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“Elaboration of a Strategic International Cooperation Plan for the Decentralized Autonomous Government of Canton Morona”

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DEDICATION

I want to dedicate this graduation thesis to all the people that have believed in me, who have valued my time, effort, and know my ability and determination to get things one. I hope I do not let you down during the long journey I have to make, and someday to be able to give back everything that you have given me.

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Glossary of Abbreviations

AECID Spanish Agency for International Development Cooperation

AEM Association of Ecuadorian Municipalities

ABC Brazilian Agency for Cooperation

BCE Central Bank of Ecuador

BDE Development Bank of Ecuador

BID Interamerican Development Bank

CA Capability Approach

CAF Andean Development Corporation - Development Bank of Latin America

CAN Andean Community

CARICOM Caribbean Community

CEPAL United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean

COMAGA Consortium of Amazonian and Galapagos Municipalities

CONGA Commonwealth of Provincial Autonomous Governments of the Ecuadorian Amazon

CONGOPE Consortium of Provincial Autonomous Governments of Ecuador

COOTAD Law of Territorial Organization, Autonomy and Decentralization

COPFP Law of Planification and Public Finances

DAC Development Assistance Committee

DRECI Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation Department

ECOSOC United Nations Economic and Social Council

EU European Union

FAO United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization

FDA French Development Agency

GADs Decentralized Autonomous Governments

GATT General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade

GDP Gross Domestic Product

GEF Global Environmental Fund

GIZ *Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit* International Cooperation
German Society

IC International Cooperation

ICTs Information and Communication Technologies

IFIs International Financial Institutions

IMF International Monetary Fund

INEC National Institute of Statistics and Census

IOM International Organization for Migration

IR International Relations

KOICA Korean International Cooperation Agency

LAIF Instrument for the Investment Flair in Latin America

LATAM Latin America

LDC Least Developed Countries

MDG Millenium Development Goals

MREMH Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Human Mobility

NGOs Non governmental organizations

ODA Official Development Assistance

OECD Organization for the Economic Cooperation and Development

OXFAM Oxford Committee for Famine Relief

PCDOT Cantonal Plan of Development and Territorial Organization

SDGs Sustainable Development Goals

SECI International Cooperation Ecuadorian System

SENPLADES National Secretariat for Planning and Development

SWOT Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats

UN United Nations

UNCTAD United Nations Conference for Trade and Development

UNDP United Nations Development Programme

UNESCO United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

UNEP United Nations Environment Programme

UNHCR United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

UNIDO United Nations Industrial Development Organization

UNICEF United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund

UNODC United Nations Office for Drugs and Crime

UN Women United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and women's empowerment

WFP World Food Programme

Summary

This graduate thesis has the purpose to develop an International Cooperation Strategic Plan for the Autonomous-Decentralized Government of Canton Morona. The first chapter provides conceptual precisions on International Cooperation and its modalities, alongside an analysis of the historical evolution of International Cooperation and its current situation in and outside the country, as well as the legal frame for International Cooperation in Ecuador. The second chapter establishes a context of Canton Morona, the role of International Cooperation in the territory and its previous experiences in the matter, providing a diagnosis. The third and final chapter proposes an International Cooperation Strategic Plan for Canton Morona, which responds to the necessities and priorities previously identified in the research.

Key words: international cooperation, decentralization, local development, management.

Abstract

This graduate thesis has the purpose to develop an International Cooperation Strategic Plan for the Autonomous-Decentralized Government of Canton Morona. The first chapter provides conceptual precisions on International Cooperation and its modalities, alongside an analysis of the historical evolution of International Cooperation and its current situation in and outside the country, as well as the legal frame for International Cooperation in Ecuador. The second chapter establishes a context of Canton Morona, the role of International Cooperation in the territory and its previous experiences in the matter, providing a diagnosis. The third and final chapter proposes an International Cooperation Strategic Plan for Canton Morona, which responds to the necessities and priorities previously identified in the research.

Key words: international cooperation, decentralization, local development, management.

Introduction

This graduate thesis has the objective to develop an International Cooperation Strategic Plan for the Decentralized Autonomous Government of Canton Morona. In the Province of Morona Santiago, few and incipient have been the International Cooperation processes carried out. None of the 12 cantons which are part of the province has an entity in charge of the management of such activities, considering the only office of this kind the one that the Provincial GAD has. It would be understood that the Morona Canton, being the cantonal head of the Province, should be the leader and the local reference in the management of International Cooperation. Therefore, the creation of a Strategic Plan is a necessity, which would have a positive impact towards development at regional level.

In order to better understand International Cooperation, certain conceptual clarifications must be made, as well as the types of International Cooperation must be listed; what are their modalities and under which criteria are they distinguished. Key terms that focus on the Strategic International Cooperation Plan for GAD Morona are those of Development Cooperation, Decentralized Cooperation and Localization. Alongside the concept of International Cooperation, there are two important analyses that will facilitate its understanding, the first being an analysis of historical evolution, and the second dealing with the subject in the Ecuadorian context.

The methodology used for this research will be qualitative in nature, by collecting non-numerical data through descriptions and observations, as well as gathering empirical material such as the study of theories, experiences, texts and in-depth interviews. In the same way, the methodological strategies of the bibliographic review, the analytical method and the hermeneutical method will be used in order to present the corresponding definitions, establish a context of the subject, and thus, be able to provide an analysis that explains the state of Canton Morona in the field of International Cooperation.

This thesis is structured in three main chapters: Chapter I defines International Cooperation and provides an analysis of its historical evolution and the Ecuadorian situation, emphasizing in IC for Development and Decentralized IC. Chapter II delivers a context of

Canton Morona, in the form of a diagnosis, which will allow us to move forward to Chapter III. The final chapter will propose an Strategic International Cooperation Plan.

Chapter I: Theoretical Framework and State of the Art

1.1. Theoretical Framework

1.1.1. Definition of International Cooperation

According to the Dictionary of the Royal Academy of the Spanish Language (2020), the verb *to cooperate* refers to a joint work to achieve a common goal, while the word *international* refers to the fact that said joint work transcends the borders of a country, being relative to two or more nations. Therefore, International Cooperation could be understood as joint work to achieve a common goal between two or more States. However, IC goes further. It can be defined more precisely by referring to the transfer of financial, technological, human, or other resources, of concessional or non-reimbursable character, with the aim of solving a series of problems of different nature. In this way, supporting government efforts to promote the improvement of people's well-being (Sotillo, 2015). In turn, taking into account the concept proposed by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Mexico (2019), International Cooperation activities respond to an agenda, which may come from the international organizations that conform the United Nations system, as well as other regional institutions, or intergovernmental or non-governmental organizations.

Within the subject of IC, it is important to distinguish other fundamental concepts to understand this graduate thesis, emphasizing those mostly used by local governments and development. In the first place, it must be distinguished that, although in this process there are not necessarily only two parties, for purposes of providing a simple and brief explanation, the term "donor" will be understood as the party that has available resources and that delivers those for the objectives described above. On the other hand, we will be referring to the term "receiving party" as the one who receives these resources and benefits from IC. In the second place, distinctions between the modalities and instruments of IC should be established, because both terms can make reference to the available options for the donor to distribute and materialise said assistance (Spanish Agency for International Cooperation for Development , 2014).

Similarly, it is important to mention that there are no “pure” modalities or instruments, but rather these must be adapted to the specific context for the IC process being carried out. The modalities are the options available to the donor for the distribution and delivery of resources, where aspects such as the nature of the assistance provided, the delivery conditions, the collecting channels, the development policies between the recipient party and the donor and their relationship should be considered. (Sotillo, 2015). On the other hand, the instruments are the alternatives and tools by which the materialization and execution of assistance is given to meet the objectives set (Ibid, 2015).

Within the framework proposed for the understanding of this graduate thesis, it is also important to take a tour of the different types of International Cooperation. The Uruguayan Agency for International Cooperation (2019) and the National Directorate for Regional Monetary and Financial Integration of the Central Bank of Ecuador (2016), groups this typology based on various criteria:

1. According to the origin of the funds:

- a. **Public or Governmental:** funds are granted by the governments and/or local, regional or state administrations of the donor country,
- b. **Private:** funds come from private contributions such as companies, private foundations and individuals.
- c. **Mixed:** funds come from both parties, the donor and the beneficiary.

2. According to the involved parties:

- a. **Cooperation North-South:** the means of the IC is granted by a developed country or by an International Organization towards a less developed country,
- b. **Cooperation South-South:** it occurs between countries that maintain the same or a similar level of development, in which they also share experiences and create mutual learning

- c. **Triangular Cooperation:** two or more actors, which can be states and /or international organizations (or both at the same time), work together to assist a third country.
- d. **Bilateral Cooperation:** it occurs between two countries through agreements,
- e. **Multilateral Cooperation:** it occurs between international organizations, since governments take part in them

3. According to the nature of the Cooperation:

- a. **Technical Cooperation:** exchange and transfer of technical and management knowledge, with the objective to increase and improve the capacity of institutions to promote their own development and properly manage their own resources.
- b. **Financial Cooperation:** transfer of financial resources or investments, in which there are two types:
 - i. **Financial Reimbursable Cooperation:** the granted funds should be repaid to the cooperant country in favorable conditions such as low interest rates, long payment terms, grace periods, and others.
 - ii. **Non-reimbursable Financial Cooperation:** the granted funds are given as a donation, where there is no debt acquisition.
- c. **Humanitarian and Emergency Aid:** granted assistance to a determined zone affected by armed conflict or natural catastrophe. It has the objective to reestablish the life conditions of the population and solve their basic needs. Usually, this assistance is of immediate response and is temporal.
- d. **Alimentary Aid:** delivery of food supplies to underserved populations through donations or soft loans.

1.1.2. Historical Evolution of International Cooperation

The concepts and definitions of International Cooperation described above did not emerge at the same time as IC, but rather these were developed over time, as IC itself evolved. Because of this, it is important to make a historical review within this research. International Cooperation was born from the Second World War and the establishment of the United Nations Organization in 1945, in response to two fundamental questions: the first being the humanitarian and ethical motivations that arose from the war.; and the second being the product of the political situation determined by the division of the world into two antagonistic blocks (Escobar, 2007).

What could be considered as one of the first forms of International Cooperation is the Bretton Woods Conference of 1944. A common framework of economic policies was established in this conference through the creation of an international financial system, in which many institutions that are crucial to it are still operating such as the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank, as well as the GATT, the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade that would later become the World Trade Organization (World Bank, 2019). On the other hand, it is also necessary to mention the Marshall Plan of 1948 as one of the first initiatives. This Plan consisted of a series of economic incentives provided by the United States for the reconstruction of Europe devastated by war, worth more than 12 billion dollars (Office of the Historian, 2016). Likewise, another initial milestone in this area was the 1957 Treaty of Rome, where the European Economic Community was created within the framework of the necessary cooperation between the countries of this continent for the maintenance of peace, the establishment of relations that transcend the commercial, as well as the bases for common project and policy making. Years later, this Community would become the European Union (ECB, 2016).

Starting in the 1960s, the scenario marked by the Cold War, as well as the intensification of the decolonization processes, especially in Africa and Asia, gave way to the creation of Official Development Assistance by the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development OECD. This assistance is responsible for providing aid oriented towards the economic and social development of countries (OECD, 2020). Later on in this chapter, it will be specifically discussed what ODA consists of. Also during this time, the signing of the

Cartagena Agreement of 1969 would become a crucial integration space for Ecuador, which would give the path to the Andean Pact, predecessor of what today is known as the Andean Community.

During the following decade, in the 70's, multiple international organizations within the field of International Cooperation were born, due to a scenario marked by: the appearance of new independent States; multiple international economic and social crises; and the increasing technological and scientific advances. In this decade, one of the most important events of the field of IC was the creation of the Buenos Aires Plan of Action, during the 1978 United Nations Conference on technical cooperation among developing countries. This plan has the objective of promoting Technical South-South Cooperation, as well as to stimulate the economic and social growth of niche countries. In Latin America, the creation of spaces for integration and cooperation such as the Latin American and Caribbean Economic System in 1975 and the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) in 1973 was created.

In the following decade, in 1980, important steps were taken in International Cooperation thanks to events such as the Washington Consensus and the Fall of the Berlin Wall, both of which occurred in 1989 (Escobar, 2007). The Washington Consensus consisted of economic recommendations provided by the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank and the United States Treasury towards Latin American countries in order to face the economic crisis of the time (Castañeda, 2017). This is one of the examples of how, during this time, other actors within the International System began to gain relevance, such as the IFIs (International Financial Institutions), in this case the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank; and Multi and Transnational Companies (Baylis, Owens and Smith, 2016). During the 34th Session of the United Nations General Assembly in 1980, the Member Countries made the commitment to contribute to Official Development Assistance with a minimum amount equivalent to 0.7% of their Gross Domestic Product (GDP). annual (Rodríguez, 2020).

During the 90s, the disintegration of the Soviet Union and the end of the Cold War marked the end of an era and the beginning of a new one, in which a common framework of policies was established, especially oriented towards the field of economic liberalism and development. This was evidenced through the birth of the World Trade Organization in 1996

(Ibid, 2016). Likewise, organizations such as the United Nations Security Council came to have a more active role by taking decisions that were not affected by the veto of the two hegemonies, as in previous decades. An example of this being the actions taken on the genocides of Rwanda and Srebrenica from 1994 and 1995 (Ibid, 2016). In this decade, the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) established the guidelines and definitions of Human Development, where the human being is fundamental for the effect, when presenting the Human Development Report for the first time in 1990 (UNDP, 2015).

In September 2000, the United Nations General Assembly adopted the Millennium Development Goals. These consisted of a commitment by all the member states to improve the quality of life of the world's population and aim towards development, with a deadline to meet until 2015. These eight proposed objectives addressed areas related to poverty reduction, universal primary education, gender equality, reduction of infant mortality, improvement of maternal health, fight against diseases such as AIDS, HIV and malaria, among others (UNDP, 2015).



Figure N°1: Millenium Development Goals

Source: https://www.undp.org/content/undp/es/home/sdgoverview/mdg_goals.html

However, due to the attack against the World Trade Center on September 11, 2001, and the consequences that it had within the political and economic situation worldwide, the panorama and the scenario in which International Cooperation should have taken place changed. Even so, an important milestone that occurred in this decade is the Paris Declaration

of 2005. This consisted of a series of agreements by member governments of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) on how to make Official Development Assistance more effective under a policy framework based on strategy and management (OECD, 2005).

The Global Financial Crisis of 2008 hit all economies worldwide, due to the domino effect of the interdependent economic system itself, causing governments to restructure budgets, expenditures and priorities, as well as the implementation of other measures to relieve the effects of the crisis. This caused a significant decrease in the resources that were delivered in assistance to developing countries (Moshirian, 2011). However, in the same year the Accra Declaration was signed, which reaffirmed the commitments made in the Paris Declaration, not only by governments, but also recognized other actors in the participation of the Paris Declaration. such as International Organizations and Civil Society (BCE, 2016).

In September 2015, a new panorama arose due to the adoption of the Sustainable Development Goals, again by the United Nations General Assembly, to give continuity to the Millennium Development Goals with new perspectives. centered around the well-being of people, maintaining peace, caring for the environment and creating strategic alliances (UNDP, 2015).

The SDGs became the Agenda that must be fulfilled by the year 2030. The Sustainable Development Goals are integrated. That is, they all go hand in hand, since action within a specific area for the fulfillment of a determined objective will affect the performance and results in others, also doing in this way that development must be balanced with respect to the economy, society and the environment, in turn oriented towards sustainability and the long term (UNDP , 2020). To achieve the 17 objectives set, not only governments and official authorities must work to fulfill the agenda, but the contribution of the private sector and civil society is also required.



Figure N°2: Sustainable Development Goals

Source: <https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/es/objetivos-de-desarrollo-sostenible/>

The Sustainable Development Goals established a new framework for International Cooperation, in the sense that they propose the creation of strategic alliances other than the donor-recipient relationship, which is traditional and characteristics of of North-South Cooperation, since, to meet these objectives not only government work is required, but other actors such as the private sector and civil society must be involved (Sotillo, 2015).

One of the most important events in recent years was held in 2016; the II High-Level Meeting of the Global Alliance for Effective Development Cooperation in Nairobi. This meeting had two main objectives: the first one, to monitor the cooperant countries in order to achieve the contribution goal to the ODA of the 0.7% of their GDP; and the second one, to improve the execution and management of the received resources from ODA by the receiving countries (OECD, 2016).

1.1.3. International Cooperation for Development

IC for Development can be defined as joint efforts by various actors within the international arena to improve the socioeconomic conditions of people and thus enhance the development of said society (Ibid, 2014). Within this context, Cooperation would be understood as the means to reach the established end, that is, towards development. However, today development is not only understood as the expansion of productive and technological

capacity, but is also oriented towards expanding human capacities and opportunities (Proyecto Local, 2010).

1.1.3.1. Capability Approach

Taking a closer look at the topic of capabilities, it is important to consider Amartya Sen's economic theory of the capability approach. The main idea of this approach is its emphasis on what people are capable of doing and being, effectively. This approach can be understood as a moral framework, which proposes that social arrangements should be evaluated according to the degree of freedom that people have to promote or achieve functions considered valuable. Therefore, it is understood that capacity has two fundamental elements: the first, freedom; and the second, valuable beings and facts, also called "functions" (Robeyns, I. 2003).

