic roots and others typical from the colony. The *Killaraymi* or Moon festivals are celebrated and “*La procesion de la Virgen de la Nube*”, which is one of the most important religious expressions of the austral region, and it takes place every January first.

¹⁰ Art. 11-16 of Resolution no. 0009-CNC-2011, Official Register 565 of October 27, 2011.

¹¹ It is named after Saint Francis for the religious festivities attributed to the saint every October 4.

¹² Name attributed to the Cañarí people of Peleusí and some yellow flowers in the area.

¹³ Derived from quicksilver, it refers to the mercury mines present in the area.

2.2.2. Geography

The canton of Azogues is located at the west of Cañar province, bordering Azuay and Chimborazo provinces. It has 4 urban parishes: Aurelio Bayas, San Francisco, Charasol, and Azogues; and 8 rural parishes: Javier Loyola, Cojitambo, Luis Cordero, San Miguel, Guapán, Rivera, Taday and Pindilig.

Map of the rural parishes of the Canton Azogues.

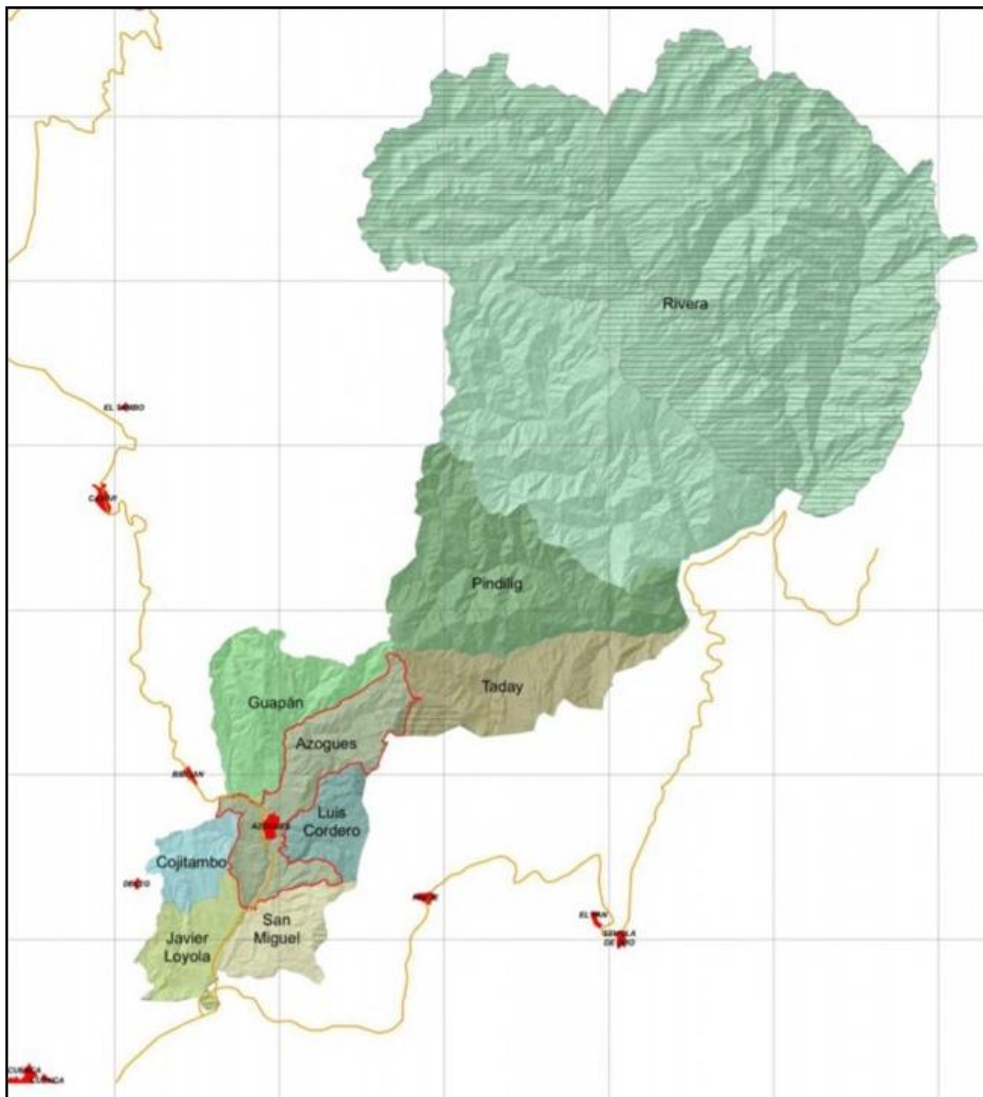


Figure 2 Map of Azogues

Source: (Gobierno Autonomo Descentralizado del Cantón Azogues, 2017)

2.2.3. Demography

According to the National Institute of Statistics and Census, of 2010, the canton of Azogues had a total population of 7,064 inhabitants, of which 48.31% belongs to the urban area and 51.69% belongs to the rural area, between 37967 women and 32088 men, showing a greater number of women than men this year. Regarding racial self-identification, in Azogues, 92% identified themselves as mestizo, 2% as indigenous, 4.8% as white, 1.7% as Afro-Ecuadorian and others 0.2%. The 2010 census period has been characterized by a decrease in the average annual rate of population growth, which was 2.18%. Regarding the population pyramid, about 30.28% of the population is under 15 years old and adolescents between 15 and 25 years old make up the 20.84% of the population, which results in a total of 51.12%, which shows that the population is young.

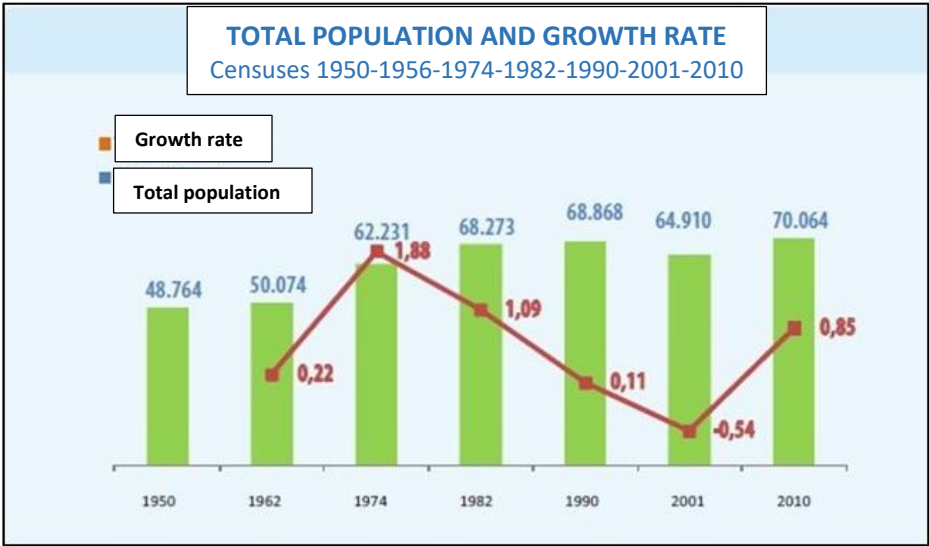


Figure 3 Total population and growth rates of the Azogues canton

Source: (Instituto Nacional de Estadísticas y Censos , 2019)

2.2.4. Education

According to the 2010 Population and Housing Census and the diagnosis of the *Plan del Buen Vivir* and Territorial Planning of Azogues, the canton has an illiteracy rate of 8.19%, where women represent a higher illiteracy rate with 10, 6%, in relation to men who present 5.1% (INEC, 2011). Also, Also, it is important to note that the illiteracy rate in the rural sector of the canton rises to 12.7%. The attendance to primary and basic education, in urban and rural areas exceeds the 90% of the population; however, for secondary care, the rate is low, in urban areas at 74.79% and, in rural areas, at just over the 60%. In the entire canton, only a 54.7% of the population attended high school and 29.43% attended to a higher education.

Table 1 State of education in the canton Azogues

INDICATOR	TOTAL	URBAN	RURAL
ILLITERACY RATE	8.19%	4.17%	12.17%
SCHOOL DROPOUT RATE PERIOD 2009-2010	8.57%	5.63%	5.40%
SCHOOL DROPOUT RATE PERIOD 2012-2013	2.17%	1.85%	4.90%
NET RATE OF ATTENDANCE IN HIGH SCHOOL EDUCATION	54.7%	65.07%	45.29%
NET RATE OF ATTENDANCE IN BASIC EDUCATION	93.61%	95.17%	92.36%
NET RATE OF ATTENDANCE IN PRIMARY EDUCATION	94.18%	93.05%	95.12%
NET RATE OF ATTENDANCE IN SECONDARY EDUCATION	67.82%	71.79%	62.60%
NET RATE OF ATTENDANCE IN HIGHER EDUCATION	29.43%	40.93%	18.50%
AVERAGE SCHOOLING OF THE POPULATION AGED 24 AND OVER	8.96%	11.22%	6.66%

Source: (Gobierno Autonomo Descentralizado del Cantón Azogues, 2017)

2.2.5. Migration

The canton of Azogues has a high migration rate of 5.63%. The population migrated abroad between 2001 and 2010; meaning that 3,947 people between 2,260 men and 1,287 women, left the country. Furthermore, in 2001 this migratory flow meant that the population growth rate in Azogues decreased by -0.54 points. The average age of migrants is divided into two groups: from 5 to 14 years old and mainly, from 15 to 49 years old. Most of this migratory flow (64.60%) comes from rural parishes and 45.40% from urban areas. The main destination was the United States of North America, followed by Spain, Canada and Argentina. In this scenario, the remittances that the migrants send to their relatives who reside in the Azogues canton, represent a dynamic source of the economy, for 2010 these were more than 18 million US dollars. (Plan del Buen Vivir y Ordenamiento Territorial , 2017)

2.2.6. Economic activity

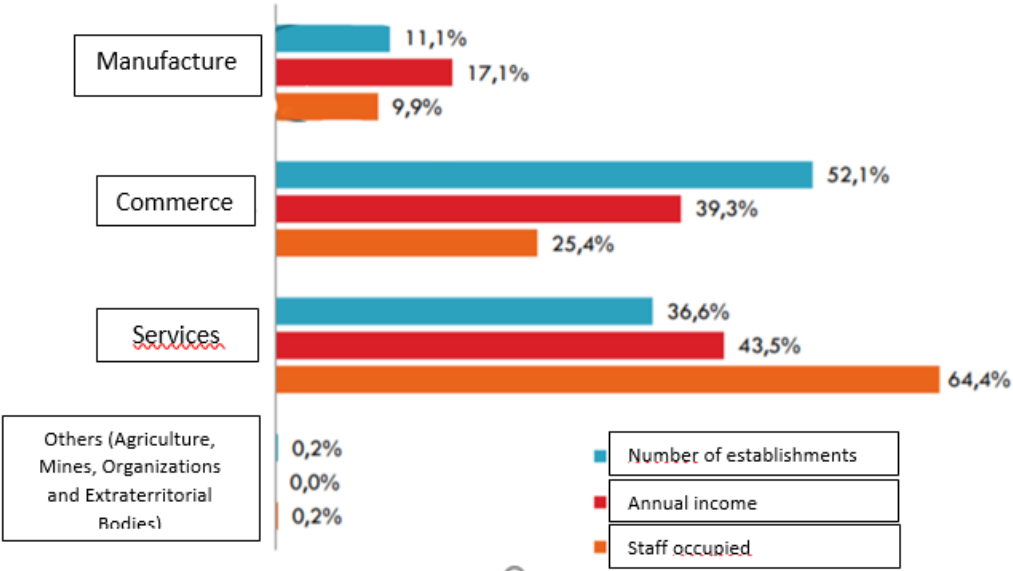
In the canton of Azogues, the economically active population, that is conformed by people from the age of 10 years or more, was a total of 11,474 people employed in 2010. The economic profile of the Azogues canton has 3 main economic activities, which are:

- Productive activities: Manufacture of clothing and Manufacture of metal products for structural use.
- Trade Activities: Retail sales of food, beverages and tabaco (window stalls and markets).
- Services: Restaurant activities and mobile food services and Legal activities.

Regarding the income that is generated in the canton, and considering the manufacturing sector as the main value-generating activity in accordance with the result of the 2011 National Economic Census, Azogues, a total of USD 56 million of revenues are from the Manufacturing Sector, USD 128 million annual from the Commerce Sector and USD 142 million from the annual income generated by the

Services Sector (INEC, 2011). However as shown in the following table, the commerce sector has the highest number of establishments with 52.21% and an annual total income of 39.3%, while the Services sector has a 43.5% of annual income and covers most economically active people with 64.4%. This shows us a greater reception for these two sectors, as well as a greater development of these economic areas.

Table 2 Percentage of numbers of establishments, annual income, personnel employed by economic sector.



Source: (Instituto Nacional de Estadísticas y Censos , 2011)

2.2.7. Basic services

49.2% of the houses in the canton have access to electricity, water, toilets, and garbage disposal by collection truck. In the urban area, the coverage of the sewerage network was a 77.32% for 2010. As for the electrical network coverage, it is a 94.97% in the entire canton, reaching practically all coverage in the urban area.

2.2.8 Local authorities

Mayor: Romel Sarmiento Castro

Vice Mayor: Mariana Andrade

Urban Councilors: Carlos Olmedo Palacios, Ronaldo Ruiz, Javier Serrano.

