

38. EVALUATION REPORT

SPAIN AND ITS REGIONS EXCHANGE KNOWLEDGE WITH ANTIOQUIA (COLOMBIA). «ERICA»

SYNTHESIS REPORT



MINISTERIO
DE ASUNTOS EXTERIORES
Y DE COOPERACIÓN



Cooperación
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Report made by: EVALUANDO with a team formed by Estela López Torrejón, Cristina Neira de Fonseca, Gloria Calderón Ordóñez y Francisco Pardavila Pino, and coordinated by: Inmaculada Román Millán.

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If you have any questions about this document, please contact:

Evaluation and Knowledge Management Division
General Secretariat for International Development Cooperation
Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation
C/ Serrano Galvache, 26. Torres Ágora. Torre Norte
28071 Madrid
Ph:+34913948808
e-mail: evaluacion-sgcid@maec.es

LIST OF ACRONYMS

AECID	Spanish Agency for International Development Co-operation
COMFAMA	Family Compensation Fund of Antioquia
CSO	Civil society organisation
DIRENA	Development with Regional Identify between Spain and Nariño
ERICA	Spain and its regions exchange knowledge with Antioquia
GP	Good Practices
ILO	International Labour Organisation
NGO	Non-governmental organisation
OAI	Other exchange activities
PPP	Public-private partnership for development
PPT	Transfer pilot project
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
SGCID	General Secretariat for International Development Co-operation
ToC	Theory of Change
ToP	Theory of the Program
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Program

I. ERICA PROGRAM

The evaluation report presents main findings, conclusions, lessons learned and recommendations of the program “*España y sus regiones intercambian conocimientos con Antioquia*” (ERICA), henceforth called “the program”, implemented by the Spanish Agency of International Cooperation for Development (AECID in Spanish), in the Department of Antioquia (Colombia). The program was implemented from 2007 to 2014 (8 years) on a 5-stages approach, and with an overall budget of 1,833,854 euros.

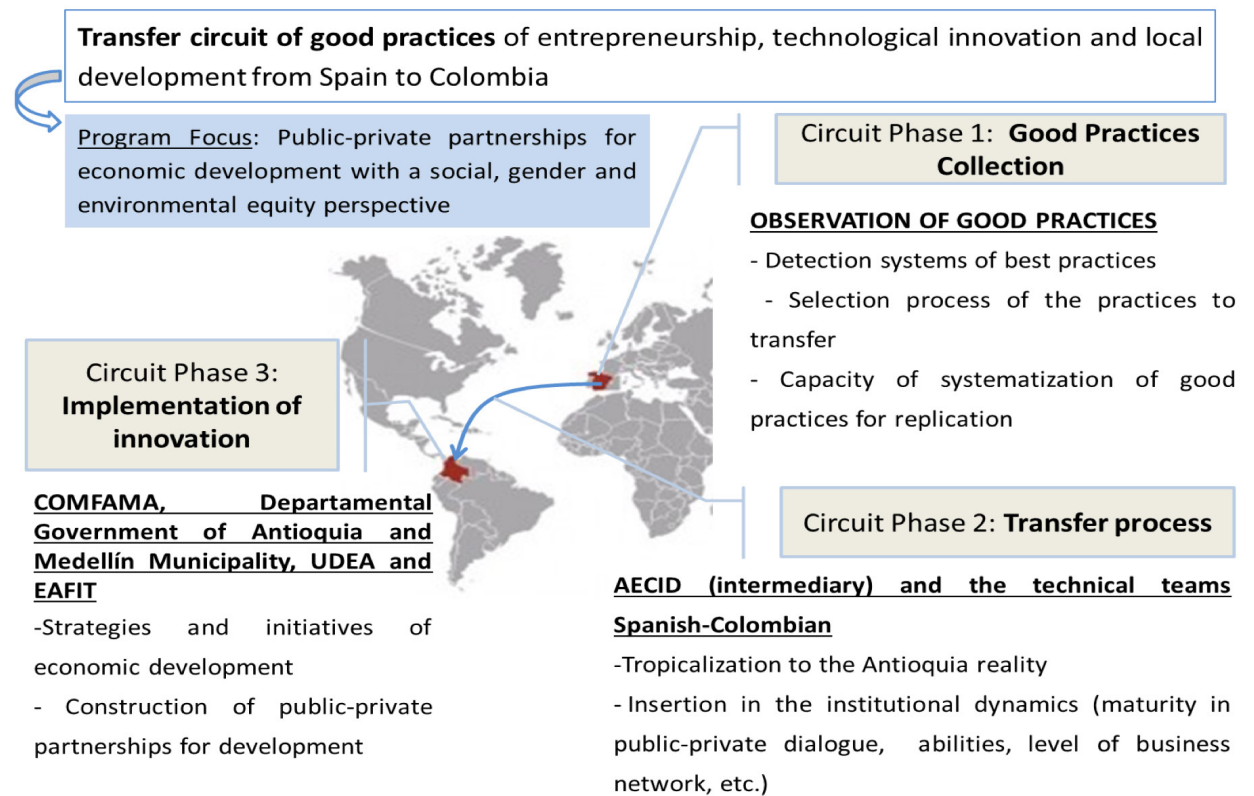
The program began with an agreement between the Government of Antioquia, the Medellin Mayor's Office, the Family Compensation Fund of Antioquia (COMFAMA), two of the principal academic institutions of the Department: the Antioquia University (public university) and the EA-FIT University (private university), and the AECID as representative of the Spanish Cooperation and main donor of the program.