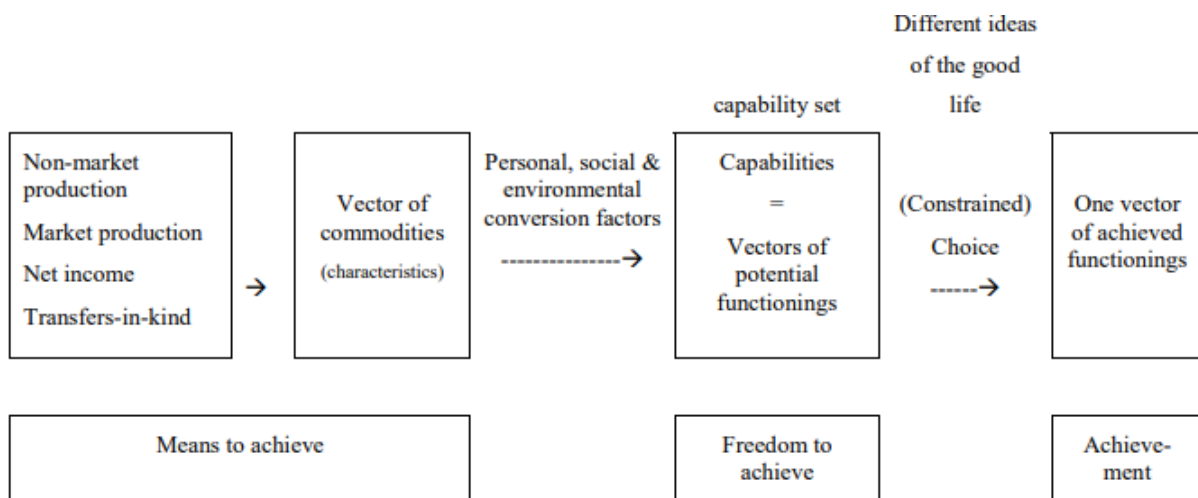


Figure N°3: The components of the CA and the role of raw materials

Source: https://commonweb.unifr.ch/artsdean/pub/gestens/f/as/files/4760/24995_105422.pdf

The capability approach evaluates policies according to the impact they have on people's capabilities. Health, nutrition, education, participation in a community, freedom of expression, thought and worship, and many more are considered as fundamental capacities (Ibid. 2003). For some of these, financial resources and economic production could be

considered as the main input, but for others, aspects related to political practices must be taken into account, such as the warranty and effective protection of: freedom of thought, religion or political participation; or in turn, social and cultural practices, social structures, social institutions, public goods, social norms, traditions and habits.

Within the theme of Development, the Capability Approach suggests that the primary objective of development is the expansion of human capabilities beyond economic growth. While growth may be necessary for development, it is not always enough. In CA, development and well-being are considered in a holistic and integrated view, and much attention is paid to the links between: the material, mental, spiritual and social well-being; or to the economic, social, political and cultural dimensions of life. In the field of International Cooperation for Development, projects and programs that are carried out must go beyond promoting economic growth, but rather they have to promote the well-being of the communities where they are carried out. Therefore, the people who benefit from IC have the freedoms (capacities) to live the kind of life they desire, to do what they want to do and to be the person they want to be.

1.1.3.2. Official Development Assistance

The Official Development Assistance (ODA) is an initiative originated in the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development. It has the objective of granting financial resources to developing countries in different modalities, which are gathered through other international organizations or through contributions by member states (UNHCR, 2019). The Official Development Assistance can be granted under different modalities, in which financial or technical donations and credits with low interest rates can be listed. However, the provided assistance is conditional, since the receiving countries must commit to changing their socio-economic conditions. Likewise, most of the funds granted by ODA come from three main sources: the first are the contributions of countries that are part of the list of ODA donors; the second comes from agencies and programs linked to the United Nations; and the third is by the IFIs, such as the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (Ibid, 2019).

According to the OECD itself (2019), the Official Development Assistance must:

1. Be initiated and directed by the administration and official bodies, such as governments at different levels (state, regional, local).
2. Have as a primary objective the promotion of economic and social development.
3. Be done under favorable financial conditions for the parties involved.

The Official Development Assistance can be applied in different ways. The Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development recognizes the following:

Type of Assistance	Definition
Multilateral	Mandatory or voluntary contributions made by several States or through Multilateral Development Organizations
Bilateral	Direct agreement between States or through Multilateral Development Organizations
Entrusted	Resources that are gathered from one or more cooperation institutions, and are designated to a third agency to manage and deliver them.
Triangular	Two actors work together to help a third
South - South	Exchange and collaboration between developing countries

Table N°1: application ways of ODA

Made by: Michelle Camila Molina Barros

Source: https://eacnur.org/blog/ayuda-oficial-al-desarrollo-combatir-pobreza-tc_alt45664n_o_pstn_o_pst/

The beneficiaries of Official Development Assistance are the countries that appear within the list of recipients of the Development Assistance Committee, updated by the OECD itself every three years, in which countries must comply with certain parameters for the receipt of the resources (Spanish Cooperation, 2017). These requirements are contained within the Paris Declaration of 2005, which defines the "partner country" as a developing state that may be eligible to be a recipient of ODA.

As mentioned in previous sections of this chapter, in 1980, during the 34th Session of the United Nations General Assembly, the member states made the commitment to contribute to the Official Development Assistance with a minimum amount of 0.7% of their annual Gross Domestic Product (GDP). However, this objective has not been met at today's date. Only seven member countries of the Development Assistance Committee (DAC) have done so (Rodríguez, 2020). According to data from the OECD (2019), these States are:

1. Sweden (1.4%)
2. United Arab Emirates (1.09%)
3. Norway (1.05%)
4. Luxembourg (0.93%)
5. Denmark (0.85%)
6. Netherlands (0.76%)
7. United Kingdom (0.71%)

Despite not meeting the 0.7% target, the amount of contributions from other DAC members is higher than those already mentioned, with the following countries being the main contributors to ODA:

Nº	Donor	GDP Percentage	Amount (in billions of USD)
1	United States	0.16%	34.62
2	Germany	0.60%	23.81
3	United Kingdom	0.71%	19.37
4	Japan	0.29%	15.51
5	France	0.44%	12.18

6	Sweden	1.4%	5.41
7	Netherlands	0.76%	5.29
8	Canada	0.27%	6.42
9	Norway	1.05%	4.93
10	Italy	0.24%	4.29

Table N°2: Countries with the major contributions to the Official Development

Made by: Michelle Camila Molina Barros

Source: <https://www.oecd.org/dac/financing-sustainable-development/development-finance-data/ODA-2019-datailed-summary.pdf>

The Development Assistance Committee (DAC) updates a list of ODA recipient countries every three years, as established above. However, an important thing to note is how countries are classified. This is through a series of four categories based on the annual GDP and the income that the country has had, as well as other indicators marked by organizations. such as the United Nations, the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank and the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (2019), which are:

1. **Least Developed Countries LDC:** Actually this concept was developed by the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), which consists of countries classified as low income, but who also face problems related to the scarcity of resources and human capital, and economic vulnerability. Currently 48 countries have been designated by the UN as LDCs, which gives them the right to be recipients of ODA, preferential access to markets, specialized technical assistance, among other concessions (UNCTAD, 2014).
2. **Low Income Countries:** This includes countries whose annual per capita income is less than \$ 1,046. They differ from LDCs because they do not face such low human capital performances (OECD, 2020).
3. **Middle Income Countries:** in this category, countries are classified into two groups: countries with lower-middle income, which is greater than USD 1,046 but less than USD 4,125; and upper-middle income countries, whose incomes are greater than USD

4,125 but less than USD 12,525. According to the World Bank (2020), in this group there is at least 75% of the world's population and 62% of the world's poor. At the same time, they account for about a third of the world's GDP and are the main engines of world growth.

4. **High Income Countries:** The per capita income of this category is higher than USD 12,525. According to data from the World Bank (2019) there are 80 countries within this category.

1.1.3.2.1. Critics to the Official Development Assistance

Although ODA has been an important incentive and aid to developing countries throughout the history of the OECD, it has also been severely criticized. Many of the criticisms noted that countries get used to receiving ODA funds while no economic or social improvement or development is made. Authors such as Gilles Carbonnier (2010), mention that the delivery of resources only serves to: swell the staff of innumerable and ineffective public administrations in recipient countries; support corrupt leaders and undemocratic regimes; distort markets; stifle entrepreneurship; and create dependency among the beneficiaries.

Peter Bauer (1971) argued that the ODA discouraged leaders from developing countries from adopting “good policies”. A clear example of this is the African continent. According to the Institute of Economic Affairs of Ghana (2010), ODA has not contributed to the development of the continent, but instead has managed to increase Africa's indebtedness with high maintenance costs, which in turn have diverted resources that should be allocated to meet the development objective. However, these criticisms that have been made of ODA have been addressed by the International Community through meetings that propose possible solutions and ways to improve the mechanisms of International Cooperation.

1.1.3.2.2. Monterrey Consensus

It was an agreement that came from the International Conference on Financing for Development, held in Monterrey, Mexico, in 2002, in which the participating actors agreed that Official Development Assistance should be improved by modifying the way in which this is distributed (CIFD. 2002). In Art. N ° 43 of the final document it is established that:

“Recipient and donor countries, as well as international institutions, should try to increase the effectiveness of ODA. In particular, multilateral and bilateral development and financial institutions need to intensify their efforts ”

To this end, participant countries made the commitment to harmonize their operational procedures, with the aim of:

- Reduce transaction costs
- Strengthen the capacity of recipient countries to manage aid
- Develop instruments and mechanisms that foresee the flows of resources
- Deliver aid through development and poverty reduction plans

1.1.3.2.3. Rome Declaration

The Rome Declaration is the result of the High Level Forum on Harmonization, held in Rome, Italy, in 2003, organized by the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development OECD.. Its objective was to analyze the progress made in the field of IC, in which donors agreed on guidelines to:

- Coordinate their activities in recipient countries.
- Reduce the transaction costs of aid in recipient countries.
- Harmonize processes and policies to improve cooperation operational practices.
- Adjust ODA to the needs of the beneficiaries.
- Strengthen the leadership and coordination capacities of ODA (Bustos & García. 2021).

1.1.3.2.4. Paris Declaration

The Paris Declaration on the Effectiveness of Official Development Assistance is an international agreement signed in 2005, which establishes concrete commitments for cooperating and recipient countries and agencies, with the aim of making ODA more effective and transparent. This is meant through the increase and improvement of the delivery and management of this aid (AECID. 2019). This agreement also contains measurable indicators and goals to evaluate, and thus guarantee that the aid delivered has quality and has been effective. This also implies that cooperating countries should prioritize the delivery of aid related to poverty reduction in recipient countries, while the latter should strengthen their domestic systems and improve their capacity to manage the resources obtained through ODA, while meeting the Millennium Development Goals.

The Paris Declaration (2005) is founded on five key principles:

1. Appropriation

- a. "Partner countries exercise effective authority over their development policies and strategies and coordinate development actions."

2. Alignment

- a. "Donors base all their support on partner countries' national development strategies, institutions and procedures."

3. Harmonization

- a. "Donor actions are more harmonized, transparent and collectively effective."

4. Results-oriented management

- a. "Manage resources and improve results-oriented decision making."

5. Mutual responsibility

- a. "Donors and partners are responsible for development results."

These principles and the actors involved are best exemplified in the following figure:

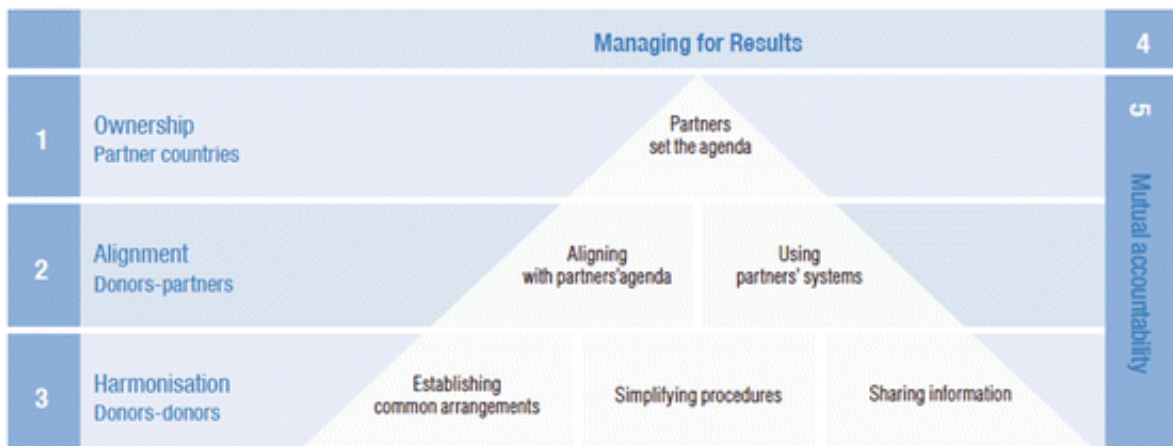


Figure N°4: Values of the Paris Declaration and involved actors

Source: Book *General Framework of Cooperation for Development* by J. Sotillo (2019)

1.1.3.2.5. Accra Agenda for Action

The Accra Agenda for Action of 2008 was a step beyond the Paris Declaration, since its initial objective was to evaluate the progress made in terms of International Cooperation since the 2005 agreement, during the III Forum of High Level on Aid Effectiveness (AECID. 2019). Based on this, it was sought to streamline and complement the commitments made in the Paris Declaration by including Civil Society Organizations. As a result of the Forum, the Accra Action Plan was born, which achieved:

- Reinforce the commitments of the Paris Declaration and the Millennium Development Goals.
- Include civil society, local governments and other actors as full actors.
- Provide greater attention to issues of gender equality, human rights and disability.
- Create agreements on foreseeability, national systems, MDG-based conditionalities, and untied aid.
- Recognize the fundamental role of South-South Cooperation
- Improve coordination between the initiative projects of the donors and government programs, information and accountability of aid activities.

1.1.3.2.6. Busan Alliance

The Global Alliance for Effective Development Cooperation was created in 2011 during the IV High-Level Forum on Aid Efficiency, as a result of the slow progress in IC and the new prospects for the potential of South-South Cooperation (OXFAM. 2020). This Alliance managed to reaffirm the commitments of the Paris Declaration and the Accra Plan, as well as brought to the discussion the role of traditional donors vis-à-vis new donors, thus integrating new CI modalities and including non-governmental actors such as civil society and private enterprise. The Cooperation was restructured into four main principles that, in turn, come from the Paris Declaration and the Accra Plan of Action, which are:

1. Appropriation
2. Results Approach
3. Inclusive Alliances
4. Transparency and Shared responsibility

1.1.3.2.7. Other Agreements

From the events mentioned above, which consisted of fundamental advances in the field of International Cooperation, more mechanisms were developed to improve the delivery of aid, and the inclusion of new CI perspectives, based on the principles of the Paris Declaration and the Busan Alliance. These instruments include:

- **Bogotá Declaration**

- Strengthening South-South Cooperation to promote the exchange of knowledge and experiences for mutual learning.

- **DIII Declaration**

- Peacebuilding and construction of the state in aid recipient countries.

- **Istanbul Principles**

- Promotion of the participation of civil society actors to exercise their role in development effectiveness (OECD. 2019).

1.1.4. Localization

In a globalized and interdependent world, information circulates rapidly between distant places. In this same world, the spread of ideas from a specific location can have an influence on a place on the other side of the world. Localization refers to the process in which Southeast Asian countries took foreign ideas that indicate legitimacy and authority to rebuild them, and thus be able to adapt and apply them according to their specific context. All this information and ideas taken by local actors resulted in a formal, remarkable and coherent development when combining these ideas with local practices (Acharya, 2004). Beyond being just an adaptation of ideas, localization is progressive, not regressive or static, reforming both existing beliefs and practices and foreign ideas in their local context.

Within the academic study of International Relations and its multiple theories, Acharya is identified with the Constructivist theory, because of the importance he gives to ideas. This author also addresses the issue of where ideas come from. It is described that the norms and initiatives of those come from what Acharya has called the Global North or the West, as well as the existence of a pattern, since those who carry out the processes of acceptance and adaptation of foreign ideas and norms is the Global South (Ibid, 2004). However, Acharya also indicates that local customs and practices also matter, since international ideas must be in line with local customs.

The International System is constantly creating norms, as well as questioning existing ones. This is where one of the basic functions of International Organizations can be named, which is to issue and give legitimacy to said international regulations. An example of this is the application of the Sustainable Development Goals by each of the governments worldwide, under the parameters of "global" or "universal" standards within a common framework that seeks to promote human development in a sustained manner. Because each State has different needs, and objectives to meet that are more urgent than others, the SDGs should be carried out through a localization process, where these goals are truly met while meeting local needs. Acharya describes three scenarios in which localization can take place:

1. If norms takers and adapters believe that these could be used to enhance the legitimacy and authority of their existing institutions and practices, but without fundamentally altering their social identity
2. If the norms and ideas to be localized serve to reinforce existing local regulations
3. If there are enough local actors who have credibility and discursive influence to adapt foreign regulations

1.1.5.. Decentralized Cooperation

In the first place, in order to address this concept, it is necessary to establish what is centralized cooperation. This refers to the traditional process through which the transfer of resources is made by governments (Local Project, 2010). It is important here again to mention that the States are not the only actors in the International Cooperation System, but that it is actually a complex network with different mechanisms and where different actors interact, in which, in effect, the States are.