Rural Councilors: Francisco Molina, Nancy Gonzales, Gabriel Crespo

2.2.9. Organizational structure

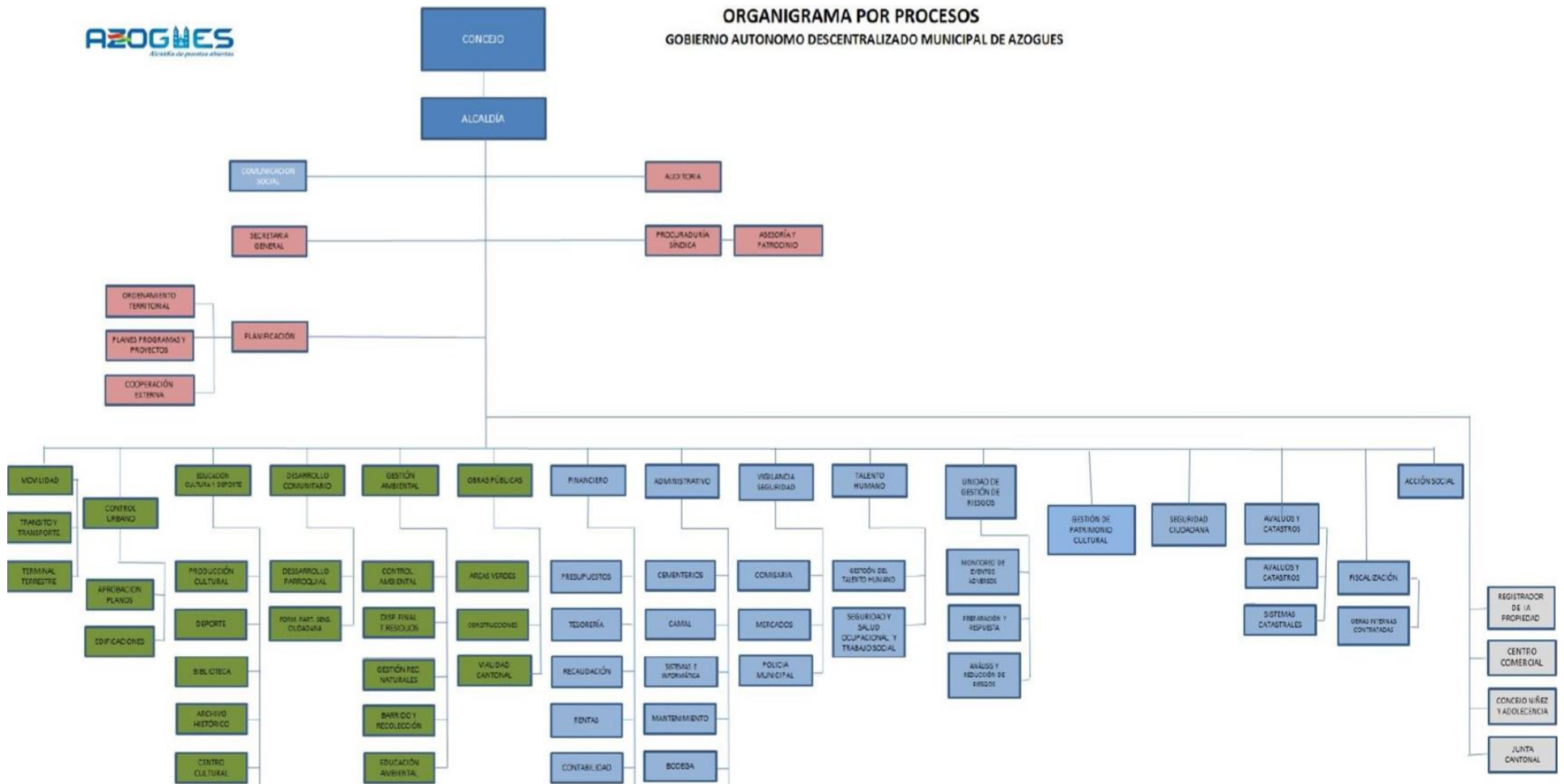


Figure 4 Organic Structure of the GAD of the Canton Azogues

2.3. Diagnosis of the Department of External Cooperation of the Decentralized Autonomous Government of the Canton Azogues

The External Cooperation Department that exists within the local government of the canton, was created in 2014 in compliance with the provisions of COOTAD about the exclusive power that decentralized autonomous governments must exercise. "The GAD must assume the competence of managing international cooperation, in order to obtain new resources for the fulfillment of the municipalities' objectives." According to the organic structure of the GAD, the Department of External Cooperation belongs to the planning direction, which makes it a third-level dependency in the hierarchical order.

In accordance with the Organic Statute of Organizational Management by Processes of the GAD of Azogues, the department must carry out the following activities:

1. Projects and financed agreements
2. Monitoring plan for the allocation of project funds
3. Reports and progress reports
4. Systematized database of sources and interests of cooperation
5. Files of confirmed agreements
6. Report on accepted programs and projects
7. Execution agreements and progress reports

However, within the Organic Statute, the functions are not clearly established, much less the mission or vision that would delimit the actions of the department. It was legally created in 2014, however, there is no budget item for its entry into operation, which results in the non-existent position of a department for external cooperation. Currently, it functions as a commission, a level 4 official (on the scale of the public service). In addition, the instrument for public investment planning, known as PDyOT, which has been in force since 2017 does not contemplate any activity, plan or project to be executed by this agency. In the opinion of Dr. Diana Barzallo, who is in charge of its management: "Since the creation of the department, there has been no strengthening of it or support of technicians or professional personnel specialized in the subject of cooperation management, due to budget constraints that exists within the

[municipality], and also, because the administrations think that this dependency only serves to collect resources and not to generate current expenditure.” Regarding the autonomy of the Department of External Cooperation, despite of being subordinate to the Planning Direction, it maintains a direct line with the mayor’s office, and reports to the afore mention direction. According to the head of the department, from the date of its creation to the present, the projects and the proper functioning of this department have been coordinated directly with the mayor without the need to go through any other filter.

Despite the almost non-existent institutionalization and no financing, the Department of External Cooperation’s daily activities revolve around three fundamental axes:

- Tracing sources of international cooperation in all its forms, to harmonize them with institutional interests
- Acquisition of training, scholarships, internships through technical support from international cooperation and links with other levels of government.
- Coordination and contact with national organizations such as ministries, undersecretaries, etc.

The last point clarifies the role of this department. The name of External cooperation refers not only to the international arena but also to all contact made by the GAD, outside its own institutional framework. This is the reason why this municipal dependency has been in charge of managing funds and approaching national institutions such as the Electricity Corporation of Ecuador (CELEC EP) in the socio-environmental field, and with the National Secretariat of Water (SENAGUA) on issues of reforestation.

Regarding to the search for the offer of international cooperation, the department carried it out in a direct way, despite of being a member of the Association of Municipalities of Ecuador (AME), having a Strengthening and Cooperation Network (RIICI), and also a Cooperation Offer Information System (SIOC). The calls of these associations and its projects are not constantly updated and are also sent to the municipalities indiscriminately; in other words, these instances have not been useful for the GAD of the canton of Azogues, which means yet another limitation.

2.3.1 Projects executed by the department of External Cooperation

There are a few projects related to IC that have been managed within the GAD of Azogues. According to the information obtained through an interview with the head of the Department of External Cooperation, the projects that have been carried out are:

- With Charity Anywhere NGO, that donated the amount of \$300,000 for medical brigades' equipment to assist people in vulnerable situations in rural areas.
- Funds Valencia, an expert organization in community tourism issues, provided technical assistance for training and evaluating the management of this activity in the canton of Azogues, with the help of a technician that stayed 15 days in the city.
- Through the Gender Advisory Council of the canton of Azogues and with the help of Freedom House NGO, who donated an amount of 8,000 dollars for the organizational strengthening of women.

The Department also worked with the Japanese embassy, which provided technical assistance for irrigation, however, due to budgetary limitations, the GAD did not have the counterpart necessary to carry out the projects. In addition, there are several initiatives and projects that have not been possible due to the various limitations of the GAD. (Barzallo, 2019)

2.4 Analysis of the international cooperation management of the GAD of Cuenca as previous experience in the region

The management of the International Cooperation of the municipal GAD of the canton of Cuenca was born in 1999, where the IC began to be implemented, through an office that was in charge of International Relations and had a only official employee that played a protocol role in this framework to declare Cuenca as an international heritage. In 2011, an office was established as a direction with a real focus on International Relations and Cooperation, which now, is responsible for articulating and acting as an intermediary for the intercommunication between national dependencies and

international actors (Maldonado & Malo, 2019). Through the interview with Ana Isabel Maldonado and María Elisa Malo, international relations, and cooperation technicians of the GAD of the canton of Cuenca, an analysis will be made of the experience that this canton has had with the management of International Cooperation.

The Office of International Relations and Cooperation, since its creation, has been in charge of adhering the city to international networks such as cooperation or twinning agreements, management of technical assistance and management with United Nations agencies or other cooperation entities in the territory such as the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ), which has worked with the Ministry of Urban Development and Housing, in the city of Cuenca and other cities of Ecuador with the project "Sustainable Intermediate Cities", providing support and technical assistance to meet the Sustainable Development Goals (GIZ, 2017).

The projects carried out by the Municipal GAD of Cuenca are articulated by direct contact with municipal agencies such as the various directorates and public companies, through a socialization of the areas of greatest interest proposed and determined by the PDyOT and the work plan of the mayor on duty. The main needs are defined in order to set the budgets that will be directed towards the realization of the projects offered by international agencies, which must consider the plan, priorities and needs of the municipality (Maldonado & Malo, 2019). Once the objectives are defined, annual and periodic meetings are held to monitor and fulfill projects. This articulation, which must be maintained by the international relations department, demonstrates an existing dependency with the municipality, which is dictated by the Resolution No. 0009-CNC-2011, that empowers the municipal GAD to plan, regulate, control and manage International Cooperation, strictly based on the Planning of both the mayor and the Central Government.

Currently, the Directorate of International Relations and Cooperation has two projects: 1) International Cooperation to establish international networks through protocol visits, agreements and obtaining technical assistance, and 2) "*Cuenca Intercultural*" which is a project related to the competition of the municipal GAD to promote the interculturality of Cuenca and is aimed to foreigners that live in the city, in order to

establish contacts with the various embassies and consulates, through the articulation of different foreign institutions and organizations (ibid.). However, the municipal GAD of Cuenca is focused on raising non-reimbursable funds for projects in accordance with the city's Development Plan and Land Management (PDOT).

In order to contact international cooperation agencies, it is necessary to know the types of International Cooperation that could be acquired for a greater benefit to the municipal GAD and its projects. As mentioned in the previous paragraph, the GAD of Cuenca uses technical assistance focused on fundraising and non-reimbursable financial assistance, which have been decreed by the Central Government since 2011 and are obtained from NGOs, Agencies of Cooperation like the French Development Agency, International Funds and Banks like CADVID (Multilateral organizations). There are several ways to make the first contact with the agencies, these are:

1. Writing letters or emails directly to agencies.
2. Through the visit of ambassadors, in order to make contacts and connections; either with the ambassador as an intermediary of any organization or with the embassy itself.
3. Taking advantage of the mayor's trips abroad to make the first contacts with the agencies.

It is also important to make visits to the headquarters of the agencies to strengthen relations between them and the municipal GAD.

The canton of Cuenca has benefited in a positive way by applying International Cooperation; without the opening of the city to international cooperation, there would be no technical assistance or good practices such as good solid waste, water and garbage management, which are positive experiences that have helped for the positioning and international management of the city. The benefit of the internationalization of Cuenca, lies in the strengthening of institutional capacities in areas such as heritage, culture, gender policy, mobility, environment and in the international field. To achieve this, it is important to know the priorities of the international community to have clarity in the cooperation offers that can be accessed to (Maldonado & Malo, 2019).

On the other hand, according to the technique, María Elisa Malo, most of opportunities and international agencies are established in Quito, where there is a greater offer and opening of projects, technical assistance, and financing. She also mentions that the problem is that the cities do not have a significant importance, the role of the local government (GAD) is not comparable to the national government at the international level but these local governments are the ones that face the problems of people and the possible solution. For this reason, it is important to consider the 2030 agenda or Sustainable Development agenda, which places the role of the city above the government because the majority of the population is in the cities and local authorities should have more importance for problem solving. This would also prevent the ministries from hoarding the funds for the State itself.

Due to the experience that the municipal GAD of Cuenca has had regarding International Cooperation, it could be said that the city is a great example of international management. Cuenca has participated with several international agencies and actors, mainly for exemplary projects such as those mentioned above (waste management, water management, etc.), and in general for its good practices, which have led the city to be internationally attractive and recognized by the UN, as an intermediate city (more than 100,000 inhabitants without reaching a million), for its balanced and sustainable system of government and for its social and cultural characteristics that provide a better quality of life, less conflict and a lower social cost (Ochoa, 2015). Also the GAD of Cuenca has gained greater importance internationally compared to other municipal GADs, which had helped the city to become a founding member of a Municipal Network (RICI) within the Association of Municipalities of Ecuador (AME), through which the GAD of Cuenca has been able to train other municipalities in the country with forums, workshops and congresses on issues of International Cooperation (Dirección de Relaciones Externas, 2019).