ERICA's objective is to contribute to improving the levels of equity in the Regional Department, mainly through specialization and deepening the capabilities of institutional actors – public and private – by developing actions aimed at economic, social and academic areas.

The program has focused on boosting regional development by working in three strategic lines: (1) technological development and innovation; (2) business development and entrepreneurship; and (3) local development. In addition, it has four transversal approaches: developing gender; sustainability and environmental protection; peacebuilding; and social protection. To that end, an inter-institutional platform, formed by all members, was created and to which the AECID was added with the mission of coordinating and articulating the transferring process. The transferred projects were previously implemented by the Spanish entities, with a high level of success, thus creating an exchange of good practices.

Based on the needs identified through the assessment process conducted in the Department of Antioquia in 2006, 60 best practices experienced in Spain, which could respond to the identified shortcomings, were found. 22 practices were transferred to Colombia through a period of adaptation to the context and socio-economic reality of the region.

Diagrama 1. Dynamics of ERICA operating program after diagnosis



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The Spanish stakeholders are universities, technology centers, European Business and Innovation Centers, and Interprofessional Laboratories, all of which have maintained a close relationship with the Colombian actors and have developed work based on selfless and generous knowledge sharing.

The target population encompasses the platform partnering institutions, the departments of the institutions involved in its management, sectoral departments, and all those who indirectly benefit from the lessons learned through the PPT / OAI.

The added value of the program focuses on strengthening interagency partnerships where public and private actors are integrated, with knowledge transfer as central to the cooperation between the two countries.