Once the definition of Centralized Cooperation has been understood, it is important to answer the question why it should be decentralized. Local governments are the ones that best understand the problems of their own location, and in general, they are the ones who seek to be the beneficiaries of an effective International Cooperation. However, having to resort to a higher authority or power to carry out IC processes may imply a long and bureaucratic process, as well as the loss of opportunities for channeling resources and strategic alliances.

Decentralization implies faster, more efficient, direct processes, which are carried out by actors from a specific locality, without the need to resort to the structure of the central administration of said State. According to the Spanish Agency for Decentralized International Cooperation (2010), Decentralized IC can be defined as a new perspective, which aims to establish direct relationships between local representations with actors in the international scheme to carry out projects and initiatives that promote the development of said locality. The decentralized IC, according to Enríquez and Ortega (2007) is characterized by:

1. Cooperation actions are led by decentralized entities, without excluding the participation of other actors such as central governments.
2. Subnational entities have the necessary competencies to act and manage resources and alliances from IC.
3. IC goes far beyond financial contributions and transfer of resources, as it also involves the exchange of experiences and knowledge.
4. CI agents must be decentralized, and therefore autonomous.

5. The autonomy of the agents allows them to establish a cooperation framework with fewer conditionalities and bureaucratic procedures, as well as greater flexibility and effectiveness.
6. The relationships created between the donors are more durable and stable, oriented towards the medium and long term.
7. The IC that is carried out is based on the direct interests of the parties, thus helping to build symmetrical relationships.
8. The diversity of actors that participate in IC processes is greater.

1.2 State of the Art

1.2.1. International Cooperation in Latin America and Ecuador

1.2.1.1. International Cooperation in Latin America

Cooperation, for many Latin American countries, is a tool that has been included in government agendas as part of foreign policy, as well as strategies for the establishment or strengthening of diplomatic relations, growth of foreign trade, attraction of direct foreign investment, creation of infrastructure projects, exchange of experiences, knowledge and technology transfer.

In the International Cooperation system, as explained above, the priority to grant aid is given to developing countries under a series of parameters that must be met by States, one of which is per capita income. Latin America and the Caribbean is not the first choice in terms of the distribution of ODA, according to data from the World Bank (2020), this area is considered to be middle-income, despite the fact that it faces many problems such as over-indebtedness, corruption, insecurity, high levels of inequality, weak institutions, and environmental problems, among others.

According to the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (CEPAL) (2017), grouping countries according to their level of income causes the different capacities and needs existing in countries classified as middle income to not be considered. Due to this classification, many countries in the region have experienced a decrease in the aid received through International Cooperation. That is why one of Ecuador's proposals in this area is to consider not only the needs of low-income countries in terms of development, but also to seek a comprehensive and broad response directed also towards the countries that face challenges in multiple areas, such as Ecuador (Foreign Ministry of Ecuador, 2019).

Type of rent	Countries from Latin America and the Caribbean
Low	Haití
Medium-Low	El Salvador, Bolivia, Honduras, Nicaragua
Medium - high	Costa Rica, Argentina, México, República Dominicana, Cuba, Perú, Colombia, Ecuador, Guatemala, Paraguay
High	Chile, Panamá, Uruguay

Table N°3: Countries of Latin America by income

Made by: Michelle Camila Molina Barros

Source: https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/ny.gnp.pcapi.cd?year_high_desc=true

Likewise, according to data from the World Bank (2019), the main donors in the region have been the European Union, the United States, Spain, the United Kingdom, France, Germany and Japan, while institutions such as the Inter-American Development Bank and Agencies belonging to the United Nations have contributed 8% and 5.7% respectively. In this context, Haiti has been the largest recipient of funds and resources in the entire region, considering that it is a country classified as LDCs (Ibid, 2019).

1.2.1.2. International Cooperation in Ecuador

To address the Ecuadorian case, in the first place it is important to remember that during Rafael Correa's government, a pessimistic view was maintained towards international organizations, where former President Correa even expelled multiple NGOs and International Cooperation agencies (Calvache, 2019). As of the arrival of Lenín Moreno to the executive branch in 2017, the perception of International Cooperation changed in the government. Several initiatives were launched as an incentive to strengthen diplomatic relations and attract resources through IC, while the recently established government of Guillermo Lasso seeks to open Ecuador to the world, by consolidating agreements and treaties with key countries in international relations.

According to the Policies and Strategies of Non-reimbursable International Cooperation Plan of the Ecuadorian government for the period 2017-2021: “one of the objectives of Ecuador's foreign policy is to project the country as a provider of South-South Cooperation. We have assumed the challenge of thinking, from the South, in an autonomous and horizontal way to cooperate with other countries ”. The South-South IC is one of the strategies that Ecuador has proposed to generate exchanges of experiences and knowledge, as well as spaces for mutual learning, with countries that face similar challenges, while promoting regional integration. Within the same Plan, it is considered that one of the greatest challenges in the field of IC is to include a strategic vision of development cooperation, which alludes to the need for the country to overcome the vision oriented to short-term, characteristic of most IC projects carried out in Ecuador in recent decades (Ibid, 2019).

Within the framework of Ecuador's foreign policy the importance of international cooperation is recognized, so the roles of all the actors of the Ecuadorian System of International Cooperation (SECI) are involved, committed and strengthened in order to achieve a more effective management. In this way, it is guaranteed that the non-reimbursable IC is a true contribution to development. One of the strategies that the country has also adopted is to align policies to manage IC in accordance with the principles of the Paris Declaration on the Effectiveness of ODA. In addition, Ecuador has also participated in the IV High Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness of 2011 and the High Level Meeting of the Global Alliance for Effective Development Cooperation, as well as the adoption of the agenda Addis Ababa 2015 (Ibid, 2019).

The Ecuadorian System of International Cooperation (SECI) is the entity in charge of strengthening the implementation of programs and projects that have non-reimbursable external financing, with the objective that they are in accordance with the government's development plans and policies (Ibid, 2019). The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Human Mobility is in charge of the administration, management, supervision and evaluation of the SECI, through the Undersecretariat of International Cooperation. One of the functions of this body is to design, propose and evaluate policies and tools for non-reimbursable IC to support the processes carried out by the GADs. Additionally, within this area the National Secretariat for Planning and Development (SENPLADES) also works, since it is in charge of approving non-reimbursable IC programs and projects, so that these are aligned with the guidelines and

policies proposed by the central government. In the same way, other important actors are listed within the Policy and Strategy Plan of Non-reimbursable International Cooperation with their specific roles, such as:

- The Ministry of Economy and Finance, because it determines alongside the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Human Mobility the national needs that must be complementary through the non-reimbursable IC.
- The Central Bank of Ecuador, being responsible for the administration of the Special Transfer Account, for the receipt of funds from abroad.
- The sector councils, when granting endorsement to investment programs and projects with non-reimbursable IC resources, with the corresponding verification of alignment with sector policies.
- Central-government entities, since they negotiate, sign and execute the non-reimbursable IC agreements that in turn, come from official non-reimbursable IC agreements, as well as analyze the requests of foreign NGOs for the subscription or renewal of the Basic Agreement of Operation in Ecuador.
- The Decentralized Autonomous Governments, since they administer IC processes, projects and programs within their territorial districts.
- The official cooperation organizations, since they determine the intervention strategies according to the needs and policies of the country, beside the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Human Mobility.
- Foreign NGOs, since they are the ones that execute IC resources in the country, approved by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Human Mobility.
- The academy, because in addition to executing CI resources, they also generate information through research.
- The private company, because it has managed to mobilize large amounts of resources to finance development-oriented programs and projects.

According to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Human Mobility (2019), from 2018 to 2020, the country has raised non-reimbursable IC resources of 400 million dollars, considering that Ecuador is a country classified as medium-high income . 77% of these funds come from official cooperation through contributions from countries and multilateral organizations, while the remaining 23% have been obtained through the participation of non-governmental organizations.

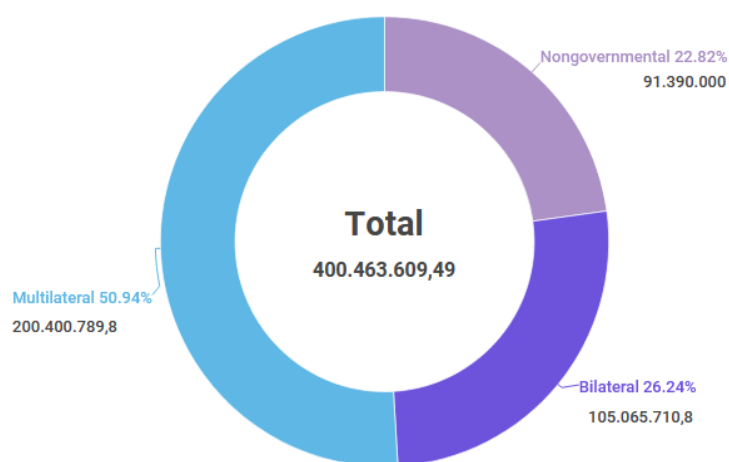


Figure N°5: Amounts by type of International Cooperation in Ecuador

Translated by: Michelle Camila Molina Barros

Source: <https://www.primicias.ec/noticias/politica/gobierno-incrementar-flujo-cooperacion-internacional/>

Despite the fact that the Moreno government considered being a South-South Cooperation provider, it has also worked to raise funds through bilateral agreements. The most important non-reimbursable CI projects and initiatives, where Germany has become Ecuador's main bilateral donor, are detailed in the table below:

Donor Country	Sector	Period in value	Amount in USD
Germany	Environment, fight against corruption,	2018 - 2020	47.775.679

	citizen participation, gender, open government		
Germany	Human mobility, northern border	2018	3.420.693
China	Economic and technical cooperation agreement for the construction of the Bahia hospital and other projects	2018	28.898.280
European Union	Early warning system, delegated cooperation with the UN system	2018-2020	3.420.693
European Union	Higher education and strengthening of the Technical Secretariat for Reconstruction and the Secretariat of Higher Education	2014-2020	21.550.366
Total			105.065.711

Table N°4: Non refundable Bilateral International Cooperation Resources for Ecuador

Made by: Michelle Camila Molina Barros

Source: <https://www.primicias.ec/noticias/politica/gobierno-incrementar-flujo-cooperacion-internacional/>

On the other hand, taking into account the funds raised through non-reimbursable Multilateral International Cooperation, the international institution that has contributed the most to the country has been the United Nations, through its multiple agencies and subsidiary bodies, according to to the Foreign Ministry of Ecuador, the main ones being:

1. The United Nations Development Program (UNDP) with a contribution of USD 102,650,000.
2. The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) contributed USD 25,980,000.
3. The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) awarded USD 16,219,000
4. The United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) provided \$ 7,600,000.

Also, the Moreno government signed 32 basic operating agreements with NGOs starting in 2018, which would allow the development and execution of programs and projects valid until 2022 (Ecuadorian Chancellery, 2019). 66% of these non-governmental organizations are American and 19% are Spanish. Most of the programs developed have been oriented towards social development from the family nucleus, and to a lesser extent towards production (Ibid, 2019). The current administration, chaired by Guillermo Lasso has a positive perspective towards International Cooperation, having as a priority establishing agreements with strategic partners for the country such as the United States, as well as belonging to organizations that will have a positive impact for Ecuador, naming the Alliance of the Pacific and the efforts of President Lasso to sign a treaty with Mexico which will allow the country to join said Alliance.

1.2.2. National Regulatory Framework

1.2.2.1. Constitution of the Republic of Ecuador

The Constitution in force within the Ecuadorian State was established in 2008, being at the top of the hierarchy of the country's legal regulations. This Constitution, moreover, entailed multiple changes from the last supreme norm that dates from 1998, since a transformation was made from a model of Social State, to one called “constitutional State of rights and justice” (National Assembly, 2008). In addition, it was the first Constitution to include innovative aspects such as the separation of the State into five powers, rights for nature, and more importantly for the purpose of this work, it gave specific powers to local governments.

Title V of the Constitution on the Territorial Organization of the State (2008) establishes that the Ecuadorian State will be conformed by Autonomous Decentralized Regional, Metropolitan, Provincial, Cantonal and Parish Governments, established in Art. 238 that:

"The decentralized autonomous governments will enjoy political, administrative and financial autonomy, and will be governed by the principles of solidarity, subsidiarity, interterritorial equity, integration and citizen participation ... Decentralized autonomous governments are constituted by rural parish councils, municipal councils, metropolitan councils, provincial councils and regional councils. "

Regarding the field of International Cooperation and how local governments in Ecuador can manage it, Art. 264 delimitates the exclusive powers of the Autonomous Decentralized Cantonal Governments "without prejudice to others determined by law", specifying in the numeral fourteen of said article that each GAD is capable of "managing international cooperation for the fulfillment of its competences" (Ibid, 2008). That is, local governments previously classified by legal regulations, have the legal capacity to use International Cooperation as a tool for the fulfillment of the other competences listed within Title V of the Ecuadorian Constitution.

1.2.2.2. Special Law of Territorial Organization, Autonomy and Decentralization

The Special Law of Territorial Organization, Autonomy and Decentralization, better known by its acronym COOTAD, dates from 2010, and is in charge of guaranteeing political, administrative and financial autonomy to the different hierarchies of GADs (ECLAC, 2018). In the same way, COOTAD follows the line of the progressive decentralization model established in the Constitution, delimiting the national system of competencies depending on the different types of GADs, available financing mechanisms, and the institutional framework of the territorial organization of Ecuador (COOTAD, 2010).

Art. 53 of COOTAD (2010) defines that "municipal decentralized autonomous governments are legal entities of public law, with political, administrative and financial autonomy," while Art. 55 of the same law again determines that the GADs have the ability to manage International Cooperation as a tool to achieve compliance with the rest of its powers.

This last aspect mentioned can also be found within the same COOTAD (2010), in Art. 131 that addresses the subject of IC Management, since it establishes that:

"The decentralized autonomous governments may manage to obtain resources from international cooperation and technical assistance for the fulfillment of 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 cooperation. "

Art. 187 defines GADs' own income as those resources obtained through International Cooperation. In contrast to this, Art. 293 promotes "twinning" between local governments of Ecuador with others at the international level, within the framework of the IC, since it is defined that the GADs "may enter into twinning agreements in order to make viable processes of planning, oriented to the promotion of the integral, social, economic, cultural, environmental and security development of the territories and peoples "(COOTAD, 2010).

1.2.2.3. Special Law of Planification and Public Finances

The Special Law of Planification and Public Finance is the legal norm in charge of organizing, regulating and linking the National Decentralized System of Participatory Planning with the National System of Public Finance, as well as coordinating and regulating national planning and the integrated management of finances. for the different levels of government (National Assembly, 2010).

Regarding International Cooperation, the COPFP (2010) establishes from Art. 65 to Art. 69 the regulations to be followed with regard to Non-Refundable IC and its management, defining it in Art. 65 as :

“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 or complement national initiatives for the achievement of planning objectives . Non-reimbursable international cooperation comes from external sources of a public and / or private nature from entities and organizations that carry out this type of activity. Non-reimbursable international cooperation is promoted, managed, executed, monitored and evaluated through the entities established in this law ”.

Art. 66 of the COPFP (2010) establishes the principles that IC processes with Ecuador must follow, which will be: sovereignty, independence, legal equality of the States, peaceful coexistence, self-determination of the peoples, integration, solidarity , transparency, equity and respect for human rights. Complementarily, Art. 67 defines that the national policy of Non-Refundable IC must respond to the National Development Plan and the State's foreign policy, while Art. 68 determines that the management of the Non-Refundable IC by the GADs must also be exercised in accordance with national policies, development plans and land use planning. Finally, Article 69 decrees that any program or project carried out on the basis of Non-Refundable CI must be under the supervision of the competent technical body depending on the area, since given the cases of Non-Financial CI, the cooperant must submit the required information. by law to said competent technical body (National Assembly, 2010).

1.2.2.4. Executive Decree 1202 on the Reorganization of the Ecuadorian System of International Cooperation

As established in the previous chapter, the Ecuadorian System of International Cooperation (SECI) is the entity in charge of strengthening the implementation of programs and projects that have non-reimbursable external financing, and that these are in accordance with development plans and policies. of the government (Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Human Mobility, 2019). Through the Executive Decree No. 1202 of 2016, with the suppression of the Technical Secretariat for International Cooperation, the Ministry of

Foreign Affairs and Human Mobility is designated as the entity in charge of the administration, management, supervision and evaluation of the SECI (Decree N ° 1202, 2016).

1.2.2.5. Resolution N ° 009-CNC-2011 on the Transfer of the International Cooperation Competence

The National Competencies Council through Resolution No. 009-CNC-2011, decreed what are the competencies between GADs and the Central Government. Specifically in Art. 1, the managers of the Non-Refundable IC and technical assistance IC will be the Autonomous Decentralized Regional, Metropolitan, Provincial, Cantonal and Parish Governments, within the framework of the Ecuadorian System of International Cooperation. Similarly, in Art. 4 of the same Resolution the criteria of the IC's competence are detailed, where those of: complementarity and co-responsibility; territorial articulation; transparency, effectiveness and impact; self-sufficiency and not conditionality; specialization and harmonization; and decentralized management (Resolution No. 009-CNC-2011, 2011).

In Section II of the Resolution the powers of the central government in the field of IC are detailed. This is the one in charge of defining the plans and strategies that promote and complement the competencies of each of the levels of government, in addition to determining the national regulations for the administration and management of Non-Refundable CI, through: agreements; projects and programs; actors, periodicity, monitoring, evaluation, and information related to IC processes, which must be in accordance with national development policies and plans (Ibid, 2011).