Finally, Ana Isabel Maldonado and Maria Elisa Malo, recommend to those municipalities that do not manage International Cooperation, that they should carry out an analysis of the institutional strengths and capacities of the GAD, with the purpose of acquiring cooperation of International Agencies and Actors. It is important that the

administration has a clear idea of the priority projects for the city, in order to focus the management of international cooperation with the guidelines of the PDOT and the POA of the municipality. They also mention that it is necessary to have political will, an adequate technical team prepared on the subject of international cooperation and financing, and the necessary investment in International Cooperation, not only monetary, but also by attending International Networks, which are programmed spaces to exchange experiences between cities and show the benefits and importance of International Cooperation as an alternative for financing and the development of projects.

2.6. Necessary elements to achieve a sustainable territorial development model in the GAD of canton of Azogues.

- A. Legal. - The GAD of Azogues needs a legal regulation where the mission, vision, and specific functions of the department of international cooperation are clearly established; the same that must result in an ordinance and a public policy that allows the continuity and progressiveness of the administration, and the execution of international cooperation. In addition, the actions and plans that the department executes must be in full harmony with the institutional and cantonal needs, allowing the GAD to comply with the national regulations regarding IC.
- B. Financial. – The GAD must provide security and financial freedom to the department of external cooperation to ensure its proper functioning and autonomy, allowing it to meet the objectives set by the municipal administration. It is necessary to create an exclusive budget item for this dependency.
- C. Human Talent. – The GAD must be equipped with technical and specialized personnel in the field of international relations and cooperation, who contribute to the efficient and effective management of the department.
- D. Transversality. - 1) Inside the GAD, the different municipal departments must articulate their actions with the department of external cooperation to facilitate

joint work, allowing the greatest number of projects generated within the institution to have the opportunity to access the wide variety of resources offered through the CI; 2) Outside the GAD, it is important to articulate initiatives and projects with institutions and companies in the public sector, as well as with NGOs and international organizations that are in Ecuadorian territory and also with civil society agents.

- E. Political Will. - It is important that the authorities on duty (mayor and councilors) understand and appreciate the importance of the CI, since its proper management can translate into a series of opportunities, which so far have been non-existent for the canton, and can contribute to improve the quality of life in the city and ensure its proper internationalization.
- F. Transparency. - It is a vital element when executing the international cooperation function, guaranteeing the legal scrutiny and of the control institutions over the resources (in their different natures) that are obtained and executed.

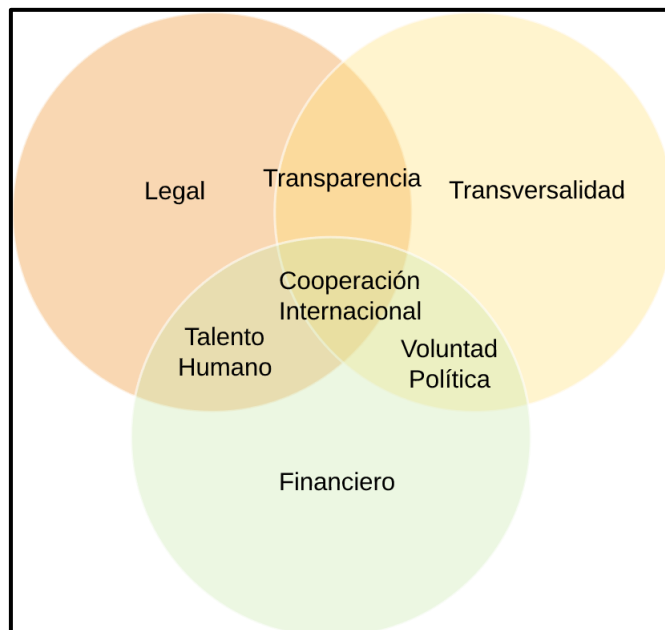


Figure 5 Elements for International Cooperation

CHAPTER 3: Proposal for the comprehensive management of International Cooperation in the Canton Azogues

3.1 Public Policy Model to regulate International Cooperation in the canton of Azogues

The participation of different actors for the construction of this model of public policy has been limited by the lack of organization within the public administration of the canton of Azogues, as well as the absence of civil society organizations interested in strengthening International Cooperation. However, the institutional needs of the GAD of Azogues have been considered, as well as the fundamental contribution of its public officials that are dedicated to managing international cooperation. Also, opinions and suggestions were collected from public officials of the international relations directorate of the GAD of Cuenca, which has been in full management of international cooperation for more than a decade.

The purpose of this public policy model is to introduce into the general debate the need to implement policies focus on the management of the CI and the internationalization of the city, within the framework of the Bicentennial Independence of Azogues, fostering the participation of civil society with the articulation of the public institutions present in the territory.

Furthermore, this model aims to be the precursor of the transvers inclusion of different actors in the construction of this public policy which, once consolidated, will represent an important tool to strengthen the institutional capacities of the GAD and the development of the canton.

3.1.1. Issue

In the canton of Azogues there is a deficient administration of international cooperation that has caused a delay in building relationships with actors involved in cooperation processes, which means a loss of opportunities for strengthening institutional and development capacities.

The projects and programs that have been executed through or with the help of the CI have not had a significant impact within the canton; in addition, there also has been an inadequate follow-up and feedback that does not allow constant evaluation in order to improve cooperation processes.

In the austral region of Ecuador there have been IC processes that have been successful, but are isolated and exclusive, preventing small cantons such as Azogues from participating proactively and receptively in these processes.

The administrative and budgetary limitations, as well as the null political will of the different authorities on duty, have made it impossible to implement and strategically manage the CI in the canton, causing this territory a serious delay when compared to processes carried out in Cuenca.

In addition to these limitations, there are no guiding principles or guidelines to manage the IC in the canton, which translates into a merely reactive participation, subject to the will of the decision-making actors of the public administration or subject to the agendas or priorities of certain institutions or organizations. Likewise, there is no inter-institutional articulation and coordination with the plurality of existing actors within the framework of IC.

Currently, there is an inadequate and limited approach to what IC means since its success is measured in the amount of money that could be received through cooperation processes. Also, within the Development Plans and Territorial Planning of the canton, which delimit actions to achieve development, IC has not been included in any way as a precursor tool for development opportunities.

These are the reasons why it is necessary to manage the IC within the canton, in a completely different way. It is important to give an alternative and strategic approach

to improve the IC and the implementation of projects and programs, as well as to generate better results; establishing the principles and guidelines linked to the needs and priorities of the canton. For this reason, the design of a public policy with an alternative approach to development for the canton of Azogues will allow the strengthening of the municipal GAD and other local actors, making it possible to manage IC with a multidisciplinary, transversal and integrative approach, with the ultimate goal of improving locality and the life of the inhabitants.

3.1.2. General objective

To guide the strategic management of international cooperation with an alternative development approach, that contributes to improve the institutional capacities of the municipal GAD in order to achieve *EL buen vivir* in the canton of Azogues.

3.1.3. Specific objectives

- Implement a clear articulation and coordination schemes within and outside the GAD, generate new agreements and strategic alliances with the different sectors and actors in the territory, and reinforce the management of the IC.
- Propitiate an adequate management document supported by the use of ICT to strengthen the institutional capacities of the GAD, as well as the compliance with the national legal regulatory framework.
- Encourage the focalization of activities based on the canton's priorities and needs established in the PDOT to efficiently allocate international resources and opportunities and achieve efficiency in the management of IC.

3.1.4. Principles and values

- Alignment. - With the strategies and axes established in the Nations Plans for *El buen vivir* (Development Plans) and the PDOTs, as well as with the national cooperators through different organizations.

- Results-oriented management. - It involves measuring in a technical and objective way the results obtained through IC focused on improving technical capabilities.
- Articulation. - With the different actors and sectors involved in the IC processes, in a coordinated way, and undertake actions that allow its proper management.
- Standardization. - Of procedures, coordination, and planning with a vision of work oriented to effectiveness and efficiency.
- Independence and autonomy. - Respect and strengthen of the role of the GAD as the coordinating entity for development in the territory, as well as the person in charge of technically establishing the canton's priorities and needs.
- Participation. - Public policy guarantees and promotion of the right of citizen participation for its construction, design, implementation, and evaluation.
- Transparency. - In relation to international cooperation processes, the use of resources, and the strengthening of the fight against corruption.
- Equity. - Generate a balance between the duties and responsibilities derived from the commitments acquired between the actors that are part of the cooperation processes.
- *Del Buen Vivir*. - Public policy will guarantee that the programs and actions around IC focus on sustainable development and the fulfillment of the rights of *El Buen Vivir* established in the constitution of Ecuador.

3.1.5. Relevance of public policy

Azogues is a canton located in the southern region of Ecuador, in one of the provinces that has been most affected by the different excluding economic processes promoted by national economic elites, such as the so-called *Feriado Bancario* of the year two thousand, which, added to a weakened organization of its public institutions has prevented the city from taking a different approach to development and problem-solving issues. In this sense, the construction of a public policy for the strategic and integral management of IC, focused on becoming an alternative tool to promote

development and institutional capacities, is more than pertinent, it can be said that it is necessary.

The following reasons are one more example of the relevance of this public policy:

- The construction of this public policy, as well as its evolution, presupposes a broad democratic and plural participation of various actors, national and international, from public and private entities, who contribute and become involved in the management of IC in the canton.
- The promotion of alliances at all levels and in a transversal manner with actors from the international community with a view to deepening local development processes.
- The construction of a long-term planned management that transcends the conjunctural scope will allow a projection of the territory and its institutions towards the international.
- Transparency in each of the stages of the construction of public policy, as well as in the derived actions or based on it, will be subject to public scrutiny.
- The participation of migrants constitutes a useful tool for attracting resources, disseminating projects, or internationalizing the city.

The relevance of this policy lies in each of the principles and values explained above, also in its long-term perspective and, above all, in its planning and continuous and constant action. In addition to seeking adequate CI management, it seeks to strengthen the institutional capacities of the canton GAD, which will allow the processes initiated by it to promote development to have a broader and more inclusive vision, as well as a local alternative approach.

3.1.6. Legal and regulatory framework

The legal and normative framework applied and considered for the construction of this model of public policy is found in the Constitution of Ecuador, and other normative body, which were analyzed in detail in the chapter two of this document. These ratify the exclusive competence of the GAD for the exercise of the competence of CI.

3.1.7. Conceptual framework

Before establishing a concept or definition of what a public policy is, it is necessary to analyze the two fundamental elements that make it up. The political element, related to decision-making, refers to the government at its different levels (in the case of this public policy, the GAD of Azogues), being the one that sets the agenda and carries out the actions and the implementing of the public policy. The second element is the public element, this refers to the collective construction of politics in which various actors are involved, in addition, it represents the common interests that are embodied in the objectives of the policy, after extensive debate and propositions from all parties involved (Torres-Melo & Santander, 2013).

Public policies focus on proposing actions to solve problems and provide responses focused on specific needs. In this matter, the government becomes an entity that coordinates and articulates collective action, it is no longer exclusively an executor of policies. This translates into a dynamic role, in which this political entity transits from decision-making, which would be a coercive and unilateral action to encourage debate, generate consensus and respect each one of the actor's visions about the PP, becoming a guide for the collective action (ibid).

It could be said that public policy is “a strategy which the government coordinates and articulates the behavior of the actors through a series of successive intentional actions, which represent the concrete implementation of decisions around one or more collective objectives, that are considered necessary or desirable insofar as they face socially relevant situations.” (Torres-Melo & Santander, 2013, pág. 56)

3.1.8. Involved actors

- Decentralized Autonomous Government of the canton of Azogues. It is the main political actor in setting the agenda and building public policy to manage international cooperation. The institution is the promoter of the collective creation of this policy; firstly, to strengthen its institutional and administrative capacities and thus be a coordinating entity for development in the territory.

- Cantonal Council. It is the political entity that makes the decisions in the GAD of Azogues. The democratic debate around public policy is essential and the contributions of the different councilors must reflect the interests of the citizens.
- Decentralized Autonomous Government of the Cañar Province. The importance of this provincial government entity lies in its powers in rural areas. It is essential that the Azogues GAD coordinate and articulate actions with this entity to give more synergistic responses in rural areas and avoid dispersed actions without major impact in the communities.
- Decentralized Autonomous Government of the Canton Cuenca. The approach of the GAD of Azogues with this institution is essential since it is a benchmark for international cooperation in southern Ecuador. The establishment of a new alliance between these government entities will allow a better application of IC in this area, as well as the main source of advice for the Azogues GAD.
- Association of Municipalities of Ecuador (AME). This network of Ecuadorian municipalities plays an interesting role in the management of IC in the territory, since it is an institution that articulates the processes of meetings with international organizations and agencies, through its Cooperation Offer Information System (SIOC).
- Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Human Mobility. Which is the governing body of the CI at the national level, its articulation with the municipality is important to maintain actions always in accordance with national legal guidelines.
- Municipal Social Action. It is an entity in territory that is in charge of carrying out actions for the benefit of citizens who are in a state of vulnerability, this is a key alliance when undertaking actions through the IC to provide solutions with the help of donors for different problems and existing needs.
- National University of Education and the Catholic University of Cuenca, Azogues headquarters. These actors must articulate the discussion of this public policy in the academy, generating a technical contribution and permanent support.
- NGO and CSO. This type of actors that are present in the territory and those who wish to intervene in the construction of this policy with their contribution are included in this public policy.