2.2 EVALUATION OBJECTIVES AND METHODOLOGY

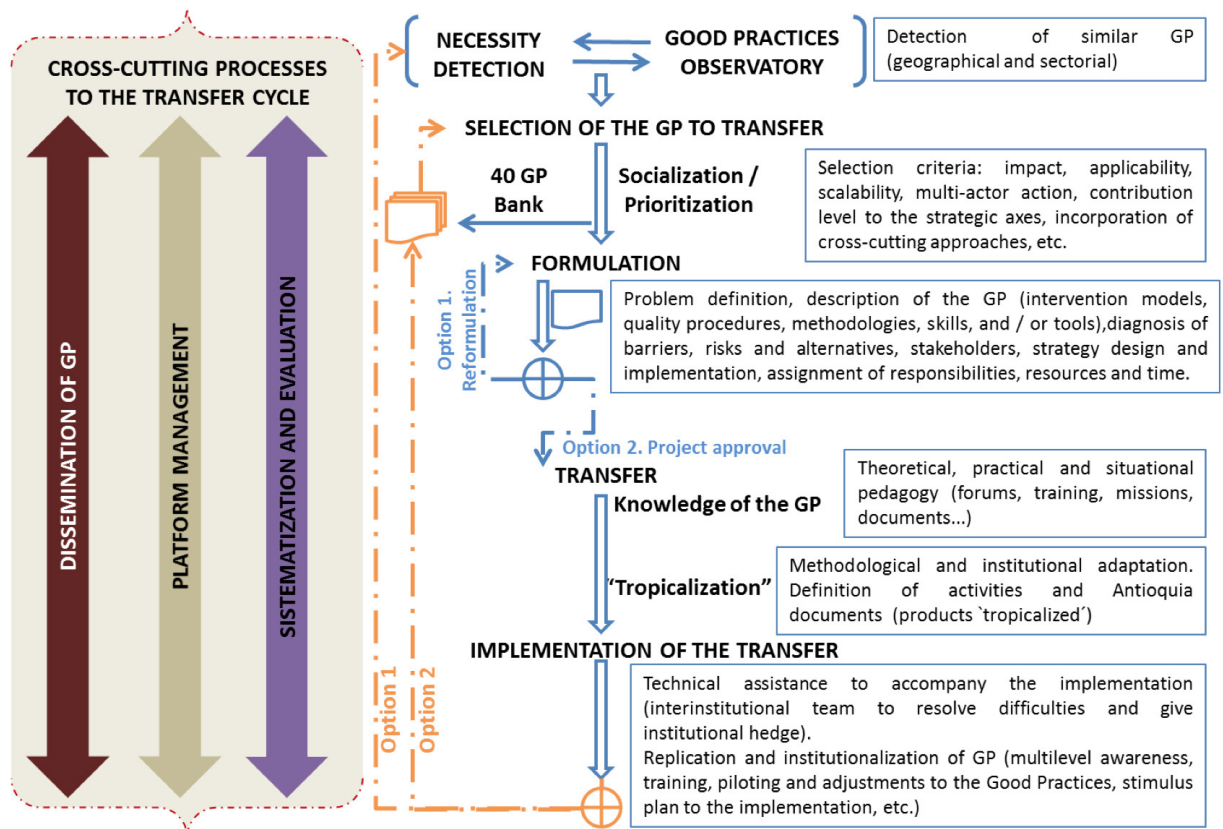
The final and external evaluation was completed with the constant accompaniment of the Management Committee of the Evaluation, made up of the SGCID and the Monitoring Committee, composed of ERICA's stakeholders. The evaluation has two purposes: firstly, **formative**, basing the training areas for improvement, replication and scaling on future interventions. In addition, the reconstruction of the program theory permits the clear illustration and modeling of the operation of ERICA. The second purpose is **summative** to promote accountability, on the basis of a systematic judgment about the degree of compliance with the objectives, both raised in advance and unexpected.

Main evaluation objectives are:

- Evaluate the results achieved by the program and its sustainability. It is approached by identifying the elements that have been essential in implementing the program and the achievement of its objectives. The focus is on the level of achievement of the expected results chain, as well as in the detection and assessment of unintended effects, both positive and negative.
- Defining the added value of the program as a driver of knowledge transfer – in comparison with other initiatives – to the new challenges of the Spanish Cooperation in Colombia. Similarly, the model underlying the PPPD in ERICA, both in its conception and its further development is analyzed.
- Check replication and scaling potential of ERICA in other initiatives. It is based on the construction of the program theory, and more explicitly, on the impact of endogenous and exogenous circumstances and conditions in the results chain. In addition, we have worked from the similarities and particularities between the ERICA model and its counterpart in the Colombian department of Nariño, DIRENA, from which to identify common or discordant findings, and consequently replication scenarios.