Section III, specifically in Art. 11 establishes that the ability of GADs is, within their competences and territorial circumscription, “the local leadership, planning, regulation, control and management of international cooperation non-refundable ”(Ibid, 2011). Therefore, within Art. 13, it is decreed that GADs must develop local plans, strategies and agendas for the management of the IC, complementing with Art. 15 which in turn commands local governments to establish control mechanisms for compliance with local regulations and

IC management (Ibid, 2011). According to Art. 16, to exercise such management competence, GADs must:

1. Identify actors, resources and offer of the existing IC
2. Identify, coordinate and process CI demands
3. Program IC management based on the identification of IC actors, resources, supply and demands
4. Negotiate and sign agreements and instruments for the implementation of projects and programs derived from international treaties signed between Ecuador and official cooperators.
5. Negotiate and subscribe decentralized cooperation agreements and instruments with decentralized cooperators
6. Negotiate and sign agreements and instruments for the implementation of programs and projects generated from direct management with non-governmental cooperators
7. Promote decentralized cooperation
8. Promote international positioning and representation
9. Formulate, design, prepare and execute IC Non-Refundable projects for the fulfillment of its competencies
10. Periodically report to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Human Mobility on the monitoring, status and results of evaluations of the Non-Refundable IC programs and projects
11. Establish, promote and participate in spaces for coordination with other levels of government to identify issues that should be prioritized in development plans and policies for the negotiation of international agreements and treaties by Ecuador

12. Establish, promote and participate in spaces for articulation with other levels of government to formulate proposals, plans and strategies for IC management
13. Establish, promote and participate in spaces for articulation to incorporate territorial needs and contributions for the operation of the SECI
14. Establish, promote and participate in articulation spaces with other levels of government, international cooperators, civil society, and other actors for the articulation of lines of intervention of IC with territorial planning

Chapter II: Analysis of the context of the Morona canton regarding International Cooperation

2.1. Institutional Context of Canton Morona

2.1.1. Introduction

The Morona Canton is part of the Morona Santiago province, located in the Amazon region, towards the east of Ecuador. The cantonal head, and the capital of the province, is the city of Macas, the center of the provincial economic and commercial activity. Important features such as its culture, history, climate, gastronomy and Amazonian landscapes have made this canton unique and unmatched, with multiple opportunities for economic and social development of the community. The name of the province of Morona Santiago has its origin in the two largest rivers that cross it and that flow into the Amazon: the Morona River, which also gives the name to the Canton; and the Santiago River, which in turn also designates the name of another canton in the province, Santiago de Méndez (Provincial GAD of Morona Santiago, 2015).

Macas is the capital of the province and the cantonal head, and it is where most of the commercial activity of the province is centralized, as well as its other main activities are agriculture and livestock. However, "La Esmeralda Oriental", as Macas is also known, is recognized for its handicrafts, mostly made by the Shuar people; its gastronomy where dishes such as ayampaco and guayusa stand out; as well as tourism for unforgettable landscapes of the Amazon and extreme sports (Municipal GAD of Macas, 2017).

Macas, was founded in 1563 under the name of "Nuestra Señora del Rosario de Macas"(Our Lady of the Rosary of Macas), becoming and maintaining itself as one of the most important economic and commercial centers of the Amazon region since its creation (Ibid, 2017).

2.1.2. Geographical information

Canton Morona is located in the province of Morona Santiago, in the center-north of the province. It has an area of 5095 km² and its limits are:

- North: Canton Huamboya and Canton Pablo VI
- South: Canton Sucúa and Canton Logroño
- East: Canton Taisha
- West: Chimborazo Province



Figure N°6: Location of the Morona Santiago Province in Ecuador
Source: Google Maps

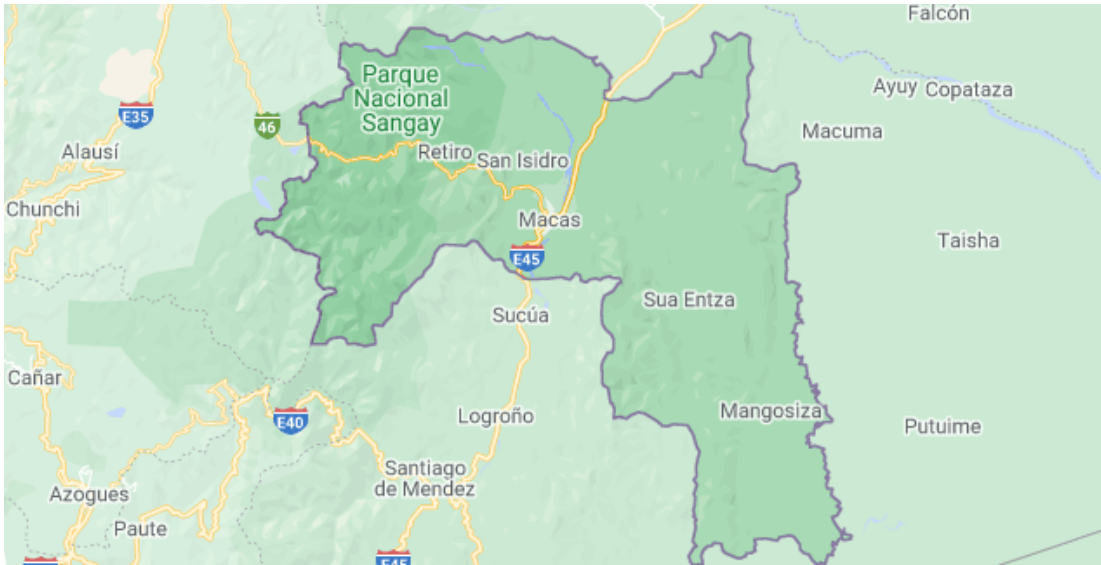


Figure N°7: Location of Canton Morona
 Source: Google Maps

Canton Morona is divided into nine parishes: one urban parish and eight rural parishes.

Parishes of Canton Morona	
Urban Parish	Macas
Rural Parishes	Cuchaentza
	General Proaño
	Alshi/ Nueve de Octubre
	Río Blanco
	San Isidro
	Sevilla Don Bosco
	Sinaí
	Zuñac

Table N°5: Parishes of Canton Morona
 Made by: Michelle Camila Molina Barros
 Source: <http://www.morona.gob.ec/>

Parroquia	N.- de Comunidades y/o Sectores	Superficie Km2
Alshi	9	273,49
Cuchaentza	15	355,04
Gral. Proaño	10	68,08
Macas	5	53,47
Río Blanco	14	452,77
San Isidro	9	128,61
Sevilla Don Bosco	85	2.306,54
Sinaí	13	395,29
Zuñac	3	621,19
Total	163	4.654,48

Figure N°8: Communities within the parishes of Canton Morona and their surface

Source: Strategic Operational Plan for GAD of Morona 2017

http://www.morona.gob.ec/sites/default/files/LY_K_PLANES/PEI%20_GMCM2017_ACTUAL.pdf

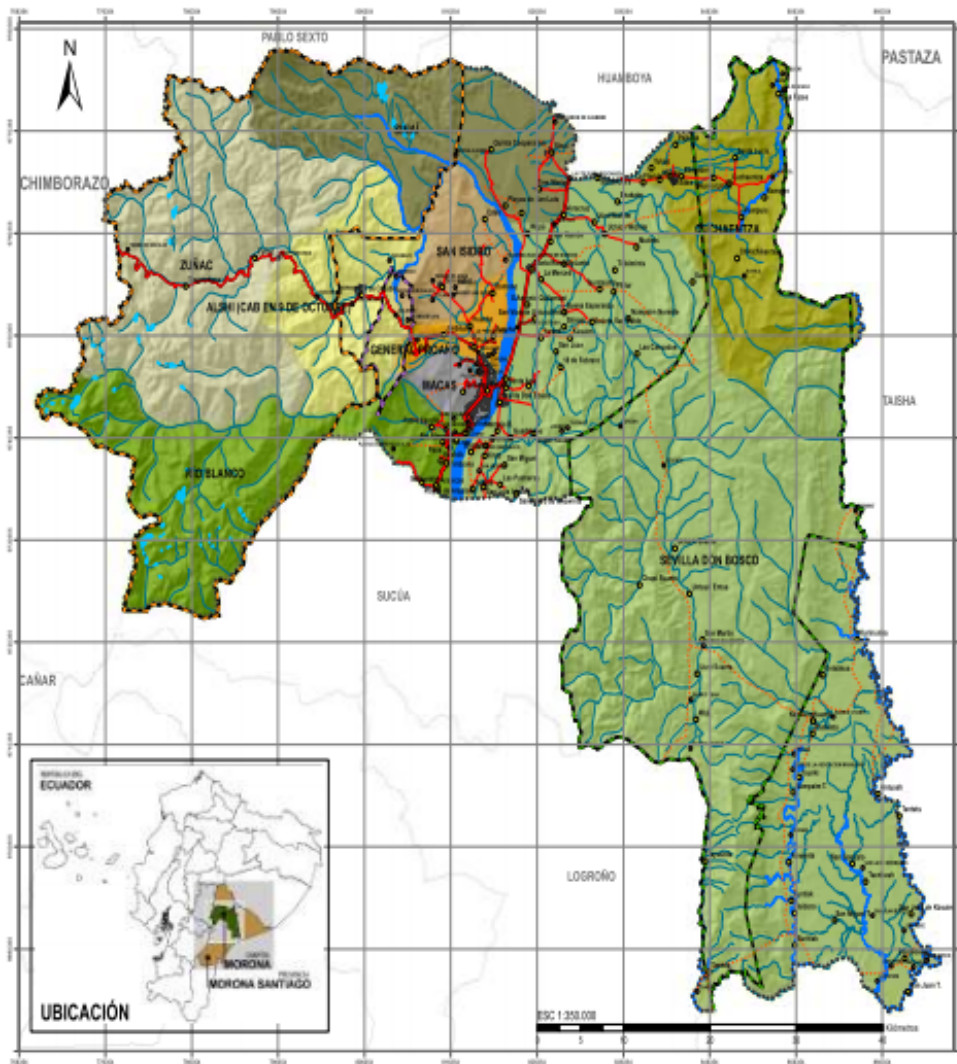


Figure N°9: Political Organization of Canton Morona

Source: Strategic Operational Plan for GAD of Morona 2017

http://www.morona.gob.ec/sites/default/files/LY_K_PLANES/PEI%20_GMCM2017_ACTUAL.pdf

2.1.3. Socioeconomic information

2.1.3.1. Demographic Indicators

2.1.3.1.1. Population

According to the last census carried out by the National Institute of Statistics and Censuses (INEC) in 2010, the Morona Canton has a population of 41,155 inhabitants, where

20,544 are women and 20,611 are men. It constitutes 22.82% of the total population of the province of Morona Santiago, being also the most populated canton of Morona Santiago.

Código Ord. Territorial	Parroquia	Población	%
140151	Alshi (9 de Octubre)	425	1,03
140162	Cuchaentza	1.785	4,34
140153	General Proaño	2.590	6,29
140150	Macas	19.176	46,59
140164	Río Blanco	1.992	4,84
140156	San Isidro	785	1,91
140157	Sevilla Don Bosco	13.413	32,59
140158	Sinaí	766	1,86
140160	Zúñac	223	0,54
Total		41.155	100,00

Figure N°10: Population by parish of Canton Morona
 Source: Cantonal Plan for Development and Territorial Organization of Canton Morona 2012

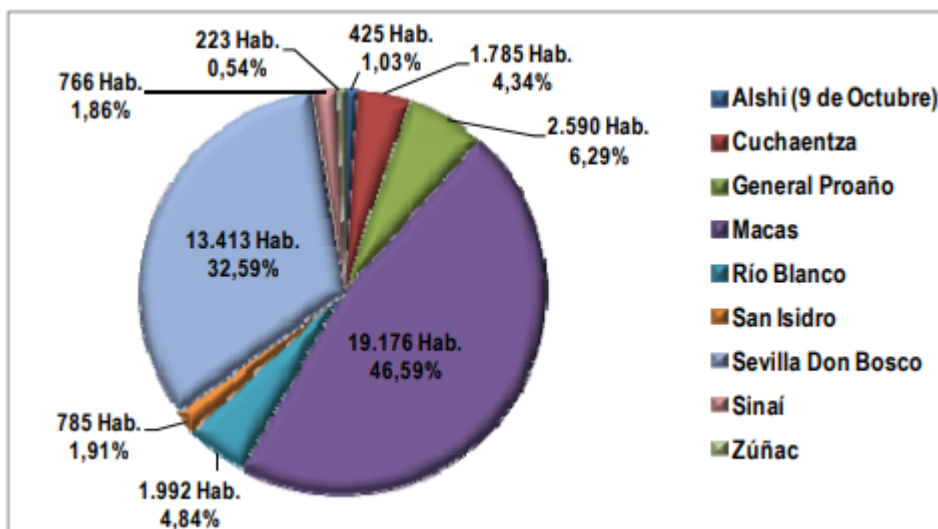


Figure N°11: Population by parish of Canton Morona
 Source: Cantonal Plan for Development and Territorial Organization of Canton Morona 2012

As can be seen in the two previous figures, the Cantonal Head, Macas, is the most populated parish in the canton, where 49.59% of the total population of Morona lives in this urban area. The most populated rural parish is Sevilla Don Bosco, with 32.59% respectively (PCDOT Morona, 2012).

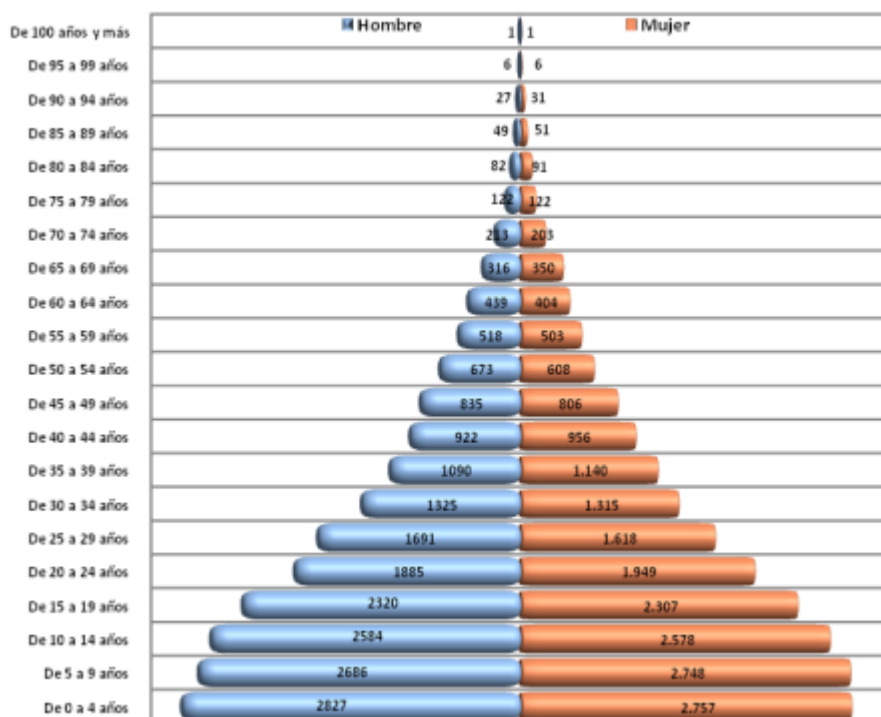


Figure N°12: Population Pyramid of Canton Morona
Source: Cantonal Plan for Development and Territorial Organization of Canton Morona 2012

2.1.3.1.2 Education

According to the Cantonal Plan for Development and Territorial Organization of Morona from 2012, 1,291 people, or 5.71% of the total Moronense population, which is equal to or greater than 15 years, cannot read or write.

Parroquia	Grupos de edad										Total	
	15-17		18-29		30-49		50-64		65 o más		Nº	%
	Nº	%	Nº	%	Nº	%	Nº	%	Nº	%		
Alshi (9 de Octubre)	0	0,00	0	0,00	1	12,50	1	12,50	6	75,00	8	100,00
Cuchaentza	2	2,67	16	21,33	10	13,33	12	16,00	35	46,67	75	100,00
General Proaño	1	0,95	14	13,33	19	18,10	29	27,62	42	40,00	105	100,00
Macas	6	1,63	47	12,74	81	21,95	98	26,56	137	37,13	369	100,00
Río Blanco	1	1,28	5	6,41	15	19,23	18	23,08	39	50,00	78	100,00
San Isidro	0	0,00	4	12,12	10	30,30	6	18,18	13	39,39	33	100,00
Sevilla don Bosco	14	2,47	84	14,81	95	16,75	153	26,98	221	38,98	567	100,00
Sinaí	0	0,00	3	6,67	4	8,89	16	35,56	22	48,89	45	100,00
Zúñac	0	0,00	1	9,09	7	63,64	2	18,18	1	9,09	11	100,00
Total	24	1,86	174	13,48	242	18,75	335	25,95	516	39,97	1.291	100,00

Figure N°13: Illiteracy by age and parish of Canton Morona

Source: Cantonal Plan for Development and Territorial Organization of Canton Morona 2012

On the other hand, the level of education in the canton is 9.28, indicating with this figure that the population has completed or reached at least the ninth grade of basic education. Macas has the highest level of literacy in the canton, where the average shows that students reach up to the first year of high school, while the Zuñac parish has the lowest level, where it has reached up to the sixth year of basic education (Ibid. , 2012).