- Private sector. Any company or foundation in the private sector that carries out projects for the benefit of citizens and that have experiences in the international sphere are key when generating contributions for the development of this PP.
- Media. Key actors in the socialization stage of politics.

3.1.9. Focus

Public policy for the management of international cooperation must be aligned to: 1) The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs); 2) The National Plan for *El Buen Vivir*, and; 3) The objectives established in the Planning and Territorial Development Plan (PDOT) of the canton of Azogues. Meanwhile, actions oriented at strengthening institutional capacities and promoting territorial development implement resources that, in their different forms (non-reimbursable funds or technical assistance), come from international entities. Also, this is aimed at promoting actions, projects, and programs within the framework of sustainable development with alternative approaches within the territory.

This public policy must be constituted as a tool that allows solving problems and satisfying needs that in the canton of Azogues are related to the social and cultural uprooting caused by migration, environmental pollution, the weakness of its public institutions, public health, poverty, a marginalized rural sector, among others.

The public policy approach to the management of international cooperation, in addition to being a source for problem solving and capacity building, constitutes a space of local convergence, where an orderly and democratic process leads every stakeholder that is interested in IC, to contribute to the constant and permanent development of public policy, which will determine its adaptability and applicability in the future.

3.1.10. Strategic factors

Information and communication technologies for international cooperation (ICT). - The creation of a novel and practical system to facilitate the registration of cooperators and projects related to IC.

Participation in international cooperation networks. - Attendance or participation in spaces where cooperation and international relations are discussed, such as the RICII and other international level networks.

Adherence to standards in international cooperation processes. - Generated by other institutions with more experience.

Accountability. - Public and well-known data that position international cooperation as a tool for transparency and the fight against corruption.

Management of diverse sources of cooperation. - Funds from South-South, triangular and decentralized cooperation.

3.1.11. Components

- **Good government practices:** In order to turn international cooperation into an alternative tool for generating sustainable territorial development, focused on solving problems present in the locality; promote the democratic construction of public policies and the fight against corruption and transparency. Priority will be given to the strengthening of the technical institutional capacities that allow the municipality to carry out concrete actions to comply with the aforementioned, including actions in the territory with the participation of citizens.
- **Creation of strategic alliances:** It is essential that the Cantonal GAD becomes the articulating entity of new alliances, which can be public-private, with Civil Society Organizations, other government entities at different levels, with local institutions or organizations, regional and international; in order to add all their perspectives and contributions to public policy, making it inclusive and diverse.

- **Work focus:** Establish priorities and set objectives to guide the actions of the GAD with respect to international cooperation, while it is aligned with the different local and national development plans.
- **Promotion of a culture of cooperation:** The creation of a culture that promotes and preserves international cooperation over time, where actors and society in general are participants and can understand that an international cooperation policy aimed at solving problems is beneficial and can contribute to improve the quality of life of citizens

3.1.12. Viability

Political viability lies in the democratic achievements during the construction and implementation of this policy, avoiding unilateral changes due to changes in the situation, which supposes a long-term vision in its application. Regarding social viability, it includes the acceptance of different actors who are benefited by the solution to the different problems mentioned above.

3.1.13. Feasibility

The feasibility of public policy is closely related to the GAD's economic capacity and the availability of resources (financial, human talent, technical, etc.) that it allocates to the management of international cooperation. Public policy for international cooperation will be feasible as long as the actions have a long-term projection with articulated processes, avoiding isolated and counterproductive activities, prioritizing programmatic actions with a focus on results.

3.2. Model of Ordinance to regulate International Cooperation in the Canton Azogues

MODEL ORDINANCE TO REGULATE INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION IN THE AZOGUES CANTON

MOTIVATION

The National Competence Council, through Resolution No. 0009-CNC-2011, resolved to transfer to the Decentralized Autonomous Governments (GADs) the competence to manage international cooperation to obtain non-redeemable resources and technical assistance for the fulfillment of their competences. Ergo, the international cooperation competence is exclusive to the GADs.

Therefore, it is mandatory that this Ordinance be implemented in the Decentralized Autonomous Government as a tool to regulate international relations and the management of non-reimbursable international financial cooperation and technical assistance, in order to meet institutional objectives and guarantee constitutional rights of Good Living.

THE DECENTRALIZED AUTONOMOUS GOVERNMENT OF THE AZOGUES CANTON

CONSIDERING:

That, the Constitution of the Republic of Ecuador in Art. 1; First paragraph establishes that: “Ecuador is a constitutional state of rights and social justice, democratic, sovereign, independent, unitary, intercultural, plurinational and secular. It is organized in the form of a republic and it is governed in a decentralized manner”.

That, article 238 of the Constitution of the Republic establishes that: “The decentralized autonomous governments shall enjoy political, administrative and

financial autonomy, and shall be governed by the principles of solidarity, subsidiarity, inter-territorial equity, integration and citizen participation (...)"

That the Art. 225 of the Constitution, in paragraph 4) infers that "legal entities created by legislative act of the decentralized autonomous governments for the provision of public services." Are organisms that belong to the public sector.

That, Article 264 *ibid*, in its number 14 establishes as exclusive competence of the Decentralized Autonomous Governments: "To manage international cooperation for the fulfillment of their competences".

That, Constitutional article 416 establishes that "Ecuador's relations with the international community will respond to the interests of the Ecuadorian people, to whom its managers and executors will report, and consequently"; In its number one, "it proclaims the independence and legal equality of the states, the peaceful coexistence and self-determination of the peoples, as well as cooperation, integration and solidarity".

That, article 423 *ibidem* establishes that: "Integration, especially with the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean, will be a strategic objective of the State ...".

That article 425, final paragraph of the Constitution of the Republic prescribes that: "The regulatory hierarchy shall consider, as appropriate, the principle of competition, especially the ownership of exclusive powers of decentralized autonomous governments";

That, the National Plan for Good Living 2017-2021 "All a Life" in its third axis establishes the decentralization of the State as a way of approaching the citizen; The last objective of this axis seeks to guarantee sovereignty and peace, and to strategically position the country in the region and the world.

That, the Organic Code of Territorial Organization, Autonomy and Decentralization defines as general principles of political, administrative and financial autonomy; Unity, Solidarity, Coordination and Co-responsibility, Subsidiarity, Complementarity, Inter-territorial Equity, Citizen Participation and Sustainability of Development.

That, the second subsection of article 5 of the ibidi law, “(...) Is expressed in the full exercise of the regulatory and executive powers over the competences of its responsibility, the powers that are concurrently assumed; the ability to issue territorial public policies (...)”.

That, Article 6 of the Organic Code of Territorial Organization, Autonomy and Decentralization recognizes the guarantee of autonomy by which no State function or foreign authority may interfere in the political, administrative and financial autonomy of decentralized autonomous governments, except that prescribed by the Constitution and the laws of the Republic.

That, Art. 55 ibid; literal n) determines: “To manage international cooperation for the fulfillment of its competences”.

That, in article 131 of the same legal body, establishes that: “The decentralized autonomous governments may manage the obtaining of resources from international cooperation and technical assistance for the fulfillment of their own competences within the framework of their national objectives, of their plans of development (...)”.

That, Article 15, second paragraph of the Organic Code of Planning and Public Finance, determines: “The decentralized autonomous governments shall formulate and execute local policies for the management of the territory within the scope of their competences, which will be incorporated into their plans. of development and territorial ordering and in the normative instruments that are dictated for the effect.”

That, the Organic Code of Planning and Public Finance, in its article 65 specifies that: “Non-refundable international cooperation is understood to be the mechanism by which the Republic of Ecuador grants, receives, transfers or exchanges resources, goods, services, capital, knowledge and / or technology, in order to contribute to or complement national initiatives to achieve planning objectives”.

Non-refundable international cooperation comes from external sources of a public and / or private nature of entities and organizations that carry out this type of activities (...)”.

That, Article 66 *ibidem* determines that the principles of international cooperation with the Republic of Ecuador are: "The sovereignty, independence, legal equality of the States, peaceful coexistence, self-determination of peoples, as well as integration, solidarity, transparency, equity and respect for human rights".

That, Article 68 of the same Act defines what the goal for international cooperation and states that: "The management of non-refundable international cooperation, exercised by the decentralized autonomous governments will be guided by national policies and its respective development and territorial plans".

That, the Organic Code of Planning and Public Finance in Article 69 states: "The approval of programs and projects of non-refundable international cooperation will be carried out according to the procedures for prioritization of public investment programs and projects, and It will be carried out by the National Secretariat for Planning and Development, with the exception of those received and executed by universities, polytechnic schools, decentralized autonomous governments and social security. In these cases, the programs and projects will be approved by the highest authorities of said entities, within the framework of the guidelines of the national policy for international cooperation.

Public sector entities, contemplated in the scope of this code, that execute actions, programs and projects with resources from non-refundable international cooperation, have an obligation to register them with the competent technical body.

The compulsory registration, for information purposes, of international cooperation actions, programs and projects executed by the public sector, will be carried out before the competent technical body. This body will be responsible for monitoring and evaluating non-reimbursable international cooperation and implementing the corresponding information system."

That the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness of March 2, 2005, establishes an international commitment to apply 5 principles in the exercise of international cooperation: Alignment, harmonization, appropriation, results-oriented management and mutual responsibility.

That, the National Competence Council, with Resolution No. 0009-CNC-2011, issued on September 29, 2011, resolved: “Transfer and implement the competence of international cooperation to obtain non-reimbursable resources and technical assistance for the fulfillment of its powers to the Decentralized Autonomous Governments (...)”

That, the competence of Management of International Cooperation transferred to the Municipal Autonomous Decentralized Governments, “consists of the collection of resources from non-reimbursable donations that do not constitute fiscal resources, for which reason the cost of the competition does not proceed, as it follows of the report of the constant Ministry of Finance in Official Letter No. MF-DM-2011-1365, of September 26, 2011, therefore being able to transfer it directly”.

In use of the legislative power provided for in article 240 of the Constitution of the Republic, article 7 and; literal a) of article 57 of the Organic Code of Territorial Organization, Autonomy and Decentralization; and, accepting what is determined in Article 322 of COOTAD, referring to legislative decisions, concomitant to article 60, literal d) of COOTAD, issues the following:

ORDINANCE FOR THE REGULATION OF INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION IN THE AZOGUES CANTON

TITLE I

General considerations

CHAPTER I

COMPETENCE, PURPOSE, SCOPE AND PRINCIPLES

Art. 1.- Competition. - The Decentralized Autonomous Government of the Canton Azogues is the competent public entity to regulate and manage international

cooperation in the Canton, aligned to the development and territorial planning plans (PDyOT), to national planning and framed in the State's foreign policy.

Art. 2.- Purpose. - Regulate the exercise of cooperation management in the Canton, for the fulfillment of its competences, through the establishment of mechanisms and strategies in order to guarantee the effectiveness and efficiency in the management of resources from international cooperation.

Art. 3.- Scope. - This legal body will be applied in the jurisdiction of the Decentralized Autonomous Government of thenAzogues Canton, which includes the legal entities created by normative act for the provision of public services, affiliated entities and cooperation organizations.

Art. 4.- Principles. - The principles that guide the management of this competence are: sovereignty, independence, legal equality of States, peaceful coexistence, self-determination of peoples, integration; and, articulation between the different levels of government.

In the same way, the following principles will be applied:

1.- Articulation: Donor countries must carry out coordinated actions with recipients to guarantee adequate resource management.

2.- Alignment: Recipients will adjust the collection of resources and aid from donor countries based on development strategies established in national and territorial plans (PDyOT).

3.- Standardization: Recipients will coordinate with each other, simplify their procedures and share information to avoid duplication and lack of coordination.

4- Results-oriented management: Recipients will focus cooperation on the results themselves, which will be measured through established evaluation frameworks.

5.- Mutual responsibilities: Donors and recipients must carry out mutual accountability regarding the results of development cooperation carried out in the cantonal jurisdiction.

6.- Autonomy: Donors will have complete autonomy, without violating the previous numeral, in the management of resources from international cooperation within the cantonal jurisdiction.

Additionally, the management of international cooperation must be framed in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the rights of Good Living established in the constitution of Ecuador.

TITLE II

Exercise of Competence

CHAPTER I

CRITERIA FOR THE MANAGEMENT OF INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION

Art. 5.- Criteria for the exercise of international cooperation management competence.

- This ordinance will be guided by the following criteria:

- a) **Complementarity and co-responsibility:** The management of international cooperation in the canton must complement the actions carried out by the State focused on local development processes. Your contribution must be aimed at improving the living conditions of citizens, to achieve Good Living.

- b) **Territorial articulation:** The Decentralized Autonomous Government of the Azogues canton must be the coordinating institution and rector of the development guidelines to which the management of international cooperation must focus, while promoting citizen participation.
- c) **Transparency:** Through citizen participation and accountability processes, transparency against corruption will be guaranteed.
- d) **Self-sufficiency:** The Decentralized Autonomous Government of the Azogues canton will try to make international cooperation a tool that strengthens institutional technical capacities and promotes sustainable local development based on economic, environmental, social and cultural self-sufficiency.
- e) **Harmonization:** The Decentralized Autonomous Government of the Azogues canton will promote the cohesion of actors to avoid isolated actions that disperse international cooperation in the territory, ensuring compliance with the Development Plan and Territorial Planning.
- f) **Strategic Vision:** The exercise of the competence of international cooperation will be oriented to the sustainability and continuity of the institutional and territorial processes in the medium and long term.