2.1.3.1.3. Economic Activities

The economically active population of Canton Morona is 56.62%, with women representing 28.42%, while men represent 28.20%. Therefore, 43.38% of the population of the Morona Canton is economically inactive (Ibid, 2012)

Parroquia	Total	Hombres	% Hombres	Mujeres	% Mujeres
Macas	12.217,00	6.103,00	52,17	6.114,00	52,68
Alshi(9 de Octubre	248,00	145,00	1,24	103,00	0,89
Gral. Proaño	1.427,00	712,00	6,09	715,00	6,16
San Isidro	455,00	219,00	1,87	236,00	2,03
Sevilla don Bosco	6.531,00	3.284,00	28,07	3.247,00	27,98
Sinaí	398,00	196,00	1,68	202,00	1,74
Zuñac	118,00	61,00	0,52	57,00	0,49
Cuchaentza	809,00	423,00	3,62	386,00	3,33
Río Blanco	1.101,00	555,00	4,74	546,00	4,70
Total	23.304,00	11.698,00	100,00	11.606,00	100,00

Figure N°14: Classification of the Canton Morona population of working age by parish and sex
Source: Cantonal Plan for Development and Territorial Organization of Canton Morona 2012

According to the 2010 Population and Housing Census, the main economic activities of both the Morona Santiago Province and the Morona Canton are:

- Agriculture, livestock, forestry and fishing
- Wholesale and retail trade
- Public administration and defense
- Construction

Other economic activities in Canton Morona that can be listed are teaching, manufacturing, transportation and storage, accommodation and food service activities, among others (Ibid, 2010).



Figure N°15: Percentage of the Canton Morona Population and their economic activities
Source: Cantonal Plan for Development and Territorial Organization of Canton Morona 2012

2.1.4. Local Authorities

Mayor:

- Ing. Franklin Galarza

Councillors:

- Raquel Tovar Pichama - Vicemayor
- Andrés Noguera
- Braulio Jaramillo
- Nadia Sensu
- Federico Tseremp

The PCDOT of the Municipal GAD of Morona is divided into seven volumes:

1. Systems Diagnosis

- a. This volume includes statistics, information, cartography, maps, reports and enumerates problems in the Physical-Environmental, Economic-Productive, Social-Cultural, Human Settlements, Mobility-Energy-Connectivity, and Political-Institutional planning systems.

2. Strategic Diagnosis

- a. This volume establishes key indicators of the problems analyzed, as well as delimits a guide for solving said problems.

3. Risk Management

- a. This volume deals with the possibilities to help future decision-making regarding risk prevention.

4. Territorial Ordering of the Canton

- a. This volume determines the possible actions and proposals for the territorial ordering of the canton and the human development of the local population.

5. Establishing the long-term vision

- a. This volume constitutes a fundamental element required by law for the elaboration of the Plan of Development and Territorial Ordering

6. Management Model

- a. Volume VI contains the information on the participatory mechanisms and instances, as well as the line of action according to the competencies of the GAD, and the proposal of a structure for monitoring, follow-up, evaluation and control.

7. Legal Framework

- a. This final volume contains the supporting documents and procedures for the preparation, approval and implementation of the PCDOT.

The Cantonal Plan for Development and Territorial Ordering of Morona is related to the management of International Cooperation in the sense that, as explained above, this document required by law lists the problems within the territorial district, the possible solutions to be taken, and the lines of actions that must be followed for this purpose, fulfilling objectives related to those of Decentralized IC, where again, it is established again that IC should respond directly to local problems as an alternative way to promote human development, which should be included in the preparation of the PCDOT of the different levels of government.

2.2. Proactive or receptive role of International Cooperation within Canton Morona.

As explained in the previous chapter, local governments, such as the Morona GAD, can be providers or recipients of IC. But in order to determine this role, proactive or receptive, different factors and circumstances in which said territory must be analyzed, since, as mentioned above, the IC has the objective of responding to the problems and needs of a specific locality where it pretends to be applied. However, here it is important to remember again the different types and modalities of IC, since agents such as local governments can not only deliver economic resources, but knowledge and experiences can also be shared. In the case of Canton Morona, determining the role of the CI, whether proactive or receptive, must take into account the Institutional SWOT (Strengths, Opportunities, Weaknesses and Threats) analysis of the Municipality.

According to UNESCO (2021), the problem tree is used in order to define a central problem, exposing its causes and negative effects, to solve it. Treating respectively the issue of the strengths and weaknesses of the municipality of Canton Morona, the Cantonal Plan for Development and Territorial Ordering lists the problems and challenges faced by the

administration of Morona through the methodological technique of the problem tree of each of the systems. analyzed in said document: Physical-Environmental; Economic-Productive; Socio-cultural; Human settlements; Mobility-Energy-Connectivity; and Political-Institutional.



Figure N°17: Problem Tree of the Physical-Environmental System of Canton Morona
Source:PCDOT Morona 2012



Figure N°18: Problem Tree of the Economic - Production System of Canton Morona
Source:PCDOT Morona 2012



Figure N°19: Problem Tree of the Social- Cultural System of Canton Morona
Source:PCDOT Morona 2012

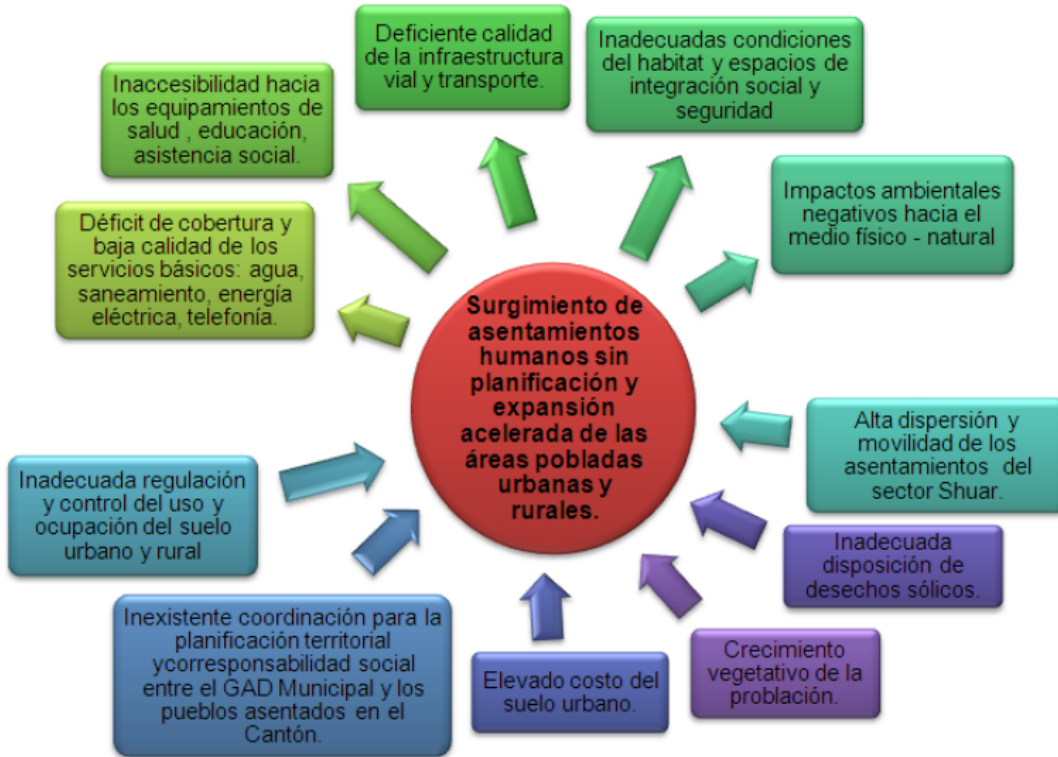


Figure N°20: Problem Tree of the Human Settlements System of Canton Morona
 Source:PCDOT Morona 2012



Figure N°21: Problem Tree of the Mobility, Energy and Connectedness System of Canton Morona
 Source:PCDOT Morona 2012



Figure N°22: Problem Tree of the Political-Institutional System of Canton Morona
Source:PCDOT Morona 2012

In the same way, the PCDOT Morona also lists other weaknesses for the fulfillment of the functions of the administration of the Municipal GAD of Morona in relation to the officials, along with their alternative solutions that can be seen as opportunities.

Weaknesses	Solution alternatives (opportunities)
<p>The operation of the different departments is isolated, with low levels of internal coordination and communication</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - - Establish a comprehensive communication system, both external and internal - Establish internal policies and criteria for planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation, in a comprehensive and integrated manner. - Organize a municipal information, monitoring and evaluation system in charge of providing, in a systematic way, the management indicators for the initial situation analysis, monitoring and evaluation of current processes promoted by the

	<p>institution and those that are related to the guarantee <i>el Buen Vivir</i> for the citizens of the canton</p>
<p>The staff working in the different departments is not enough to fulfill the assigned responsibilities</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Carry out the analysis of the institution's processes and clearly establish the roles, functions and objectives that each department and official must fulfill - Establish quality norms and standardization - Training of decision-makers so that their actions are based on technical criteria and based on the strategic planning of the development and land use of the canton
<p>Lack of knowledge of national regulations and instruments that guide new planning processes, land-use planning, and institutional work</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Permanent and systematic training plan of the levels: executive, legislative, administrative and operational, on national laws - In the training plan include technical and methodological update issues according to the responsibilities of the staff and their correlation with the fulfillment of municipal goals and objectives - Updating of internal regulations and ordinances of the Municipal Government - Training of all municipal personnel in the management of internal regulations and ordinances, their application and compliance control
<p>Insufficient transportation for the distribution of staff in the different daily activities to fulfill their responsibilities</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Revise the vehicle planning and distribution system, in force in order to optimize the existing mobilization resources - Technical analysis of the actual transportation requirements that the institution currently needs and establish the corresponding projections - Progressive acquisition of new units and the replacement of units that have reached their useful life

Table N°5: weaknesses and opportunities of the workers of the Municipality of Canton Morona
 Made by: Michelle Camila Molina Barros
 Source PCDOT Morona 2012

The PCDOT Morona of 2012, through the aforementioned analysis, has made a general diagnosis of the canton, where it has been searched through the problem trees to identify the problems that generally affect the population of Canton Morona. Said PCDOT has identified as the main conflict being the “limited realization of *el Buen Vivir* of the Morona population as a consequence of the chaos in the use and occupation of the territory”, all this due to the factors that are listed in the problem tree presented below:

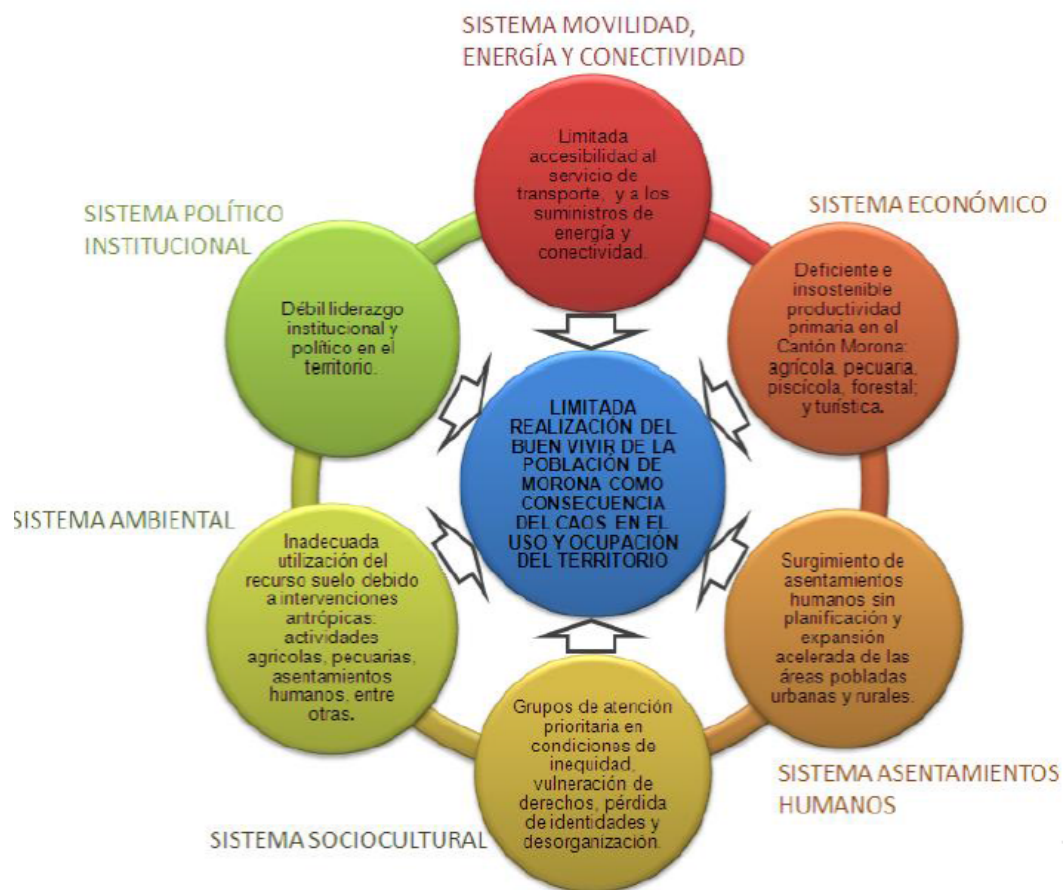


Figure N°23: Problem Tree of the general diagnosis of Canton Morona
 Source:PCDOT Morona 2012

2.2.1. Proactive Role

In the field of IC, those who are understood to have the proactive role are the offering actors (Bernal, 2019). Considering this, in case of Morona Canton, who wishes to exercise a proactive role in IC, Technical Cooperation and South-South Cooperation should be offered, according to their experiences and knowledge in successful areas such as programs, projects, works, and even implementation. policies that promote human development. According to Bernal (2019), if a local government does not have the economic or financial capacity, it can also support other local governments that have similar characteristics according to, as mentioned above, through Technical and South-South IC.

In the specific case of Canton Morona, it has actively participated in spaces aimed at promoting the development of areas with characteristics similar to its own, for example, being an active member in the Commonwealth of Autonomous Governments of the Ecuadorian Amazon CONGA or the Consortium of Amazonian and Galapagos Municipalities COMAGA. In the case of CONGA, this organization has the purpose of promoting the integral development of the Amazonian peoples, through various mechanisms, one of them being the organization of the Amazon Summit. In March 2021, Macas, the cantonal head of Morona, became the venue for said event by bringing together authorities from different levels of government of the Ecuadorian Amazon to discuss common problems and experiences, such as: the request for reforms to the Amazon Law ; requests to the central government for the completion of works and projects such as the Amazon Trunk and the payment of revenues obtained from Amazonian resources; dialogue on common public policies that the governments of the region can take; among other topics that were discussed (CONGA, 2021). In the same way, it also participated in the I Amazon Tourism Summit, organized by COMAGA, where strategies for the reactivation of the tourism sector in the region were discussed (COMAGA, 2021).

Another aspect that favors the proactive role of the Morona Canton in the face of Cooperation are its policies oriented towards the human development of the Moronense

population, how the municipality looks at itself, its future vision and its values. Specifically, the mission of the Morona Canton in the current administration is:

“The Illustrious Municipality of Morona plans, implements and promotes quality projects and services to satisfy collective needs, ensuring development in a sustainable, equitable and competitive way, with the direct participation of social actors, within a framework of ethics and transparency. institutional, optimizing available resources ”

This mission is reflected in the multiple programs in which the current administration is working in a participatory manner. Programs oriented towards: the fight against child malnutrition; policies for attracting investment and collecting seed capital for the construction of higher education centers; construction of housing for low-income people and infrastructure for businesses; training and participation of people dedicated to main economic activities of the canton such as livestock, agriculture and crafts; cleaning and sanitation of the urban area and surrounding rural sectors; sewage and drinking water; free connectivity in remote towns; among many others (GAD Morona, 2021).

Canton Morona shares its experience in these programs with other local governments in Ecuador, in this way acquiring a proactive role in terms of Cooperation, and likewise, it could do it with others at an international level with the appropriate tools and support.

2.2.2. Receptive Role

The actor, within the IC process, who receives the resources or benefits is understood as one who exercises a receptive role (Bernal, 2019). The question to be analyzed at this point is when an actor should exercise this kind of role, and this should be when there is a need that has to be solved to promote human development of a population that requires it. Many governments of different levels around the world face multiple challenges facing the lack of technical or financial capacity to develop programs and projects.

GAD Morona faces multiple challenges that put the fulfillment and development of projects and programs at risk, especially when it refers to the lack of financing or funds for them, a situation that has been aggravated by the pandemic. According to the Ministry of Finance (2021), the debt maintained between the central government and the GADs is greater than 2375 million dollars per Territorial Equity Model. These funds, which the municipal administration has not had, have caused the reduction of programs and projects for the area, as well as the dismissal of professionals. If the Municipality did not have enough staff with adequate technical preparation before 2020, the dismissals caused by the circumstances of the pandemic have worsened the situation, all this added to this the deficiencies in communication between officials, whether of the same or different departments, a problem mentioned above.

The management of the canton alongside the multiple problems it faces is limited, so its progress and development can cause a real impact on the Moronense population if IC is applied. Canton Morona has immense potential to flourish, as long as it has the appropriate tools and support provided by various international actors through IC processes. The current administration of the Canton has the political will to make the necessary changes to improve the quality of life of the Morona population, and has the legal powers to manage these processes, thus being able to also acquire a receptive role in relation to IC.

2.3. Experiences of Canton Morona in the face of International Cooperation

According to testimonies provided by officials from different departments of the Morona Municipality, the experience of administration in IC is not extensive. The projects that have been carried out through IC have been done autonomously by each department in charge of the execution of said project, or through a third organization that acts as an intermediary. During the previous administration, there was a bureau within the Municipality, specifically one in charge of advising on International Relations, however, due to several factors such as: workload on a single person; lack of trained personnel; deficiencies in interdepartmental communication; low budget and staff cuts, among others, caused the bureau to disintegrate.

Among the most relevant agreements within the current administration, the following can be found:

Year	Cooperant Entity	Country of Origin of the cooperant entity	Description of the agreement
2019	Embassy of Japan in Ecuador	Japan	Agreement between the Embassy of Japan in Ecuador and the Municipality of Morona Canton for the construction of the Kaap Entsa bridge in the Sevilla Don Bosco parish
2020	French Alliance	France	Agreement between the French Alliance and the Municipality of the Morona Canton to facilitate access to scholarships, cultural exchange, learning the French language to Moroneans citizens
2020	Development Bank, French Agency of Development, European Union, Investment Facility of Latin America	Ecuador, France, European Union	Agreement between the BDE, the AFD, the UE and LAIF and the Municipality of Canton Morona for the execution of the Technical Assistance Program to support investments in water, sanitation and solid waste management
2021	Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit	Germany	Agreement between the German Society for International Cooperation and the Municipality of the Canton Morona for the adaptation of basic infrastructure of biosafety, logistics and signaling in the rural tourist enterprises of the Canton, especially linked to the Sangay National Park
2021	UN Women - through ProAmazonia	United Nations	Improve the situation and position of women in socio-environmental processes, promoting the conservation of biodiversity, forests and ecosystem services, as well as in production

			processes to face climate change
2021	World Wildlife Fund	Denmark and the United States	Forest Biodiversity Conservation Project in the Cordillera Real Occidental

Table N°7: Agreements and projects of International Cooperation of the Municipal GAD of Morona
 Made by: Michelle Camila Molina Barros
 Source <http://www.morona.gob.ec/?p=16333>

One of the biggest problems faced by the Municipality of Morona is regarding the management of International Cooperation, because there is no trained personnel in this area because there is no managing body for it, and there is also no adequate record of such IC projects. As previously stated, the GAD Morona has managed IC, but it has not done so in an adequate or organized manner.

2.4. 2.4. Experiences of Canton Cuenca regarding International Cooperation as a reference

In 1999 Cuenca was declared Cultural Heritage of Humanity by UNESCO, for which purpose, an office that carried out these protocol processes was established (Ministry of Culture and Heritage, 2021). However, it was not until 2011 that a bureau focused on International Relations was truly established, which has been in charge of linking the city to international cooperation networks, as well as creating agreements, seeking strategic allies, achieving technical assistance and obtain non-reimbursable funds for projects that are in line with the Development and Territorial Planning Plan. The direction of International Relations of the Municipal GAD of Cuenca is oriented towards two main aspects, the first, that of managing International Cooperation for the aforementioned search for allies, creation of agreements and obtaining assistance or funds for projects, while the second is aimed at promoting Cuenca as an intercultural city, appealing to foreigners in order to establish contact and exchanges with Diplomatic Missions and International Organizations (Castro, 2020).

Cuenca could be considered as an example to follow in terms of the management of International Cooperation for its joint work with international agencies for projects aimed at

topics such as good practices, waste management and water management, which has made the city the recipient of multiple national and international recognitions. These projects are articulated in conjunction with each of the municipal agencies, bureaus and public companies through a triangulation that consists of socialization with these areas, the PDOT and the Plan of the administration on duty (Ibid, 2020). Cuenca has benefited from International Cooperation by having identified the strengths and weaknesses of the GAD, establishing priorities based on them, and through this, being able not only to identify, but also to choose the cooperation offers to which they can access and that respond to the needs of the city.

It is important to mention that Cuenca could be a benchmark for the structuring of a managing entity of International Cooperation in the Morona Canton as both Cantons are part of the Planning Zone 6, as well as both are part of organizations such as the AME.

Chapter III: Proposal for an International Cooperation Plan

3.1. The reason for International Cooperation in Canton Morona

In Morona Santiago, there have been very few and incipient International Cooperation processes that have taken place, where none of the 12 cantons that comprise it have properly an IC bureau. In this province, the only office that manages IC could be considered the one belonging to the Provincial GAD, which has also faced multiple limitations from the administrations on duty, including budgetary and political will issues. It would be understood that Canton Morona, being the cantonal head of the Province, should be the leader and the local reference in the management of IC, however, as mentioned in previous sections, it has also faced multiple problems and limitations in the field. Canton Morona has carried out International Cooperation processes. The problem that is described, and to which the proposal contained in this research must respond, is the deficient management that has been given to International Cooperation, and as a result, there is evidence of a delay and loss of multiple opportunities in what refers to the construction of strategic alliances and cooperation with actors in the international spectrum that lead and contribute to the development of the Canton, and set a precedent in the Province, with a significant positive impact.

The few projects that have been carried out through International Cooperation in the Morona Canton have been done in a disorganized manner, without adequate monitoring, feedback and trained personnel. Likewise, there are no guiding principles or a true approach that responds to the needs of the canton, rather, the vision of IC has been simplified to the idea of obtaining financial amounts and sums of money that alleviate the tight municipal budget.

It is for these reasons, briefly listed, why an entity should be established that takes charge of the adequate management of the IC in the Morona Canton, which will establish, alongside the administration on duty, an approach and strategic principles that respond to the needs of the Canton for the execution of projects and programs towards development.

3.2. Elementos base para la Cooperación Internacional Estratégica

Considering the Guide for Foreign Action of Local Governments and EU-LATAM Decentralized Cooperation of the Barcelona Provincial Council (2007), “ for the internationalization of a local government to be coherent, effective and durable, it is essential that it takes place within a strategic framework, where there is a preliminary reflection that precedes the action ”. In other words, a strategy must be proposed for the internationalization of a city to be successful, which must be structured through a process that allows it to position itself and identify its place on the international scene, where it wants to be and how to do it. To achieve this, the local government must be able to consider not only the context of its territory and that population, but must also bear in mind the international reality. There are three main guidelines, the same ones that are:

1. The formulation of the international strategy
2. The instrumentalization of international strategy
3. The professionalization of the international strategy

Tabla 4 Pautas generales para la acción internacional	
A. Para formular la estrategia hay que...	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Analizar el contexto externo 2. Analizar la situación interna 3. Identificar las prioridades locales 4. Definir la visión de futuro
B. Para instrumentar la estrategia hay que...	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 5. Adecuar la institución y los procesos 6. Vigilar la legalidad de las actuaciones 7. Asignar recursos
C. Para profesionalizar la estrategia internacional hay que...	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 8. Formalizar y garantizar la continuidad 9. Comunicar y sensibilizar a la población 10. Evaluar y perfeccionar la estrategia

Figure N°24: Guidelines for the Strategic International Planning

Source: <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1DiXE5cf9uqpTt6-20PbI7ZMfMuwz1sbg/view>

According to the Policies and Strategies of International Cooperation of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ecuador (2018), IC management must be governed by the principles of the Ecuadorian legal system as well as international agreements and treaties, specifically referring to:

1. In the national legislation, Art. 66 of the Special Law of Planning and Public Finance (2012) establishes that:

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

2. In the international legislation to the principles contained in:
 - a. The 2005 Paris Declaration on Development Aid Effectiveness
 - b. The 2008 Accra Program of Action
 - c. The 2008 Busan Global Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation

Principles	Definition
Appropriation	Partner countries exercise effective authority over their development policies and strategies and coordinate development actions
Alignment	Donors base all their support on partner countries' national development strategies, institutions and procedures
Harmonization	Donor actions are more harmonized, transparent and collectively

	effective
Management by Results	Management of resources and improvement of results-oriented decision making
Mutual Responsibility	Donors and partners are accountable for development results

Table N°8: Values for International Cooperation and the Paris Declaration on the Efficacy of the Official Development Assistance of 2005

Made by: Michelle Camila Molina Barros

Source <https://www.oecd.org/development/effectiveness/34580968.pdf>

In a similar sense, Bernal (2019) considers to carry out a strategic and effective International Cooperation project, three essential elements must be considered:

1. Political Will: support from the highest authority of the local government.
2. Continuity: the relationship with other IC actors must be continuous, that is, political distancing must be avoided and constant contact with them must be maintained.
3. Progressivity: the impacts and effects of a proper IC application will not be seen immediately, but the results will be reflected over time.



Figure N°25: Scheme of essential elements for Strategic International Cooperation

Source: <http://dspace.uazuay.edu.ec/handle/datos/8951>

Similarly, the Association of Ecuadorian Municipalities (AME) (2019) proposes a series of criteria to manage IC, which are:

1. Complementarity and Responsibility

- a. IC must complement the efforts of the Ecuadorian State towards local development, to improve the living conditions of citizens in conjunction with the constitutional compliance of *el Buen Vivir*.

2. Territorial Articulation

- a. GADs must exercise and coordinate effective leadership on territorial development policies and strategies, with the joint participation of other IC actors and the different levels of government.

3. Transparency and Effectiveness

- a. The execution of IC must be accompanied by processes of citizen participation and accountability to guarantee its effectiveness.

4. Self-sufficiency and No-conditionality

- a. GADs should promote IC as a tool that strengthens: the technical capacities of local institutions; equitable development; economic and environmental self-sufficiency; and the social and cultural sovereignty of the locality.

5. Specialization and Harmonization

- a. GADs must avoid the dispersion and fragmentation of the actors involved in the IC process.

6. Strategic Vision

- a. GADs must guide the IC processes towards the sustainability and continuity of the institutional processes in the territory in the medium and long term.

3.3. Proposals for the management of International Cooperation in Canton Morona

3.3.1. Proposal for the creation of a unit in charge of managing International Cooperation

3.3.1.1 General Objective

To establish an International Cooperation unit within the Municipal GAD of the Morona Canton in charge of the adequate management of IC processes, which will respond to the needs of the administration and the Morona population, while aligned with the Cantonal Plan for Development and Territorial Ordering and IC National Policies.

3.3.1.2. Specific Objectives

- To promote the establishment of relationships and strategic alliances between the Morona Municipal GAD with external IC actors, so opportunities for projects can be sought and identified, as well as linking Canton Morona to international networks
- To coordinate efforts with other dependencies and departments of the Municipality of Canton Morona, as well as institutions belonging to the SECI for the execution of projects and programs through International Cooperation
- To develop mechanisms that guarantee transparency in the use of resources obtained through IC, as well as give proper monitoring and feedback to executed projects and cooperating agents.
- To position the image of Morona at the international level, by promoting participation in events such as international fairs, as well as applications to external recognitions and certifications
- To establish the principles, criteria and approaches that will guide the International Cooperation processes being carried out, while considering the needs of the locality,

the Administration Work Plan, and the Cantonal Plan for Territorial Development and Planning.

3.3.1.3. Approach

For adequate and conducive IC management, a structured approach must be established, which must respond to:

1. Sustainable Development Goals SDGs
2. National Development Plan
3. Cantonal Plan for Development and Territorial Ordering of Morona
4. Work Plan and Objectives of the current administration
5. The needs of the Morona population
6. Strengths and Weaknesses of GAD Morona

The approach proposed for the management of IC should include all the elements listed above. Remembering the purpose of IC as an established tool that goes beyond the traditional and outdated vision of being a means for raising economic funds, it is also important to note that it serves as a way to solve problems and satisfy the development-oriented needs of the population, while contributing to the improvement of the technical and institutional capacities of the Municipal GAD; and inserting the Canton in the international context for the search for opportunities to promote local development. The approach must also adapt to the new economic, social and environmental challenges of today. It is important once again to mention that the approach proposed must go beyond traditional views, since Canton Morona also has great potential to participate in national and international networks as a cooperator, through experiences it has in certain areas, or common issues with other localities, which can be resolved through dialogue and exchange.

3.3.1.4. Strategic Factors

In this section, “strategic factors” are those elements that facilitate and strengthen International Cooperation processes, which must be considered when proposing the articulation of a IC management unit, in which they can be listed:

- **Information and Communication Technologies ICTs**
 - As a means to identify IC offers and opportunities, while establishing and maintaining contact with cooperators and external agents, organizing and registering projects and programs executed through IC.
- **International Cooperation Networks**
 - As an opportunity to find and establish strategic alliances, opportunities and offers of cooperation, as well as solve common problems with other localities, and facilitate the internationalization of the Canton
- **International Standards for Cooperation**
 - As a tool that guarantees the adequate management of IC processes and that provides greater confidence to cooperators about the projects and programs executed by the Municipal GAD
- **Transparency and Accountability Processes**
 - As mechanisms that socialize and provide greater confidence to the general public, levels of government and cooperators on the use and management of resources obtained through IC, as well as the results of projects and programs executed through IC.

3.3.1.5. Body of Legislation and Regulations

In the first place, the Municipality of Canton Morona must make changes in this area to allow the management of IC by said unit, which can be done by the Mayor through a

Municipal Ordinance. The AME has proposed a model ordinance that can be used as a guide for this, in which Article 6 establishes the creation of a Direction / Coordination / Unit / Headquarters / Department in charge of managing IC. Considering the structure of the Municipality of Canton Morona, as can be seen in figure No. 14, the creation of the Department of Foreign Relations and International Cooperation (DRECI) is suggested, which will belong to the area of enabling advisory and control processes.

In addition, the autonomy of said unit with respect to other departments is recommended, including workspace. In this way, it will be guaranteed its proper function and exercise as an advisory entity to the highest authority of the GAD and to the other departments of the Municipality. Also, due to the nature of its functions, it is considered that the department with which will have a closer relationship will be the Planning department, which has the knowledge of all the projects being carried out. This with the purpose of directing IC as a response to local needs.

Regarding the staff of said unit, it is suggested that it can start with two people: one of them being the chief or director (as appropriate); and the other an expert in the area. As mentioned above, the lack of trained personnel has been one of the problems faced by the administration of the Morona Canton in the management of IC. Therefore, it is necessary that the personnel working in the DRECI have education and training relevant to this area. The attributions and responsibilities of the personnel working in the DRECI are:

- To manage IC to comply with the competences of GAD Morona, in accordance with the current national and international regulations.
- To give advice and support to the highest authority of GAD Morona and the team of the municipality of Morona in IC matters.
- To structure and align the management of IC with the Cantonal and Parish PCDOTs.
- To coordinate the management of IC with the activities of the different entities that conform the institutional articulation.
- To promote and manage the participation of GAD Morona in front of cooperators and national and international meetings.

- To propose and promote plans, strategies and activities for the positioning of Canton Morona in the national and international context.
- To promote spaces for articulation with other actors in order to promote IC management from the cantonal perspective.

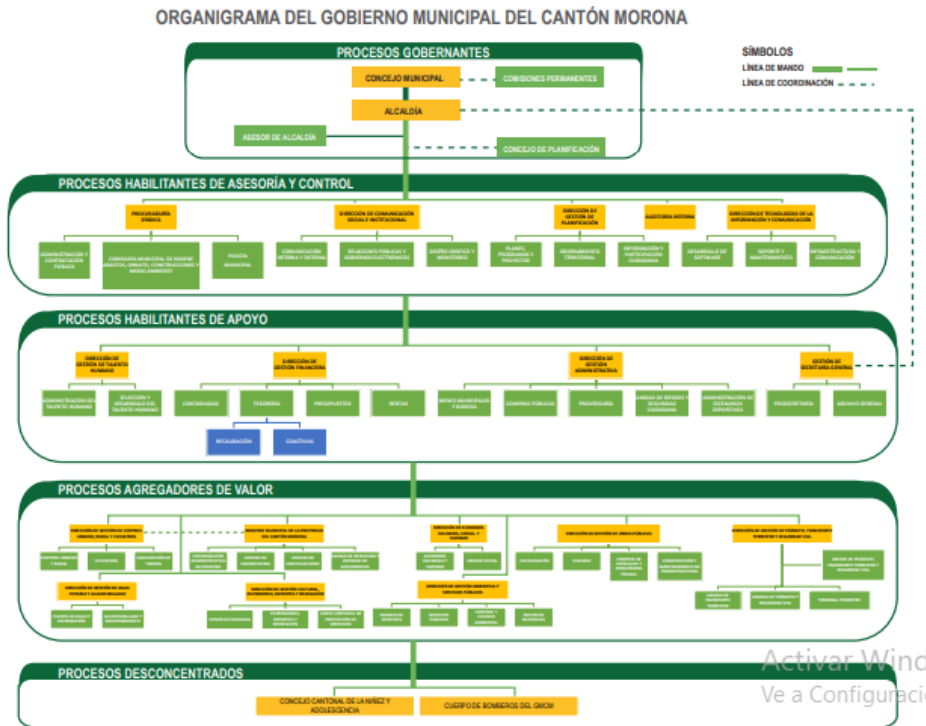


Figure N°16: Institutional Structure of Canton Morona
 Source: https://transparencia.mmorona.gob.ec/media/lotaip/2020/Mayo/a1/Organigrama_de_la_Instituci%C3%B3n.pdf

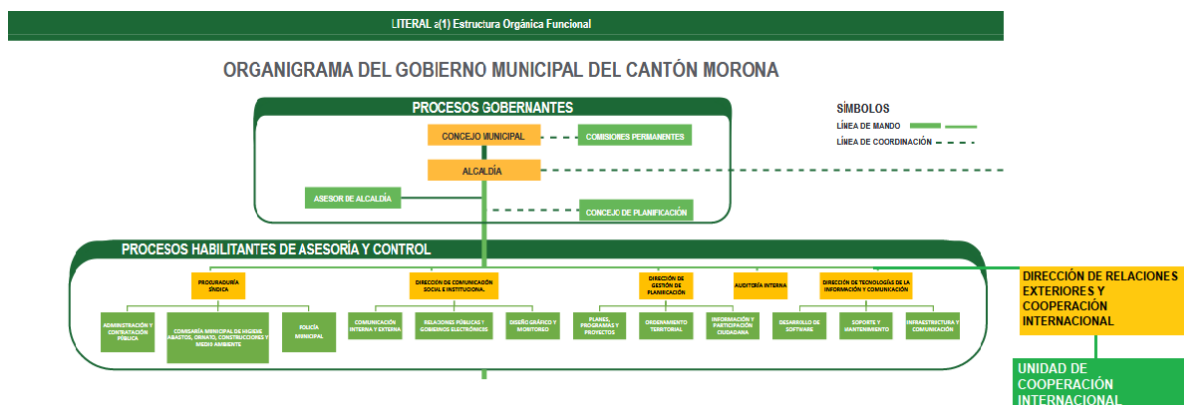


Figure N°26: Suggested organization Table for GAD Morona
 Modified by: Michelle Camila Molina Barros
 Source: <http://www.morona.gob.ec/wp-content/uploads/LOTAIP/2020/Enero/Literal-a-1-Estructura-Orga%CC%81nica-Funcional.pdf>

3.3.1.6. Functional areas of the Department of Foreign Relations and International Cooperation

Four areas in which the department will perform its functions are proposed below. It is important to note that the specific management and attributions of which will be developed in more detail in the section "Proposal for the Management of International Cooperation".