CHAPTER II

INSTITUTIONAL STRUCTURE

Art. 6.- Institutional Organization for the exercise of competition. - The Decentralized Autonomous Government of the Azogues canton, through its highest authority, in accordance with Article 60 literal i) of COOTAD, will create a Headquarters for External Cooperation, a unit that will have the respective financing.

The area will be in charge of the management of international cooperation and will mainstream the exercise of competition to all the dependencies of the GAD.

The area will plan, articulate and coordinate cooperation activities with the corresponding dependencies of the institution to:

- a)** Define institutional policies, strategic axes and decision-making to strengthen the management of international cooperation.
- b)** Contribute technically to the establishment of territorial priorities, which will be included in the programs and projects defined in the Development Plan and Territorial Planning or other sources, to be carried out with resources from international cooperation.
- c)** Search and identify offers and calls for international cooperation.
- d)** Generate a direct approach with international cooperation organizations of various kinds (bilateral, multilateral, NGO, decentralized, private).
- e)** Support in the negotiation and formalization of international cooperation instruments.
- f)** Establish agreements and technical assistance and training agreements for the institutional strengthening of competition management.
- g)** Coordinate the development of cooperation programs and projects.
- h)** Articulate with the different dependencies of the Decentralized Autonomous Government of the Canton Azogues to ensure compliance with international cooperation actions.
- i)** Preparation of strategic and operational planning for the management of international cooperation.
- j)** Carry out the monitoring and evaluation of international cooperation projects and programs under the conditions established between the GAD and the cooperating agency.
- k)** Create a database of international cooperation practice developed in the canton and promote the systematization of good practices in this area.

Likewise, the Decentralized Autonomous Government of the Canton Azogues, will have the power to execute actions in coordination with the central government, in the case of receiving humanitarian and emergency aid.

CHAPTER III

POWERS; LOCAL GOVERNMENT, PLANNING, REGULATION, CONTROL AND MANAGEMENT

Art. 7.- Faculties. - regulation, control and management of non-reimbursable international cooperation and technical assistance in the Canton Azogues

Art. 8.- Local Rectory. - The Decentralized Autonomous Government of the Azogues canton will promote the inclusion in the Plan of Development and Territorial Planning, the local public policy to regulate the International Cooperation in the Azogues Canton aligned to all the objectives of the plan.

Art. 9.- Planning. - The international cooperation management process will be carried out based on a technical study to identify needs, problems, capacities and development opportunities in the canton.

The technical study includes the identification of actors, resources and programs or projects executed in the territory, as well as the offer of existing international cooperation, which will be contemplated in the PD and OT.

In the framework of planning, the Decentralized Autonomous Government of the canton Azogues will promote:

- a) The identification of the supply and demand for international cooperation in the territory and at the national level, with the aim of organizing the management of competition towards compliance with the Development Plan and Territorial Planning.
- b) Internationalization strategies in order to strengthen traditional, South-South, decentralized, and horizontal cooperation relationships; as well as promoting the role of the Decentralized Autonomous Government of the Azogues canton as a provider of cooperation.

Art. 10.- Regulation.- Within the scope of its competences, the Decentralized Autonomous Government of the Azogues canton must issue local regulations, and incorporate within the Development Plan and Territorial Planning guidelines to regulate the management of international cooperation within its jurisdiction, which implies that of international cooperation agencies, private and civil society in the territory, in order to ensure correspondence with the territorial demands defined and prioritized in their respective development plans and territorial ordering, in compliance with the regulations and national politics.

Art. 11.- Control. - The Decentralized Autonomous Government of the canton of Azogues, will establish the following control mechanisms to ensure compliance with local and national regulations, in addition to proper management of competition in the territory:

- a) To monitor the programs and projects carried out with international cooperation resources from its beginning to its completion.
- b) Develop the respective control mechanisms in accordance with the regulatory instruments issued for the management of international cooperation.

Art. 12.- Management: - In the framework of the management of international cooperation, the Decentralized Autonomous Government of the Azogues canton must:

- a) Implement horizontal and vertical articulation mechanisms for the construction of plans and programs in order to promote the alignment and complementarity of international cooperation in the territory.
- b) Negotiate and sign agreements and instruments with international cooperation organizations.
- c) Execute internationalization strategies, in order to strengthen the position of the Decentralized Autonomous Government of the Azogues canton and the territory in local and international spaces, with the purpose of making municipal

management vis-à-vis the management of competition and generating strategic alliances that influence in territorial development.

- d) Generate a decentralized cooperation offer to influence the exchange of knowledge at the international level and promote cantonal development.
- e) Promote associativity as a management model through the formation of consortiums and associations, for the execution of programs and / or projects, in order to optimize resources.
- f) Promote inter-municipal cooperation as a mechanism for exchanging experiences to strengthen the exercise of international cooperation management competence.

CHAPTER IV

RESOURCES AND THE BUDGET

Art. 13.- Access to International Cooperation. - Pursuant to article 69 of the Organic Code of Planning and Public Finances “the programs and projects to be executed by means of international cooperation resources will be approved by the highest authority of the Decentralized Autonomous Government [of the Azogues canton]”, in accordance with the Land Development and Planning Plan and the corresponding regulations.

Art. 14.- Administration of Economic Resources. - The Decentralized Autonomous Government of the Azogues canton, through the Financial Directorate, will be responsible for the administration and management of the economic resources that correspond to the management of competition.

Art. 15.- Sources of Income. - They are economic resources for the exercise of competition:

- a) The income that comes from fees established by the municipal council by ordinance for the services it provides;

- b) The budgetary allocations made by the GAD to support activities in competition management;
- c) Donations and legacies made by national and foreign public or private institutions;
- d) Income derived from repayable or non-refundable credits;
- e) Those that by virtue of law or agreement are assigned; and,
- f) The resources provided in other laws and other sources of financing.

Art. 16.- Of the property of the Competition. - The equipment, vehicles, movable and immovable property, among others, acquired through the management of non-reimbursable international cooperation and technical assistance, as well as securities, budgetary allocations, transfers and donations from public organizations constitute the assets of the competition. national and international private companies acquired under the exercise of this competence.

TITLE III

CHAPTER I

TWINNING

Art. 19.- Twinning. - The Municipal Decentralized Autonomous Government will promote the status of twinning with decentralized governments of other countries of the world in the framework of international cooperation, in order to promote cooperation and integration programs and projects for the integral development of the canton and the benefit of its inhabitants, so as to guarantee the full exercise of their rights.

Art. 20.- Twinning Agreement. - The Municipal Decentralized Autonomous Government will enter into twinning agreements in order to make planning and management processes feasible, aimed at promoting integral, institutional, social,

economic, cultural, tourist, heritage, environmental, security and other responsibilities and functions of its territory.

Twinning will be carried out in accordance with its strategic vision, affinity with other territories, the need for integration and internationalization, respect for sovereignty and mutual benefit in the provision of public services.

CHAPTER II

INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION NETWORKS

Art. 21. International Cooperation Networks. - The Decentralized Autonomous Government of the Azogues canton will promote its entry into networks or networks of local governments, decentralized cooperation and issues of municipal interest, in order to:

- a) Strengthen the exchange of experiences in the area of international cooperation management of municipalities and benefit from this mutual exchange.
- b) Contribute with technical documents, created by the GAD, to collect data on International Cooperation.
- c) Promote the institution's internationalization process, within the framework of attending forums, meetings, and conventions aimed at dealing with issues of decentralized international cooperation.

CHAPTER III

OF THE PROTOCOL

Art. 22.- Protocol. - The Head of External Cooperation will be in charge of preparing a protocol manual for receiving international visits based on those that already exist in the Foreign Ministry.

The Head of External Cooperation will be in charge of coordinating and accompanying the different protocol visits made by: cooperators to the Azogues canton or the GAD authorities to agencies or donors.

Art. 23.- Interculturality. - the receptions must have elements that promote the interculturality and idiosyncrasy of the canton.

Art. 24.- Diplomacy. - Attached to equal treatment and International Relations to promote sovereignty and respect for the diversity of existing actors in the international community.

FINAL PROVISIONS

First. - This ordinance shall enter into force upon its promulgation in the Official Gazette, website, without prejudice to its publication in the Official Registry.

Second. - Send a copy of this legal instrument to the National Assembly, in accordance with the Organic Code of Territorial Organization, Autonomy and Decentralization; and, to the Association of Ecuadorian Municipalities.

Third. - Through this Ordinance and its entry into force, other existing ordinances or normative acts are automatically repealed for the exercise of the competence of International Cooperation.

3.3. Elaboration of the Proposal for the management of the International Cooperation for the GAD of the canton Azogues

In the framework of the construction of a proposal for the strategic management of international cooperation in the Azogues GAD, it is important to prioritize the role of the entity or agency responsible for executing this exclusive competence of the municipalities. In this case, the External Cooperation department was created within the normative framework of the GAD, however, it does not have a vision, mission or a roadmap that delimits its actions, the only reference to its powers or competencies are

established in the General Organic Statute of Processes of the GAD, where, in a very simple way, establishes a list of products that the department must elaborate.

With this background it is necessary to consolidate the structure, not only of the department itself but rather of the organization of the GAD as such. However, the relevance of the current hierarchy position that the Department has, must be recognized. It is located in the area destined for consulting advisory processes, within the planning direction; the last, is consequently directly connected to the legal area under the direction of the governing bodies such as the mayor's office and the municipal council.

The current structure would comply with the national regulations that is established by the close link of the management of international cooperation with the planning area, which must guarantee an adequate link between the strategic planning of the GAD and the IC as well as the operation of the different plans or projects that emanate from the headquarters.

Another important aspect is how practical the cooperation management is by being held within the planning direction, which means that the Department will be able to articulate its actions directly with the entity in charge of conducting GAD activities, this generates synergy in taking decisions and an adequate articulation of the objectives of the GAD with the activities that must be carried out by said Department. Likewise, it allows a multidisciplinary team to be integrated to guarantee the strategic management of the international cooperation.

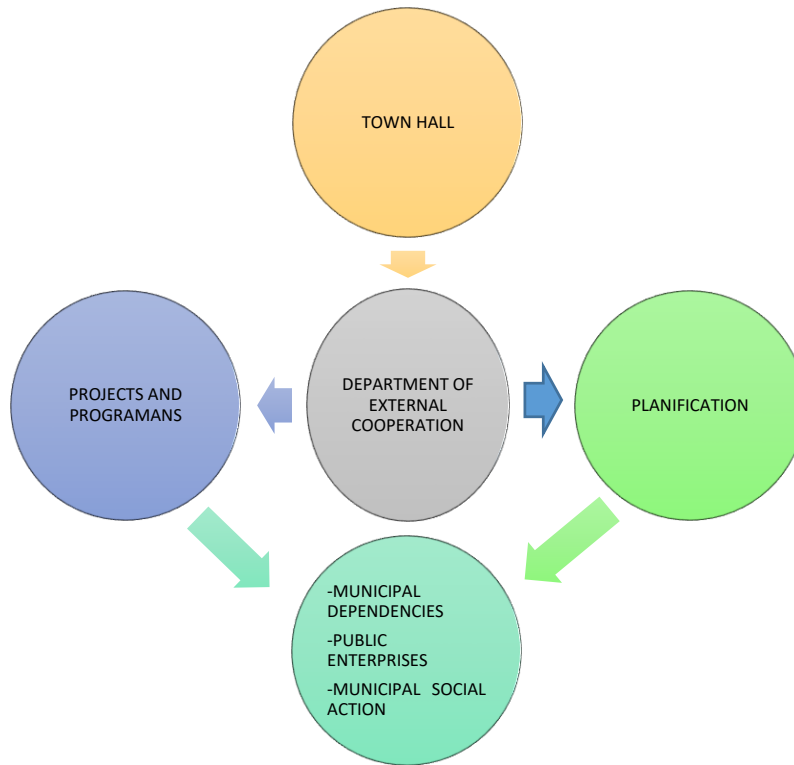


Figure 6 Relationship of the Department of External Cooperation with other dependencies of the GAD

The areas that the Department of External Cooperation must manage are: 1) International Cooperation; 2) International Relations and 3) Territorial linkage (national entities).