Figure N°27: Suggested working areas for the Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation Department
Made by: Michelle Camila Molina Barros

International Relations:

- Search for IC opportunities and projects
- Linking with other IC agents
- Receive and organize formal visits from guests involved in IC processes
- Organize and coordinate the dispatch of officials to international missions
- Participation in international networks

Management of Agreements:

- Establish dialogue and contact with IC agents for the establishment of strategic alliances
- Advise other departments and GAD authorities in the negotiation of IC agreements
- Implement and execute the agreements alongside the departments and institutions of the GAD

Managements of Executed Projects:

- Maintain contact with strategic allies for future projects
- Develop transparency and accountability mechanisms in projects executed through IC
- Monitor executed projects
- Maintain a registry of cooperators

International Projection:

- Positioning and managing the image of the GAD at the international level
- Participation in international fairs and events
- Host international events
- Application to international recognitions and certifications

3.4. Actors Articulation Proposal

As mentioned in previous sections, there are multiple actors involved in International Cooperation processes, again highlighting the importance of including all interested sectors to promote the correct application, management and administration of IC. All these must be articulated, that is, their needs, capacities and opportunities for the insertion of the Canton in the international scene. Three types of main actors can be identified, which should be

integrated in order to structure the approach and actions of the IC management unit, which are:

1. Local Actors, within Canton Morona
2. National Actors, external to Canton Morona but within Ecuador
3. International Actors

3.4.1. International Cooperation Actors and their relevance for GAD Morona

3.4.1.1. Actors within Canton Morona or Local Actors

In this section, reference will be made to those entities present in tCanton Morona that have the potential to become IC agents, and whose activities are closely related to the work of the Municipal GAD.

Actor	Description
GAD Morona	The DRECI as part of the Municipality of Morona will be in charge of providing advice and managing IC processes that are carried out alongside other departments of the Municipality.
Chankuap Foundation	It is part of the Salesian Mission in Wasakentsa, located in Achuar territory, with headquarters in Macas. It is responsible for: providing comprehensive social, productive, transformation and marketing development services; promoting the capacities and resources of priority care groups and valuing their identity; and encouraging self-management, solidarity and respect for nature. It works alongside the local governments of Morona Santiago, as well as international entities. This foundation is already an agent of IC.

Hidroabánico S.A.	A company based in Macas that has operated since 2003 and is dedicated to energy generation projects with social responsibility and is environmentally friendly. At the same time, it provides electricity to isolated communities in Morona Santiago. One of its objectives is also to promote economic and social development in these communities.
EMAPSA-M	It is the drinking water and environmental sanitation company of Canton Morona. Its objective is to provide basic services to the city of Macas and surrounding parishes, working with social responsibility and environmental awareness. In addition, it is in charge of providing awareness programs to citizens about the use and conservation of water resources.
Cantonal Council for Children and Adolescents	A council that groups together institutions, agencies, entities and public and private services that execute policies, plans, programs and actions, with the purpose of guaranteeing the comprehensive protection of children and adolescents in Canton Morona.
Macas Fire Department	This institution, attached to the Municipal GAD of Morona, is dedicated to defending people and property against fire; help in catastrophes or accidents; and carry out rescue actions. It should be noted here that this Fire Department is the largest and the best equipped in the province of Morona Santiago, which is why it also provides emergency services in other cantons.
Cantonal Planning Council	This instance is part of the structure of the Municipality of Morona, which is in charge of articulating and coordinating the planning of the Canton according to the National Development Plan. Also it is the entity that promotes citizen participation and social control in the formulation of public policies in the Canton.

Table N°9: International Cooperation Actors in Canton Morona

Made by: Michelle Camila Molina Barros

Source <http://www.morona.gob.ec/>

3.4.1.2 Actors within Ecuador or National Actors

Resolution No. 009-CNC-2011 establishes that all processes within the scope of International Cooperation must be aligned with the National Development Plan and other national policies, projects and strategies. Likewise, these IC processes must involve the participation of the different levels of government and civil society. Regarding actors outside Canton Morona but within Ecuador, the following can be listed in the table below.

Actor	Description
Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Human Mobility	The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Human Mobility is in charge of the administration, management, supervision and evaluation of the SECI, through the Undersecretariat of International Cooperation. One of the functions of this entity is to design, propose and evaluate policies and tools for non-reimbursable IC to support the processes carried out by the GADs.
SENPLADES	The National Planning and Development Secretariat is in charge of approving non-reimbursable IC programs and projects, so they are in accordance with the guidelines and policies established by the central government.
Morona Santiago Prefecture	The prefecture has jurisdiction and works in all the 12 cantons of Morona Santiago. In addition, the prefecture has its own IC unit. Therefore it is essential to take it into consideration in terms of experience and strategic alliances. It is worth mentioning here that the Municipality of the Canton and the Prefecture work closely on multiple projects, have several cooperation agreements and mutual work, as well as being located in the same city.
Parish GADs within the Morona Canton	Canton Morona has eight rural parishes and an urban one. With a unit in charge of the IC, the Morona Canton could carry out projects and coordinate them together with the parish GADs of its territorial district. Although the parish GADs also have the competence to manage IC processes, it would be the Cantonal unit

	that advises and supports them.
Association of Ecuadorian Municipalities AME	The Association of Ecuadorian Municipalities is an associative institution of municipal GADs that promotes the development of a decentralized and autonomous local management model, working together with other entities and levels of government. One of the tasks of the AME is to provide technical advice regarding the establishment and initiation of processes and management of IC. Currently the Morona Canton is in the Presidency of this entity.
Commonwealth of Provincial Autonomous Governments of the Ecuadorian Amazon CONGA	This organization has the purpose of promoting the integral development of the Amazonian peoples. Although the Prefecture of Morona Santiago is part of CONGA, the Municipal GAD of Morona has worked closely with this entity. In addition, CONGA has served as a forum not only for provincial GADs, but also for parish and cantonal governments in the Amazon to discuss common problems and make requests to the central government.
ProAmazonia	It is a program of the Ministries of Environment and Agriculture and Livestock of Ecuador, supported by the United Nations Development Program UNDP, to reduce deforestation in the country; promote the sustainable and integrated management of natural resources; and contribute to the eradication of poverty and sustainable human development. This entity has worked in Canton Morona with projects aimed at improving the situation and position of women in socio-environmental processes, promoting the conservation of biodiversity, forests and ecosystem services, as well as in production processes to face climate change.
Consortium of Amazonian and Galapagos Municipalities COMAGA	It promotes the integrated and sustainable development of the member municipalities, by promoting and generating development-oriented initiatives, as well as providing technical and financial assistance in plans and projects, to consolidate an alternative local and regional development model.
Universities and institutions of higher education	In the city of Macas there are extensions of several universities from Riobamba, Cuenca and Loja. Although strategic alliances could be made with institutions of this type throughout the country, priority should be given to those that have projects and programs similar to those that GAD Morona is developing and / or

	that can contribute to its action. The closest Universities are in the cities of Riobamba and Cuenca. Specifically, the University of Azuay could be taken into account due to the training it gives to graduates in International Studies.
Other actors	Various actors like Ministries, Associations, Consortiums, Secretariats, etc. whose actions may contribute to the objectives of the GAD Morona in the field of IC.

Table N°10: International Cooperation Actors in Ecuador
 Made by: Michelle Camila Molina Barros
 Source <http://www.morona.gob.ec/>

3.4.1.3 International Actors

It is necessary for the purpose of this qualification work to point out the actors in this area due to their nature and their ability to carry out International Cooperation processes, where agents belonging to other countries, of different character, would be taken into account, where they are listed the following as the main ones to consider.

Actor	Description
Embassies and Consulates	In Ecuador there are 44 embassies from other countries established in Quito, in addition to more missions established as consulates in cities such as Guayaquil, Cuenca, Loja and Esmeraldas. Maintaining contact with this class of agents facilitates the execution of projects, as the GAD Morona has already worked with the Embassy of Japan and the Delegation of the European Union.
The Spanish Agency for International Development Cooperation AECID	The Spanish Agency for International Development Cooperation is an entity part of Spanish foreign policy and attached to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, European Union and Cooperation through the Secretary of State for International Cooperation and for Ibero-America and the Caribbean of Spain. AECID in Ecuador is located within the Embassy of Spain, and has worked on multiple projects with different levels of government in the country, especially when it comes to Technical Cooperation for small local

	governments.
KOICA Korean International Cooperation Agency	The Korea International Cooperation Agency is part of the Korean Ministry of Foreign Affairs, whose objective is to establish relations with other countries through development-oriented economic and social exchange. Similarly, this agency located within the Korean Embassy, has worked with multiple local governments in Ecuador and has provided technical advice and economic contributions to these projects.
<i>GIZ Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit</i> International Cooperation German Society	The Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit or German Society for International Cooperation is an agency part of the German government that has the purpose of contributing to sustainable development throughout the world, through Technical Cooperation. He has worked with the Morona Canton previously in the area of ecological tourism.
ABC Brazilian Agency for Cooperation	The Brazilian Agency for International Cooperation is part of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Brazil, present in multiple countries, with the purpose of generating relations and dialogue on common problems, as well as providing Technical Cooperation services. It is located within the Brazilian Embassy, where it carries out multiple development-oriented projects.
GEF Global Environmental Fund	The Global Environment Fund aims to finance internationally projects that seek to solve the most urgent environmental problems facing humanity, including: climate change, loss of biodiversity, ozone depletion and degradation of the world's oceans and international bodies of water. He currently carries out multiple projects on the Ecuadorian coast, through work with small local governments.
BID Interamerican Development Bank	The Inter-American Development Bank is an international financial organization that is responsible for reducing poverty and promoting sustainable growth in Latin America and the Caribbean. In addition to granting financing through credit mechanisms, it carries out multiple programs and

	<p>projects oriented to the environment, sustainable development and economic reactivation. In Ecuador, it is currently developing various infrastructure projects for strategic sectors.</p>
<p>CAF Andean Development Corporation - Development Bank of Latin America</p>	<p>The now Development Bank of Latin America's mission is to promote sustainable development and regional integration in Latin America, through the financing of projects in the public and private sectors, as well as providing technical cooperation services in multiple areas. In Ecuador, it carries out various projects that deal with forest preservation, added value, productivity, leadership, gender, human talent, and telecommunications.</p>
<p>UN United Nations</p>	<p>The United Nations Organization has carried out multiple projects in Ecuador through its agencies and specialized organizations in different areas, with complete coordination with national development policies and in compliance with the SDGs. Some of the UN entities present in the country, and those who have carried out these projects, are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - World Food Program WFP - United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees UNHCR - International Organization for Migration IOM - United Nations Children's Fund UNICEF - The United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women UN Women - Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations FAO - United Nations Development Program UNDP - United Nations Industrial Development Organization UNIDO - United Nations Fund for Victims of Torture - United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization UNESCO - United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime UNODC - United Nations Environment Program UNEP

Table N°11: International Cooperation Foreign Actors

Made by: Michelle Camila Molina Barros

Source <http://app.cancilleria.gob.ec/mapa/#>

3.4.2. Articulation of Actors

Once the relevant International Cooperation actors for the Morona Canton have been identified at the different levels that have been described above, it is just as important to describe their role in the articulation proposal with Canton Morona, so that they can be created and energized. efforts to conduct International Cooperation processes. Here three types of articulation are identified, which are according to the types of actors:Articulaci3n Institucional:

1. Institutional Articulation
2. Territorial Articulation
3. International Articulation

3.4.2.1. Institutional Articulation

This first level of integration refers to an internal articulation, together with the actors who were called local, that is, those who are within the territorial district of the Morona Canton. If the articulation proposed in this research is carried out, two fundamental factors are required; the first of these being the alignment of local actors with the Cantonal Plan for Development and Territorial Ordering of Morona, and the second constituting the joint work of the Planning Department, for the correct execution of this proposal.

As indicated in previous sections, the Department of Foreign Relations and International Cooperation would be in charge of carrying out the IC processes, so within this scope, the DRECI must ensure that these local actors work together and not on a one-man basis. For this, support is required with each of the actors to coordinate efforts. In turn, as established in advance, it is necessary for the DRECI to work closely with the Planning Department, and for this entity to have knowledge of each of the projects of the stakeholders involved, taking charge of identifying the specific needs, the corresponding roles, and through this, manage International Cooperation that responds to these. But it is not only the Planning Department that should work with the Department of Foreign Relations and

International Cooperation, in reality, all departments and dependencies of the Municipality of Morona Canton must be aware of the functions and competencies of the DRECI for the coordination of efforts. It is suggested that the institutional articulation be carried out in the following way:

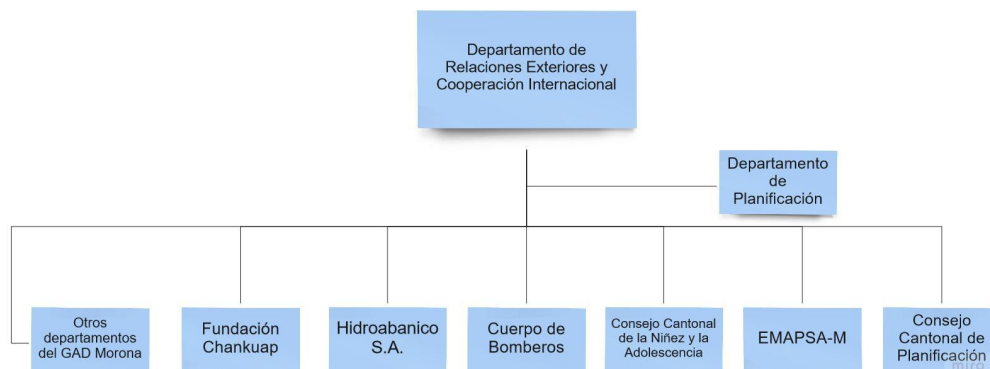


Figure N°28: Institutional Coordination of the DRECI and local actors
 Made by: Michelle Camila Molina Barros

3.4.2.2. Territorial Articulation

Once the articulation of the first institutional level has been carried out, it is appropriate to move towards territorial articulation, where the expansion of the actors of the territorial district is recommended as its articulation is addressed, that is, to advance from the most near the Morona Canton, and advance from that point. Here, the parishes of the Morona Canton should be included, and later the Provincial GAD of Morona Santiago since these are key actors in the planning of activities for the fulfillment of the Morona Canton Development and Territorial Ordering Plan. Once this has been carried out, SENPLADES must be included, since it is the competent entity at the national level for planning.

In terms of International Cooperation, the coordination of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Human Mobility should continue, the entity in charge of the CI at the national level, through the Undersecretariat for International Cooperation. Likewise, it is just as important to include the other territorial actors in the articulation:

- Association of Ecuadorian Municipalities AME
- Commonwealth of Provincial Autonomous Governments of the Ecuadorian Amazon
- Consortium of Amazonian and Galapagos Municipalities
- ProAmazonia
- Universities and institutions of higher education
- Other actors such as ministries, associations, consortia, secretariats, etc.

As is evident, there are multiple actors in the national circumscription that are fundamental in the articulation, however, due to its extension, it is suggested that the articulatory process be based on the actors presented in the figure below, and as progress is made with the work of the DRECI, others could be included.

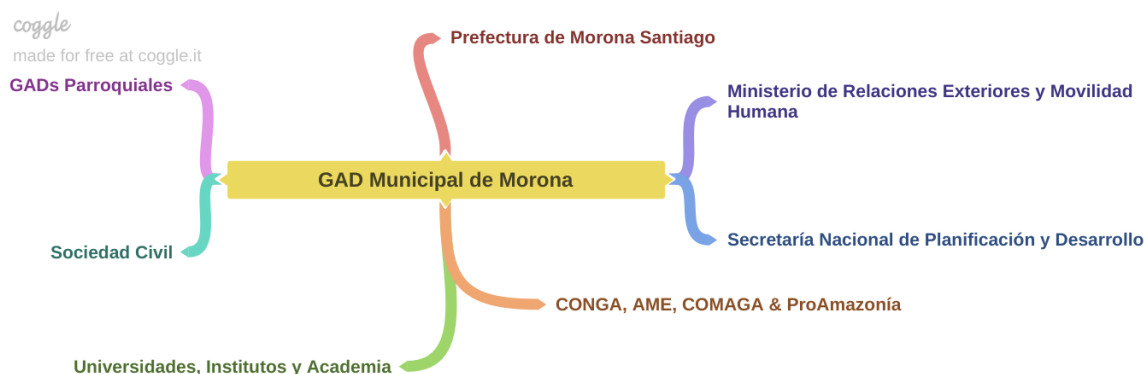


Figure N°29: Institutional Coordination of the DRECI and National Actors
 Made by: Michelle Camila Molina Barros

The articulation of the territorial actors must be coordinated and joint, in order to boost their capacities and experience, to conduct effective International Cooperation processes that respond to the needs and contribute to the development of the Morona Canton. For this, beyond the need to maintain constant communication, a line of action must be established in which all actors have the same importance, and therefore, International

Cooperation with positive results for all parties involved. Likewise, the Development Plans and Territorial Ordering of the different levels must be aligned with the national policy and the IC processes that are carried out.

Once the institutional articulation, and subsequently the territorial one, is carried out, the DRECI may begin to manage International Cooperation by abiding by Resolution No. 009-CNC-2011, which in Art. 4, Art. 14 and Art. 15 establishes said competence.

3.4.2.3. International Articulation

When the institutional and territorial articulation has already been carried out, it is finally time to approach the International. As the DRECI is a relatively new entity, articulating international actors and starting to manage International Cooperation could be somewhat complex as it does not have contacts. In the first place, it must approach these international actors, and for this, it must take advantage of the strengths of the territorial actors to be able to make such approaches to international actors, and thus, be capable of articulating them. This is why once again the importance of working together and coordinating efforts between the GAD Morona and the other actors should be highlighted, taking advantage of the capacities and experiences, especially of those who have already carried out IC processes, such as the GAD Provincial of Morona Santiago and even nearby Provincial GADs, among them the Provincial GAD of Azuay or Chimborazo could be listed. Likewise, it is just as important to access mechanisms and technical support that entities such as the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Human Mobility can provide, through the Undersecretariat for International Cooperation.

In the international arena there are thousands of actors of different kinds that participate in International Cooperation. It is recommended that the DRECI begin by establishing contact with those who already participate in the territorial constituency and have been promoted by their national allies, and later, when GAD Morona itself has already gained experience and has managed various projects with these actors, gradually articulate gradually to other actors that it can access, not only as a recipient of IC, but also the GAD Morona exercising a proactive role.

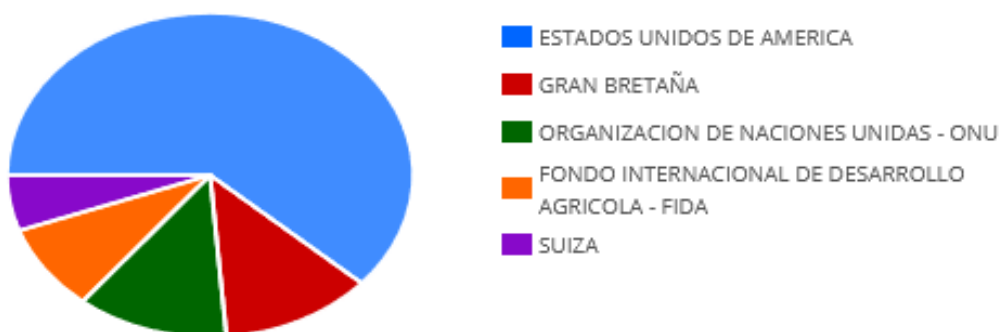


Figure N°30: Most important cooperators for Ecuador

Source: Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Human Mobility <http://app.cancilleria.gob.ec/mapa/#>

3.5. International Projection Proposal

According to Bernal (2019), the International Projection refers to “putting on the map” a city, that is, being identified at an international level. However, this brief definition could be confused when talking about the tourism field, which although important, should be clarified that the concept of internationalization tries to go further, making itself known as an actor that can actively participate in the global scene, and therefore, it can establish relationships and manage International Cooperation processes.

A particular problem with the external projection of the Morona Canton is the name itself, competing with the Province’s name. The name of Morona Santiago comes from the two most important rivers that cross it and flow into the Amazon; the Morona and the Santiago. Due to their presence, several places around the province have been named in their honor, such is the case of the Morona and Santiago de Méndez Cantons, as well as the city of Santiago de Tiwintza. To avoid any confusion regarding the names when talking about the projection specifically of tCanton Morona, it is recommended to refer to Macas, provincial capital and cantonal head, which is more recognized at the national level.

Addressing specifically the issue of Macas, this city is known as "La Esmeralda Oriental" or "La Tierra de la Guayusa y la Canela" (The Emerald of the East or The Land of Guayusa and Cinnamon). Although these names have been used for a long time, currently the Department of Tourism of the GAD Morona is promoting the city as "Macas: Ciudad Turística y Deportiva" (Macas: Touristic and Sportive City). It is important to mention that

the City Marketing Plan that has been proposed is not actually limited to the cantonal head, but rather welcomes the promotion of the Canton in its entirety, to avoid the problems described above.



Figure N°31: Touristic Logo of Macas
Source: Tourism Department of GAD Morona <https://macas.gob.ec/>

A way in which the Canton could be inserted in the international scene and create relationships with these kinds of actors is through the participation at events aimed at the promotion of the city; such as fairs, summits and conferences, which also will enable the Canton to participate in international networks. As mentioned above, collaboration with partners with more experience in the field of IC is fundamental. In this stage, coordinated work carried out in territorial articulation would be crucial to carry out this strategy. Hosting international events is just as important, since in this way, the attractions of the city can be presented first-hand, and how management is reflected on it.

One of the approaches of this degree work is to propose Canton Morona as a provider of technical IC, which consists of another internationalization strategy. The transfer of experiences and knowledge with other actors with similar characteristics would allow them to become known and participate in international networks. In addition, the DRECI by working together with the actors described in the institutional articulation, could apply to international prizes, certifications or awards in specific projects or successful management practices that it has had, which could give a positive image and enhance the city Macas and the Canton.

3.6. International Cooperation Management Proposal

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Human Mobility (2017) considers that “efficient management does not depend on the amounts of cooperation but on the mechanisms, structures and processes to manage these resources, as well as the sectors involved and the agents involved”. To manage International Cooperation from the perspective of decentralized local governments, the Consortium of Provincial Autonomous Governments of Ecuador CONGOPE (2013) recommends a process management model based on the establishment of an International Cooperation entity. In the case of the Morona Canton, the DRECI has been proposed, which will be governed by the proposed management model, which is made up of five main processes:

1. IC Information Management.
2. Technical Management of IC
3. Management of the Monitoring and Evaluation of IC
4. Policy Management and Negotiation of IC
5. Management of Relations with Local, National and International Actors.

3.6.1. IC Information Management

This process is aimed at managing the supply and demand of IC, through a database, and access to networks of this kind that exist at the territorial level with strategic allies, for example the IC database of the Provincial GADs and the MREMV through the Undersecretariat for International Cooperation. In addition, this process will also be responsible for:

- Identify and process the IC offer to which the GAD Morona can access, considering its objectives, competencies and needs, including the opening of contests, recognitions, prizes, events, scholarships, among others.

- Identify and manage the demand for IC in which the GAD Morona can access, considering its objectives, competencies and capacities to participate as a cooperator in international networks.
- Identify successful cases of IC management, inside and outside the country, in order to promote exchange and learning through technical assistance.
- Keep an updated record of the agreements, projects and programs that GAD Morona has executed with resources obtained through IC in a database.
- Provide advice to the highest authority of GAD Morona, as well as to other entities belonging to the institutional articulation, on the supply and demand of IC.
- Generate statistical information on IC actors and their impact on Canton Morona.
- Identify new modalities and options to carry out IC processes.

3.6.2. Technical Management of International Cooperation

This process is in charge of the design and formulation of IC's plans, strategies, projects, programs, etc., and their execution, alongside other entities within the articulation that are pertinent to each case. This process will be running:

- The design, programming and presentation of plans, strategies and agendas that facilitate the organization of the management of IC of GAD Morona, according to its objectives, competences and capacities
- The structuring of the supply and demand of IC of GAD Morona, giving priority to projects or programs, in coordination with other entities within the institutional articulation
- The execution and / or coordination of IC programs and projects with the corresponding technical areas.

- The effectiveness of the agreements and conventions signed between the GAD Morona and international actors.

3.6.3. Management of the Monitoring and Evaluation of International Cooperation

The purpose of this process is to create mechanisms for monitoring and evaluating the impact of the activities carried out by GAD Morona through CI. This process should:

- Follow up on programs, projects and other activities carried out by GAD Morona with resources obtained from IC.
- Inform the corresponding entities about the programs, projects and other activities carried out by GAD Morona with resources obtained from IC.
- Evaluate the impact of the programs, projects and other activities carried out by the GAD Morona with resources obtained from IC, considering the response to aspects such as the objectives, competencies and needs of the GAD.
- Inform the corresponding entities about the results of the impact evaluations carried out on the programs, projects and other activities carried out by GAD Morona with resources obtained from IC.
- Create alternative tools and mechanisms that can follow up on the IC agreements and conventions maintained by GAD Morona.
- Carry out analysis on the implications of International Relations and IC in the Morona Canton.

3.6.4. Policy Management and Negotiation of International Cooperation

In this process, public policy proposals will be promoted, created and presented that allow the establishment of mechanisms that regulate and give greater control to IC processes

in Canton Morona, as well as spaces and mechanisms for the negotiation and subscription of IC agreements. This process will have the ability to:

- Create, design and present public policies, guidelines and mechanisms of control, transparency and accountability for the management of IC in the Morona Canton, in accordance with national policies and current law, through joint work with other entities of institutional articulation.
- Generate and establish mechanisms that guide the negotiation processes for the signing of agreements and conventions between the GAD Morona and IC actors.
- Promote and foster the establishment of negotiation relationships between GAD Morona and IC actors inside and outside the country.
- Negotiate and sign agreements and conventions for the execution of IC programs and projects in accordance with the needs, competencies and capacities of Canton Morona.

3.6.5. Management of relationships with Local, National and International Actors

This process will be in charge of inserting the Morona Canton in the international context through the establishment and corresponding strengthening of relations with IC actors. In addition, it will be responsible for:

- Position and promote the participation of Canton Morona in international networks and events such as fairs, summits and international provincial, national and international conferences.

- Create, promote and participate in spaces for articulation at the different levels of government, which will facilitate the establishment of relationships, execution of projects and programs, creation of mechanisms, policies, plans and strategies in the field of IC
- Promote and participate in spaces of socialization of the impacts of IC in the Morona Canton, in conjunction with the different levels of government, international cooperators, civil society and other public and private actors
- Generate mechanisms and tools that contribute to the positioning of GAD Morona on the international scene.
- Coordinate the protocol visits and international missions carried out by the GAD Morona in matters related to IC, in conjunction with the corresponding institutional articulation entities.

Conclusions

In conclusion, in the first place, it is important to mention the little experience in International Cooperation that Canton Morona has. The Municipal GAD does not have a unit in charge of the management of IC, and therefore, the processes that it has carried out have been disordered, without have given the projects appropriate follow-ups and evaluations, as they do not have the personnel trained for said tasks, and also without the articulation of the actors involved. Through an analysis, it was determined that the GAD Morona has the ability to exercise proactive and responsive roles in IC. Canton Morona can exercise a proactive role in IC, recommending that Technical Cooperation and South-South Cooperation should be offered, according to its experiences and knowledge in successful areas such as programs, projects, works, and even implementation of policies that promote human development. Likewise, it can also exercise a receptive role, considering fundamental aspects such as the needs and priorities determined in the PDOT, as well as the guidelines of the national policy and the objectives of the administration in turn.

In the Province of Morona Santiago, there have been very few and incipient International Cooperation processes that have taken place, where none of the 12 cantons that conform it have properly a bureau or an IC management unit, considering the only entity of this type to the one belonging to the Provincial GAD. One would assume that Canton Morona, being the cantonal head of the Province, should be the leader and the local reference in the management of IC, so in Chapter III the creation of the Department of Foreign Relations and International Cooperation is proposed for GAD Morona.

This unit has the objective of being in charge of the adequate management of IC processes, which will respond to the needs of the administration and the Morona population, while aligned to the Cantonal Plan for Territorial Development and Planning and IC National Policies. In the same way, this office should be focused on going beyond the traditional and outdated vision of being a means for raising economic funds, by serving as an alternative to solve problems and satisfy the development-oriented needs of the population, which will contribute to the improvement of the technical and institutional capacities of the Municipal GAD, and to insert the Canton in the international context in search of opportunities that promote local development.

At the time of articulating the DRECI, the strategic factors that will strengthen and facilitate IC management must be taken into account, these being ICTs, International Cooperation Networks, International Cooperation Standards, and Transparency and Accountability Processes. Likewise, the regulations in the Canton must be adequate, through an Ordinance, for the creation of the DRECI, which will be part of the advisory and control area, enabling processes within the structure of tGAD Morona. In the same sense, four main areas are proposed in which this unit will develop its functions, these being International Relations, Agreement Management, Management of Executed Projects and International Projection.

The articulation of the local, national and international actors involved in IC is fundamental for the functioning of the DRECI of GAD Morona. In the first place, the previously mentioned actors must be identified in order to proceed with the articulation. This must be structured in a progressive order, that is, it must begin with institutional articulation, continuing to the territorial, and expanding towards the international. In this way, the DRECI of GAD Morona can coordinate efforts that facilitate carrying out efficient and beneficial IC processes for the territory, through the identification of its strategic allies within its territorial constituency and that of the country. Also, recommendations were established for the first steps that the DRECI should take, once the requirements established by Ecuadorian regulations have been met.

The international projection of the Canton is one of the fundamental tasks that DRECI Morona must carry out. Participation in events aimed at promoting the city, such as fairs, summits and conferences, must be motivated and promoted, which also will allow it to be inserted in international participation networks, as well as to make itself known through hosting these kinds of events. By working together with the actors described in the institutional articulation, it could also be applied to recognitions, certifications or international awards in specific projects or successful management practices that it has had, which could give a positive image and enhance the city of Macas and the Canton. In addition, recommendations were given on the promotion of the Canton with respect to certain conflicts that the name "Morona" represents.

Regarding IC management, a process management model is proposed, based on the establishment of the managing entity for International Cooperation, made up of five main processes: information management, IC technical management, monitoring management and IC evaluation, policy management and IC negotiation, and the management of relationships with local, national and international actors.

The first is aimed at managing the supply and demand of IC, through a database, and access to networks of this kind that exist at the territorial level with strategic allies, for example the IC database of the Provincial GADs and the MREMV through the Undersecretariat for International Cooperation. In the same way, this process will also be in charge of identifying and processing the supply and demand of IC to which the GAD Morona can access, keep an updated record of the agreements, projects and programs executed, generate statistics, provide advice, and identify new modalities and options to carry out IC processes.

The second process is responsible for the design and formulation of plans, strategies, projects, programs, and other IC proposals, and their respective execution, in conjunction with other entities within the articulation that are pertinent to each case. Additionally, the structuring of the supply and demand of IC of GAD Morona and the implementation of the agreements and conventions signed between the Municipal GAD and international actors will be appointed.

The third process has the purpose of creating mechanisms for monitoring and evaluating the impact of the activities carried out by GAD Morona through IC. It is also in charge of informing the corresponding entities about the programs, projects and other activities carried out by GAD Morona with resources obtained from IC. Therefore, the DRECI must: evaluate the impact of the programs, projects and other activities carried out by GAD Morona with resources obtained from IC; inform the corresponding entities about the results of said impact evaluations; create alternative tools and mechanisms that can follow up on IC conventions and agreements maintained by GAD Morona; and carry out analysis on the implications of International Relations and IC in the Morona Canton.

The fourth process will promote, create and present public policy proposals that allow the establishment of mechanisms that regulate and give greater control to IC processes in the

Morona Canton, as well as promote spaces and mechanisms for the negotiation and signing of IC agreements and agreements. Therefore, it is in charge of the design of public policies, guidelines and mechanisms of control, transparency and accountability for the management of IC, and the promotion of the establishment of negotiation relationships between the GAD Morona and IC actors inside and outside the country.

Finally, the fifth process will be in charge of inserting Canton Morona in the international context through the establishment and corresponding strengthening of relationships with IC actors. Therefore, the DRECI will be in charge of positioning and promoting the participation of Canton Morona in international networks and events such as fairs, summits and international provincial, national and international conferences; create, promote and participate in spaces for articulation at different levels of government, which facilitate the establishment of relationships, execution of projects and programs, creation of mechanisms, policies, plans and strategies in the field of IC; promote and participate in spaces for socialization of the impacts of IC in the Morona Canton, together with the different levels of government, international cooperators, civil society and other public and private actors; generate mechanisms and tools that contribute to the positioning of the GAD Morona on the international scene; and coordinate the protocol visits and international missions carried out by the GAD Morona in matters related to IC.

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