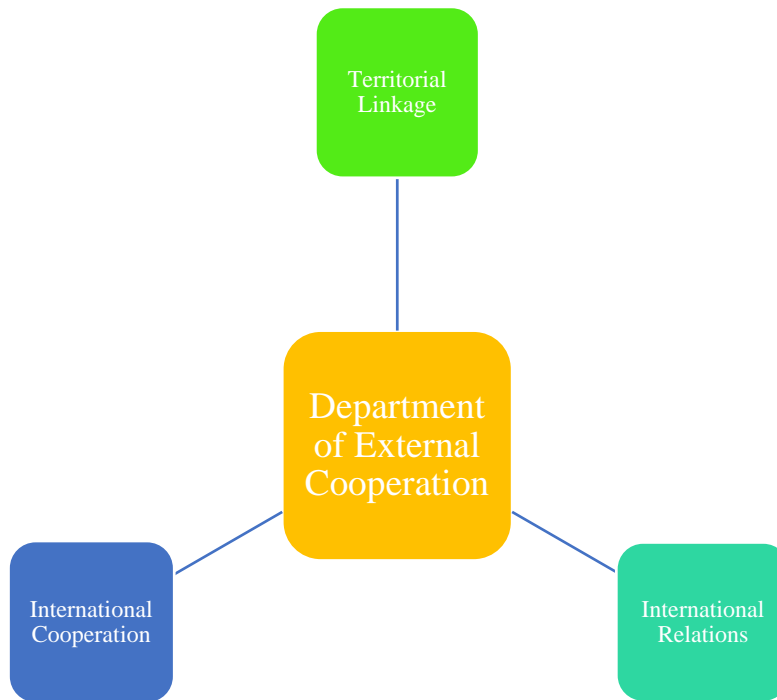


Figure 7 Management areas of the Head of External Cooperation

These three areas of action will allow the strengthening of cooperation in a comprehensive way, not only taking the IC as a source of resources but as a tool for exchanging local experiences that can save time and resources for the GAD in managing this competition. This reinforces the tripartite character of the Department.

3.3.1. Mission and Vision of the Department of International Cooperation

The mission and vision of the Department must be aligned to the mission and vision that the municipal GAD manages. In this sense, the elements must maintain the essence of the perspective that the GAD has for itself, both now and in the future, should be included.

Mission of the GAD of the Canton Azogues:

Promote the integral and sustained development of the Canton of Azogues. Promoting the adequate use of the territory in environmental, social, economic and cultural aspects, in a permanently updated and operational legal framework, which allows for

continuous improvement of the conditions of all urban and rural inhabitants, in terms of basic services, roads, health infrastructure, cultural and sports education, where the quality of life, order, respect and beautification of the city, are the reflection of a participatory administration that promotes development purposes.

Vision of the GAD of the Canton Azogues:

To be a municipality in permanent sustainable development, offering quality basic services, promoting local development at competitive levels, with strengthened socio-cultural relations and work, environmental and tourist awareness oriented to optimal living conditions, where the image of the city, its decoration, presentation and culture promote the identification and use of cantonal unity that makes concerted and equitable decisions for its permanent improvement.

In this sense, we can grant a mission and vision to the Head of External Cooperation:

Mission of the Head of International Cooperation:

To manage in an integral and strategic way the cooperation and international relations of the GAD of the Canton of Azogues with the various existing actors in the International community, likewise, promote the link of the GAD with different national or regional entities existing in the territory; helping to improve the municipality's capacities to meet the various local demands, and in turn promoting local development processes.

Vision of the Head of External Cooperation:

To be a municipal unit in constant development and innovation that allows generating an effective integration of the canton and the national and international context, strengthening ties with different municipalities in Ecuador and the world, allowing the generation of an internationalization process that translates into a reality in constant evolution.

3.3.2. Steps to access International Cooperation

To access International Cooperation, it is necessary to understand that the needs and elements, for a correct management and territorial development of the cantonal GAD of Azogues, must be harmonized with the proposals and projects of international organizations and allies, in order to carry out strategic alliances and strengthen the actions of the public administration in the locality. The following steps that are presented are subsequent to the establishment of the strategic actions of the Department, as well as the needs that the GAD seeks to solve with the help of international cooperation. These are:

- 1) **Creation of a database for the GAD's projects or programs:** This stage consists of gathering information that allows the Department to have up-to-date knowledge about the different activities carried out by the GAD to focus on the search for donors and calls. The following tab can be used for data collection:

REGISTRATION FORM FOR GAD's PORJECT				
Projects' name:				
Local governments department:				
Head of Department:		Phone number:		
		Email:		
PROJECT MANAGER				
Name:		Phone number:		
		Email:		
PROJECT OBJECTIVES				
General:				
Secifics:				
AREA OF INTEREST				
Agriculture	Environment		Infraestructura	
Emergenci aid	Employment		Lucha Antidrogas	
Comerce	Género		Resolución de Conflictos	
Culture	Gobernabilidad		Salud	
Human Rights	Industria		Sectores Productivos	
Other:				
Project summary:				

GENERAL DATA:			
Localization:		Duration:	
Urban		Starte date:	
Rural		Completion date:	
Observations:			

Source: made by authors

2) **Exploration:** It consists of a proactive research on international agencies, programs and organizations that provide opportunities for cooperation. For this stage, it is necessary to be clear about the needs, capacities and also, to know what is the offer of cooperation available through actions promoted by: the institution itself and the relationships that it has with NGOs in the field of decentralized cooperation; actions arising from the bilateral or multilateral offer; others channeled through national or regional centralized agencies and; through collaboration in networks of which the GAD is a part. This, under the responsibility and the strategic coordination of those in charge of the Department and the planning area (RACI, 2017). This stage will feature:

- g) The establishment of a registry of agencies and / or cooperators with which the municipality can establish contact directly or through a government entity.

COOPERANT REGISTRATION FORM			
TYPE OF ORGANIZATION			
NGO	Business Foundation	Religious Organization	
Civil Society Organization	Volunteering	Others	
SOURCE OF RESOURCES			
Public (centralized)	Public (descentralized)	Privates (Company)	
Private (fundation)	Privates (Individual)	Mixed	
Others:			
Main cofinanciers:			
GENERAL DATA			

Country of Origin:			
Background:			
Objective:			
THEMATIC AREAS OF INTEREST			
Agriculture	Education	Infraestructure	
Emergency aid	Employement	Fight against drugs	
Cience and Technology		Enviroment	
Comerce	Gender	Conflic Resolution	
Culture	Gobenability	Health	
Human Rights	Industry	Productive Sectors	
other:			
TARGET POPULATION			
Institutions	Displaced/Refugees	Peasant Population	
Priority Care Groups	Ethnic Minorities	Women	
Social Organizations	Victims of violence	Low-income Population	
Otros:			
TYPE OF COOPERATION			
Financial Cooperation	Technical Cooperation	Humanitarian and emergency aid	
Cultural Cooperation	Horizontal Cooperation CTD	Decentralized Cooperation	
		Scholarships or Grants	
CONTACT DETAILS OF THE HEADQUARTERS ABROAD			
Director:		Phone Number:	
Address:		Email:	
City:		Web page:	
CONTACT INFORMATION OF THE HEADQUARTERS IN ECUADOR			
Director:		Phone Number:	
Address:		Email:	
City:		Web page:	

* Or nearest office outside Ecuadorian territory

Source: Made by Authors

- h) Elaboration of a table that organizes, in a chronological way, the different calls or projects of the different cooperators that exists in the aforementioned registry (RACI, 2017).

Model:

COOPERATING AGENCY/ORGANISM	TYPE OF COOPERATION	APPLICATION TIME	REQUIREMENTS
French Agency CADVID	Technical Assistance	May 10 to 12	The presentation of a project that includes the SDGs
Charity Anywhere Foundation	Financial Assistance	January 1 to 8	Presentation of a Project to support the health sector
OAS Award (SCHOLARSHIPS)	Contests	February 20 to 25	Be a citizen or permanent resident of an OAS member country

Recommendations:

- Ensure geographic eligibility as well as subject matter, depending on the goals and objectives.
- Distinguish the type of beneficiary.
- Identify the Counterparty and Counterpart.
- Consider the specific requirements of each beneficiary (ibid).

i) At the moment of having the complete information of the table, the options should be socialized with the government in charge (Work Plan) and the benefited dependencies to adjust the objectives and needs with the projects and proposals given by the international agencies or organisms . Once this is done, the final list of projects for which cooperation will be requested will be obtained, and, in addition, potential cooperators will be included.

j) Establishment of the definitive calendar that allows compliance with the times proposed by the cooperators on their application forms.

Example:

	January	February	March	April	May	June
Open Convocatory			Freedom House			
Technical Assistance					French Agency CADVID	

Financial Assistance	Charity Anywhere Foundation			Funds Valencia		Japanese Embassy
Contests		OAS Award (SCHOLARSHIPS)				

3) Evaluation for the formulation of the project: This stage consists in an analysis of the capacity and strengths of the Department and / or GAD of the canton of Azogues for the fulfillment of objectives. By having this, the GAD or Department will be able to identify weaknesses and improve the performance and distribution of resources for future decision-making, in terms of project development. This stage should consider Institutional Planning, where the activities that are desired to be carried out in the short or long term are scheduled for the completion and the allocation of necessary resources for the execution and development of the activity or project (RACI, 2017).

3.3.3. Basic requirements and logic of project formulation

Once the agents and cooperating organizations have been filtered and selected for its application, the GAD or the Department will contact them. The contact can be:

- Writing to agencies directly through letters or emails.
- Through visits of the ambassadors to the city, where the spaces and meetings should be used to make connections, either with the ambassador as an intermediary or with the embassy itself, and;
- Talking advantage of the trips made by the mayor abroad, to make the first contact with the agencies (Ana Isabel Maldonado; María Elisa Malo, personal communication, October 2, 2019).

When making the consultation letter or craft, the interest and all the appropriate information must be expressed so that the cooperator gets to know the goals and capacities of the Department.

Recommendations:

- Comply with the formalities requested, which is, understand the guidelines of the convocation, respect its requirements (font size, font, margins, etc.), as well as the modality and delivery date suggested by it.
- Carry out a search in advance on the proposal, its project management requirements and on the beneficiary or donor itself (know their priorities and interests);
- At the time of writing, transmit the project idea as accurately as possible so that the donor acquires interest and does not generate doubts in it (RACI, 2017).

Once the entity has the first contact with the donor, it is important to make visits to the agencies' headquarters, which are generally located in Quito, in order to strengthen relations between these agencies and the cantonal GAD of Azogues and its Department. Also, the administration must have a clear idea of the priority or emblematic projects to have a focused international cooperation management, based on PDOT and POA guidelines (Ana Isabel Maldonado; María Elisa Malo, personal communication, October 2, 2019).

When sending the request or project proposal to the cooperating agency or body, and, depending on whether it is accepted, the following scenarios may occur:

- Acceptance of the project:** the cooperating entity accepts the project without any change that compromises the integrity of the proposal, that is, it would give way to its implementation.
- Reformulation of the project:** the cooperating entity requests modifications in the objectives of the project or the inclusion of new approaches such as a gender approach. These changes may mean that the donor is willing to provide a different type of assistance than that requested by the GAD.
- Generate a different project:** the project sent by the GAD is not accepted, but the cooperating entity shows its willingness to support different projects, for which, the GAD must prepare a new project that meets the proposed strategic objectives by the Department. (Asociación de Municipalidades Ecuatorianas , 2015)

Formulation of the project or program based on the terms established between the cooperating entity and the Department of International Cooperation of the municipal GAD of Azogues.

Once the terms have been negotiated between the Department and the cooperating entity, the definitive project will be formulated, which may be based on the format provided by the General Secretariat for Planning and Development (in its initials in Spanish SENPLADES) (appendix #3); or the format requested by the donor.

when signed the agreement with the cooperating entity, the responsibility for the execution of the project would fall on the management that originated it. The role of the Department would be to monitor and ensure an adequate communication between the cooperator and the project executor.

Implementation and monitoring: this stage consists on carrying out the project itself. The implementation plan and the use of resources are given as said in the agreement. The monitoring and follow-up of the quantitative and qualitative indicators that consider the progress of the fulfillment of the project goals is essential. It is also important to have a qualified team that works through a monitoring and evaluation plan, which specifies the aspects to be evaluated, when it will be carried out and who will intervene. To facilitate this stage, it is very important to take into account all the risk indicators, the production or product processes, the schedule of activities, the budget of each activities, and also the respective follow-up for the work team in order to achieve tasks (ACI, 2012).

The product of this stage will be periodic reports on the status and progress of the project, demonstrating compliance with goals, risks, time delays, lack of resources, and others, which will serve to create alternatives and take measures to continue with the correct development and implementation of the chosen project.

Some of these measures or alternatives may be: 1) corrective actions to return the project to its original planning course; 2) feedback, which implies greater changes that must be agreed between all the actors involved; and, 3) the last alternative that can be

taken, is the cancellation of the project, which implies the return of the support funds with the respective sanctions, this is an extreme case, which is avoidable if a good follow-up of the project is carried out (ibid).

Evaluation of Results: this last stage consists of evaluating the project, both in the middle of its progress, and at the moment of finalizing it, respecting what has been agreed with allies and donors. This process is carried out between the team that executes the project activities and, their performance and effectiveness in meeting the goals and objectives. Also, external audits may be required depending on the agreement made with the donor, these can be carried out during and at the end of the donor's intervention (ACI, 2012).

This stage concludes with a final report and the closure of the project. The report must have specific and quality criteria expected by the donor and allies. The results will be transparent, and these will have to demonstrate how the expected results were achieved and how the unintended ones were dealt with. Also, it is necessary to present a complete summary of the use and destination of each resource implemented in the project, with their respective sources of financial verification. This aims to systematically and objectively demonstrate the completion of the project, to generate knowledge and implement it in the entity's future projects (ibidem).

Files: It is important to generate a database with the projects and the positive and negative experiences that can be rescued, to improve the criteria of effectiveness, efficiency, relevance, sustainability and impact for future interventions and projects.

This aims to generate a systematization of experience to manage knowledge and learning. In this way, there will be the necessary information to be used in new initiatives focused in good practices and simplify processes to avoid mistakes (ACI, 2012).

Finally, it is important to consider reciprocity and accountability regarding all that were involved in the project; they must have a clear idea of how the resources were invested, demonstrated through the results achieved. This allows the entity or Department to acquire investment sustainability and legitimacy regarding the execution of projects

(ibid). This is in accordance with the transparency element that was included for the strategic management of the cooperation.

3.3.4. Basic recommendations for the elaboration of a project

For the GAD:

- **Provide a well-established hierarchical structure:** The most appropriate way to contact people from other organizations is determined. Diplomatic rules regarding the hierarchy of each organization must be respected.
- **Human Talent:** Promote the entailment of highly trained and technical staff in the GAD.
- **Institutional image:** This must be different from the image or logo of the tourist promotion of the city. It should reflect seriousness and confidence.
- **Technological facilities:** This is related to providing the institution with a telephone, email and address strictly related to the Department of External Cooperation.
- Improve the control and audit processes.

For the proposal:

- Focus on projects aligned to local development processes that solve problems and respond to a programmatic organization with a long-term vision
- Implementation of a standardized model for the presentation of projects.
- Seek the correct financing of the project with the resources coming from international cooperation and its respective counterpart from the municipal GAD.
- Clear identification of the recipients of the projects or activities.
- Respect the principle of results-oriented management; the methodology for measuring results must be clearly established and may be qualitative or quantitative.

- Elaboration of timetables that allows certain modifications and the application of contingencies to overcome setbacks and avoid jeopardizing the completion of the project.
- Plan the way in which accountability and the use of funds will be carried out to ensure transparency.
- Have adequate legal advice to avoid non-compliance with national regulations regarding the management of resources from international cooperation.
- Ensure the hiring of an adequate contingent of human talent depending on the project, which at the same time fully involves the municipal GAD and its dependencies.

CONCLUSIONS

In the first chapter of this research work, the realistic theory was contrasted with the liberal theory, where it could be established that only in the second one could International Cooperation be conceived as a possibility. This is because in liberalism the contribution and relationship between States is diverse and includes other actors in the international community; while in realism the zero-sum game prevails.

Another fundamental difference between the two theories is the conception of societies and states; in realism, there is a kind of search for power and the supremacy of one over the other; in this scenario, international cooperation would only serve as an instrument of domination and submission. On the other hand, in liberalism, societies and states are willing to cooperate to achieve objectives and promote development, due to the more open nature of the interaction between various actors.

Although international cooperation could be presented more favorably within liberal theory, its limitations and risks for developing countries must be determined. Because certain countries, through international cooperation, under the pretext of promoting development, seek to replicate economic models that, for various reasons, realities, etc. they cannot be applied in the same way.

This research work adheres to the following postulates of liberal theory: the positive vision of human nature and the relationship between actors in the international community based on a non zero sum game (win-win relationship). Furthermore, after having carried out a theoretical review on the different modalities of international cooperation, it has been determined that the management model of international cooperation for the GAD of the canton of Azogues should be based on decentralized, horizontal and non-traditional cooperation.

In this framework, decentralized cooperation will allow the GAD not only the full exercise of its powers, but also autonomy and independence in accessing the different types of cooperation available that are adapted to the needs of the territory; allowing a

leading role for the GAD by excluding intermediaries in the search for sources of cooperation such as the central State or international or multilateral organizations.

The management of the decentralized cooperation of the GAD of Azogues must be linked to sustainable local development and localization processes, contributing to improving the well-being of the citizens of this territory. This is based on the closeness that local governments maintain with citizens, thus represented, the main action front when identifying the needs of the population and determining the appropriate solutions to satisfy them.

This management will seek to prioritize local development processes, without neglecting those models that have been effective in other latitudes; this, through a localization process that allows them to be adapted to the specificities of the canton. It is also important to have national references regarding the management of projects derived from international cooperation; in order to replicate virtuous processes and to avoid mistakes that have been made previously.

Additionally, the need for a territorial model for local sustainable development that is closely linked with the objectives of sustainable development (SDGs), the national development plan "All Life" and Good Living is raised. This will guarantee the full enjoyment of the fundamental rights that every human being needs to achieve a full life.

In the second chapter, an analysis of the national legal framework was carried out, from the constitutional level, through organic laws and codes to the local level with the ordinance that regulates international cooperation in the province of Cañar. With the purpose of legally supporting the exercise of the international cooperation competence by the GADs, constituting a basis for any type of action aimed at attracting international cooperation.

In this context, the diagnosis made at the Azogues canton and its municipal GAD yielded some important data: 1) it is made up mostly of rural parishes, being 8, where 51.69% of the population lives, in contrast to the 4 urban parishes; 2) the illiteracy rate is higher in women, reaching 10.6%, compared to 8.19% in men: 3) it is a canton that

has been hit hard by a migratory phenomenon started in 2001, which produced the exodus of a 5.63% of the population. These data allow us to know the demographic distribution, highlighting certain specific social patterns.

Regarding the economic aspect of the canton, it is mainly dedicated to the sector of legal, financial and hospitality-related services; The second activity with the greatest impact is commercial activity, which includes the sale of basic products to processed products; As a third productive activity is the manufacturing industry that encompasses textile production, the manufacture of metal products for structural use and the cement industry. Helping us to identify how the lives of citizens revolve around different economic activities.

Another fundamental aspect was the diagnosis to the Decentralized Autonomous Government of the canton of Azogues, and specifically to the Head of External Cooperation. Certain deficiencies were identified in relation to project management and international cooperation, generated by the lack of a strategic vision of IC management. Little political will was identified, as well as the absence of a legal framework within the GAD that makes the existence of the Headquarters viable, and a poor documentary management of the projects.

In this way, the GAD has managed international cooperation with isolated projects of limited results, without a budget for the exercise of competition and without being included in the PDyOT. This shows certain weaknesses at the institutional level of the GAD and of the management carried out, for which the strengthening of the following elements has been determined for an adequate management of international cooperation: the legal, financial, human talent element, transversality, political will and transparency.

In the third and last chapter, a model of public policy and ordinance was developed that allows the regulation of the exercise of IC competence by the cantonal GAD of Azogues; in addition to establishing itself as the legal basis that will allow a lasting and sustained management over time, giving the canton Azogues alternative tools to promote development processes.

Regarding public policy, after having identified the problem related to IC management mentioned above, a series of guidelines, principles, values and guiding objectives are proposed to guide the dynamic construction with constant contributions from citizens to this. It is important to highlight its articulating and inclusive nature, establishing citizen participation and transparency as the central axis, making it a tool in constant feedback, thanks to the formation of multidisciplinary teams; thus allowing it to remain valid and maximize the results of its application.

In the same way that a strategic management of the CI needs a dynamic public policy in constant evolution, a legal document is also necessary to make the operational and operational part of the Head of External Cooperation viable. For this reason, an ordinance model was designed for the regulation of international cooperation in the Azogues canton; same document that establishes the competence, purpose, scope and principles that govern IC in the territory, apart from granting specific functions and an institutional structure to the Headquarters. In other words, this model gives legal life to the agency in charge of exercising the aforementioned competence.

The chapter concludes with the preparation of the proposal for the management of international cooperation for the GAD of the Azogues canton. The same that begins by establishing the relationship of the Head of External Cooperation with the other municipal agencies in charge of planning and decision-making, becoming an articulating and advisory body, making possible the generation of projects aimed at promoting the well-being of citizens. It was also determined that the areas of action of the headquarters, which are cooperation and international relations and territorial linkage.

This proposal also has a series of files and forms intended to facilitate the collection and management of information on projects managed by the headquarters, in the same way it provides a series of steps necessary for the proper approach to the sources of international cooperation. In this way, the proposal not only provides theoretical resources, but also practical elements necessary for the strategic exercise of this competence.

To conclude, it is correct to affirm that this research work constitutes a fundamental tool for the management of international cooperation in the Azogues canton, which broadens its application in this field, for which it establishes management guidelines that can be replicated by other institutions. or other municipal dependencies, thus generating an institutional strength that until now did not exist in the Azogues canton. This confirms the ultimate goal of this research work, to contribute to the local and alternative development processes generated in the Azogues canton and focused on achieving Good Living.

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Appendix

Appendix 1. Interview with Dr. Diana Barzallo responsible for the Head of External Cooperation of the municipal GAD of Azogues

- What are the specific functions performed by the Head of External Cooperation?

This headquarters was created approximately in 2014, in compliance with the exclusive competence of the decentralized autonomous governments, such as the municipalities, which assume the competence of management of international cooperation, to try to obtain new resources to fulfill the objectives of the municipalities. As for the organic, it is a headquarters created administratively, but not financially.

It is important to mention that the headquarters does not have a budget item, so there is no position of leadership, therefore, I am in charge of it, with my own name and a salary with scale 4 on the scale of public service.

Since the creation of the headquarters, there has been no strengthening of this or the support of technicians or professional personnel specialized in the subject of cooperation management, due to the budgetary impediment that exists within the leadership, and also, because the administrations think that This dependency only serves to capture resources and not to generate current expenditure.

The functions and objectives of the profile of the position are established by COOTAD and the Constitution, which determine that this unit is in charge of: 1) Tracing sources of international cooperation in all its forms, to harmonize them with institutional interests. 2) Coordinate and contact national organizations such as ministries, undersecretaries, etc. With whom we have inter-institutional cooperation agreements, for example: CELEC EP. It is an important ally for which, through them, it has been possible to manage resources and carry out significant projects due to its social / environmental component. It has also been possible to have cooperation of the same type with SENAGUA with whom we have worked on reforestation projects, studies of hydrographic basins, etc. And 3) acquisition of training, scholarships, internships through technical support from international cooperation and links with other levels of government.

Unfortunately, the need for adequate structuralization and financing of the leadership is not visible. The task of national and international cooperation has been gradually learned, and when these fields were opened, it has been seen that, currently, the existence of a specialized technician is necessary for the support of the leadership, so that resources can be captured of international cooperation through calls, competitions, and have the necessary time to search and prepare projects for existing sources of cooperation. More than political will, the leadership needs strengthening, which has not been due to the budgetary restrictions of small municipalities like Azogues. The expansion of the personnel is necessary so that not only one person is in charge of raising funds, assembling the project, presenting it, managing it and executing it. It could be said that this derives from the lack of transversality between the other dependencies with the headquarters.

Another challenge in the area of cooperation is that municipal GADs, such as the municipality of Azogues, have a great demand for specific topics, such as the renovation of the vehicle fleet for the collection of solid waste, but there is no cooperating entity that donates collectors; The municipality also needs the construction of a new street, but except for what is a public-private alliance that is a little difficult to attract for projects of less than 5 million dollars, there is no cooperative willing to finance the municipality for construction of this type. infrastructure. For this reason, it is of utmost importance to see the direction and approaches of international cooperation for Ecuador, which, for the most part, are about technical support, training and internships, but there is not a large amount for the issue of fundraising. Non-reimbursable, and if they exist, they are for specific projects of interest to the cooperation that do not necessarily match those of the immediate needs and objectives of the municipal GAD of Azogues.

Finally, the competition you have is not only to raise resources, but is the total regulation of actions with international funds, so the Municipality should act as a regulatory body, coordinator and coordinator for raising the resources of the different foundations, existing agencies or NGOs, and thus be able to carry out projects that are in harmony with the Territorial Development Plan.

How is the first contact with the agencies and how are the projects handled for the first time? What is the way in which the CI office articulates with the rest of the municipal agencies for execution, presentation, monitoring of projects?

The AME has a national office that sends calls with some frequency, but there are not always projects related to the needs of the leadership, so it is considered as a relative support of these calls. For this reason, the projects that have been carried out have been outside this line or network RISI and AME, rather they have been very particular individual or institutional searches of the municipality of Azogues, such as: a database is carried out with the foreign ministry that It is located within the Ministry of Foreign Relations, where a relatively up-to-date platform is maintained that is used to search for links and proposals for projects and international agents depending on the provinces where they work and the objectives that they could meet and be useful for the development of the country. and from the municipal GAD, after this search, letters and contacts began to be sent, such as the contact created with Charity Anywhere, with whom the project to carry out medical brigades for people in vulnerable conditions in rural areas was carried out, and a donation of \$ 300,000 was also made. Another project that was carried out through the AME was with Funds Valencia, which is a Spanish foundation expert in community tourism issues, which provided technical assistance for the training and evaluation of the management of this type of tourism for 15 days in Azogues. Freedom House, urgent aid resources the municipality coordinated with the Azogues Gender Advisory Council to promote gender equality in the province. For the organizational strengthening of 8,000 women. There has also been contact with the embassy of Japan, to provide technical assistance, but no project could be agreed because you did not have a counterpart to present to the embassy due to lack of financing.

- Regarding the autonomy of the Headquarters, do you have to request prior authorization from the planning director to send the projects to the mayor's office? Or are you free to carry out projects and communicate directly with the mayor?

Yes, you have autonomy in the headquarters where all the mayors on duty have given the green light to make contact with the agents and cooperation, you never have to go

through a filter of management or any other instance. The contact maintained by this department is directly with the mayor's office, obviously it is necessary to inform the director for hierarchical reasons, but to send the projects, the mayor is consulted for its authorization and execution.

In which areas has the municipal GAD benefited through international cooperation?

All the foundations and NGOs present, which are small, have been summoned, and this could be considered as a weakness of Azogues compared to municipal GADs such as Cuenca, which has great potential due to the presence of a large number of foundations that capture international resources. Azogues currently has 4 foundations that attract very specific resources for projects on environmental issues, issues that are dealt with by the judiciary, such as gender violence and agroecologist activities, but its headquarters are in Cuenca.

- How feasible is a GAD to handle international cooperation, what are the pros and cons of managing IC directly?

There are several issues in favor, such as the fact of having several sources that can be accessed to obtain funds directly, contrary to how it started with the competition, where the existing regulations put the CT as a certifying body that worked as a project database and acted with great control and rigor with respect to NGOs. Nowadays there is more freedom and because of this the experience of the GAD of Azogues has had a positive experience, it can be freely and directly accessed if the cooperators have the willingness to make a presence in Azogues and they do not have to respond to any another instance. However, it should be mentioned that decentralized cooperation does not always work with local governments, it works primarily with Civil Society organizations that have a link with cooperating countries, to cite an example, Spanish cooperation only works through foundations o Spanish NGOs and these NGOs hardly ever work directly with governments, but rather with civil society organizations.

Another difficulty that occurs in the municipality is that much of the international cooperation does not come directly to local governments, that is, there are well-established limitations in the calls and the municipality is forced to search for Civil

Society organizations that want to participate in these, that, in many of the cases, said organizations do not have the structure, the sufficient experience, or the financial support that is necessary to participate. However, the strengthening of organizations and foundations that already exist to work through them and the strengthening of this relationship between management and existing organizations has been raised.

Also, if the necessary budget were available, it would be feasible for Azogues to participate in international cooperation networks. This issue is one of the ones that should be worked on the most in the GAD, if it were to have the budget lines to pay the memberships of these international networks. The GAD works with UIM (Iberoamerican Municipalist Union), which is the strongest for the Municipality and with which it works the most to receive calls, internships and international visits in Spain that are intended for mayors and councilors.

- Is there a possibility for the municipality to better and better articulate projects with the provincial GAD regarding international cooperation to meet the needs of the rural sector?

That totally depends on the political relationship between mayor and prefect. Sometimes there are "basic" relationships that do not allow smooth coordination due to the fact that there is a political bias. There have been no approaches to these projects, but it is interesting in that both mayors and prefects get some call for urban interest and the management gets one for rural interest, this possibility could exist, especially with the current administration. An agreement should be envisaged that would hold both the chief and the international cooperation department of the canton accountable.

- According to your professional experience, what are the elements or characteristics necessary to have an effective and adequate IC to the needs of the territory?

There has been support in the projects that have come out from the administration, however; It is necessary to propose an ordinance that regulates the structure, the financing and that reaffirms each one of the competences and attributions that the

leadership has, apart from the support and the need that it has with respect to human talent. It is also necessary to raise awareness among the first authority, which proposes the projects and ordinance; and, of the municipal council and of the councilmen, who are those who approve the ordinance, so that it is understood that the resources that can be assigned to the leadership are to improve the opportunity of Azogues to go out into the world and in a certain way to promote itself in the internationalization of the city in order to benefit from globalization. A strengthening of the structure is needed based on a clear, well-developed regulation that makes this need to strengthen the structure well visible so that the functions are also well specified and, in turn, a budgetary item and a counterpart fund that allows expanding the ability in international cooperation to be members of international platforms and networks, strengthen the diplomatic and protocol part to improve the recruitment of cooperators. This ordinance must speak about the duality between international relations, international cooperation and the municipality's own relationship with other national entities that attract resources, which would function as the articulating axis.

Appendix 2. Interview with Ana Isabel Maldonado and Maria Elisa Malo International Relations and Cooperation techniques from the municipal GAD of Cuenca.

- Since when does Cuenca have an institutionalized management of international cooperation?

Since 1999 there was an office in charge of International Relations, but it had only one official who played a more formal role in the framework of declaring Cuenca as international heritage. In 2011, the office was established as a direction, with a real focus on cooperation and international relations.

- What are the specific functions performed by the International Relations department?

The directorate is in charge of joining the city's international networks, cooperation or twinning agreements, managing technical assistance, managing with United Nations agencies with cooperation agencies in the territory such as GIZ, COICA, GICA. We are currently concentrating on raising non-reimbursable funds for GAD projects, although this has not yet been strengthened.

Currently, the management has two projects, one for International Cooperation and the second called the Intercultural Basin. The first project encompasses International networks,

protocol visits, agreements or twinning, technical assistance, raising non-reimbursable funds, managing an agreement established with PENUD. On the other hand, "Intercultural Basin", which replaced what was previously called "International Week", this project is related to the competition that the management has in promoting interculturality in Cuenca, it does not focus so much on the diversity of cultures existing in Ecuador, more It is aimed at foreigners living in the city to establish contact with embassies and consulates. Within this framework, three events will be held, articulating different foreign institutions and organizations. The projects are expected to change next year since the budget managed by the municipality is that of the previous administration, that is, extended. With this, it is expected that the next projects aim at the internationalization of Cuenca.

In addition, it is intended through an ordinance to establish a legal framework for all the management that the management is carrying out; with the aim of ensuring the management of cooperation and international relations regardless of the administration that is in the municipality of Cuenca.

- Dividing the evolution in the management of cooperation and international relations by the GAD, how was the initial stage in which the municipality began with the management? When did international cooperation take hold and based on your experience, do you think that the management of international cooperation has reached a stage of maturity in Cuenca?

Compared with other municipalities in the GAD of Cuenca, it could be said that it has reached a point of maturity. In addition, we are founding members of a municipal network the RICI within the AME (Association of Municipalities of Ecuador), through this organization we have trained other municipalities in the country on issues of international cooperation. At the national level, there are few municipalities that understand the importance of international cooperation as an alternative for project financing.

International networks are a space for exchanging experiences between different cities, through forums, workshops, and conferences. At one point the RICI, I try to unite different municipalities to apply to funds in a joint way, since, there are very small municipalities and it is difficult to be beneficiaries of an international fund, large funds; This requires adequate planning with a good number of beneficiaries. Unfortunately, none of this materialized.

- How could a Municipal GAD be encouraged to manage international cooperation?

I show the results and the experience that, for example, Cuenca has come to several municipalities in the Amazon and other parts of the country to learn about our management. This shows that it is possible to have good results through cooperation. Also, it is important to show them the savings that a GAD can have. Through technical assistance, resources can be saved since the municipality avoids the payment of experts or technicians.

- How is the first contact with the agencies and how are the projects handled for the first time?

There are several ways to establish contact.

1. We write to the agencies directly through letters or emails;
2. Also, with the visit of ambassadors to the city, the space is used to make contacts and connections; either with the ambassador as an intermediary of any organization or with the embassy itself.
3. The trips made by the mayor abroad also serve to make the first contact with the agencies.

After the first contact, it is important to visit the offices of the agencies that are generally located in Quito to strengthen relations between the agencies and the GAD. The director of this agency is in charge of making these contacts.

It is important for this that the GAD and the administration have a clear line and the well-defined emblematic or priority projects in order to focus the management of international cooperation. The management of our management follows the guidelines of the PDOT and the POA, that is why we are working in the ordinance that establishes city objectives but not administration.

- In which areas has the municipal GAD benefited through international cooperation?

In the strengthening of institutional capacities in various areas: heritage, culture, gender policy, at risk, mobility, environment. Also in the international arena, knowing what are the priorities of the international community to be clear about the offer of cooperation to which we must aim.

- How feasible is a GAD to handle international cooperation, what are the pros and cons of managing IC directly?

There are more positive than negative aspects. Unfortunately, even though cooperation has been decentralized, agencies and opportunities are centralized in Quito, the offer goes there. Cooperation does not bring anything wrong to cities, only proper management is required. The problem is that the role of a local government is not comparable to that of the national government at the international level; however, over time it will have a more important role because local governments are the ones closest to the problem, closest to the people, to the solution. For example, in the 2030 agenda they place the role of the city above the government because the majority of the world's population is in the cities, it is fundamentally the task of local authorities to find solutions and apply the 2030 agenda and the SDGs. It is important that cities are given more importance and that the government articulates actions with us. The largest amount of funds is taken by the ministries because they have all the State equipment for the execution of those funds.

- According to your professional experience, what are the elements or characteristics necessary to have an effective and adequate IC to the needs of the territory?

The political will, an adequate technical team and prepared on the subject of cooperation because that is another limitation in Ecuador, the lack of specialized personnel on cooperation issues. The investment made by the municipality in cooperation is also important in order to have a presence in international networks that allow it greater access in cooperation issues. South-South cooperation is important and has been growing in recent years. (long explanation about the SUR SUR cooperation is more solidary)

- Which are configured as the main sources of the municipal GAD for CI?

The main sources are: agencies, international networks, United Nations Agencies, International Cooperation Agencies and municipalities in other cities.

As for Technical Assistance issues, there is greater support from NGOs, and in the area of Financial Investment, they are Cooperation Agencies such as the French Development Agency, International Funds and Banks such as CADVID (Multilateral Organizations).

- What would the Cuenca landscape look like in the absence of international cooperation, specifically, if there was no adequate management of it?

The city did not have an international position, that is, it did not publicize the good practices of the basin and its positive experiences. There was no technical assistance, which, without an address, could not have been managed.

As the Directorate of International Relations and Cooperation, our responsibility is to articulate, be intermediaries to carry out an intercommunication between national directorates and international actors. Therefore, there would not be such a fluid contact between these actors.

- What is the way in which the CI office articulates with the rest of the municipal offices for the execution, presentation, and monitoring of projects?

The local articulation occurs through contact with the municipal dependencies, from which the needs are gathered from their planning, projects and priorities of the mayor, and an attempt is made to match the "offer" that would be available of the different projects proposed by said international agencies. Annual meetings are held to define needs and also periodically to carry out the necessary follow-up to fulfill projects and needs.

- How did the municipal GAD determine the areas of greatest interest to focus IC?

The areas of greatest interest are proposed and determined by the Land Management Plan and the work plan of the mayor on duty. On the other hand, there are also needs that arise,

such as the issue of migration, which may not be in the mayor's work plan, but still becomes of interest to the municipal GAD.

- What are the types of international cooperation that are most used in the GAD?

The main types of international cooperation currently used by the GAD in Cuenca are Technical Assistance focused on fundraising and Non-Refundable Financial Assistance, which are the GAD powers decreed by the central government since 2011. These funds and assistance from Financing is used to carry out projects for the development of the city.

- What are the characteristics of Cuenca to be an attractive city for IC?

Cuenca has attracted cooperation from international agencies and actors due to its attractions, the city has a large number of projects that have been exemplary, such as good solid waste management, water and garbage management, etc. It is basically thanks to the good practices that have been carried out in recent years. Also, the city of Cuenca became internationally known as an intermediate city, the city aligned itself with others to show itself internationally with this concept of intermediate city (city with less than a million inhabitants). In other words, for a municipal GAD that does not manage International Cooperation much, it is necessary to carry out an analysis of the strengths and have the institutional capacity developed to attract cooperation from international agencies and actors. For this, the city should also distinguish if it wants to dedicate itself to CI, which is the subject of fundraising and technical assistance; or internationalization, which is more complex when cities are smaller than Cuenca. The ideal is to find something unique that the city has to offer and internationalize it.

- How are agencies, international organizations, NGOs, etc. determined? in which municipalities and territories to work?

It is determined based on how the city is known, demonstrating good practices, strengths and what the city can offer to international cooperation agencies. It is practically based on a certain type of propaganda where the qualities and strengths of the city are demonstrated.

- For a GAD, what would be an effective way of managing the IC that does not imply the submission of the institution to international agencies, how can a municipality through or with the help of the CI be integrated into a globalized world without losing its identity.

You cannot lose your identity when working with international agencies. In the event that there is a certain submission, it can be avoided when negotiating and looking for a form of international cooperation that does not harm the city, as is the case of South-South cooperation, which manages the same context and there is greater solidarity.

- Is there a possibility for the municipal basin GAD, which has more experience, to advise a municipal GAD that does not have as much experience in IC?

Yes, it has been carried out through the RISI Network with the annual meetings that are held and organized by this network. The municipal GADs can also approach the GAD of Cuenca, but it is carried out in a better way through these international networks that exchange experiences of international cooperation.

- Could the IC be spoken of as a public basin policy independently of the administrations on duty?

At this time there is a dependency by Resolution No. 0009-CNC-2011, which gives certain powers to the municipal GAD, but it must be in accordance with the Planning of both the mayor and the Central Government, that is, we depend on the approaches that they in order to plan, control and manage International Cooperation.

Appendix 3. General scheme for the presentation of SENPLADES projects.

1. Introduction
2. Background
3. Current situation of the sector, problem or region pertaining to the program (diagnosis)
4. Justification
5. Beneficiaries
6. Objectives
 - 6.1 General Objective
 - 6.2 Specific Objectives
7. Goals
8. Program Policies
9. Strategies for executing a program
10. Projects that are part of the program
 - 10.1 Summary of the technical aspects of the program
 - 10.2 profiles of each of the projects in the program
11. Program Investments
 - 11.1 Investment per project
 - 11.2 Program execution schedule
12. program budget

13. Benefits that the program would have
14. Economic and / or financial evaluation
 - 14.1 Economic indicators
 - 14.2 Financial Indicators
15. Institutional competence
16. monitoring and evaluation of the program
17. Environmental impact study