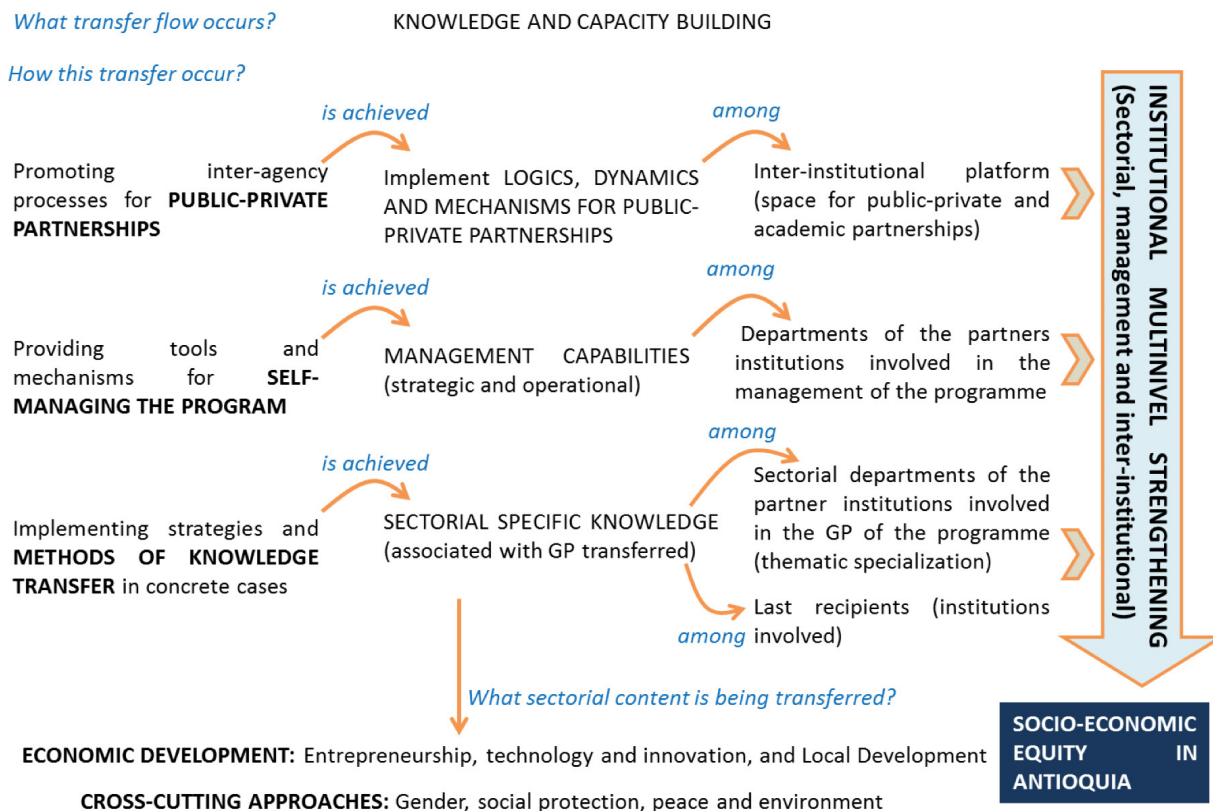
The evaluation was guided by program theory (ToP). As reconstructed, based on secondary documentation, both the change theory and the implementation theory were agreed upon by the Monitoring Evaluation Committee. The diagram of the construction of the ToP is the basis for the systemic interpretation between the dimensions of context, structure, processes and results. From there, adjustments were made to the evaluation questions presented in the Technical Specifications.

Diagrama 2. Key Processes of ERICA's program Theory of Intervention



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Diagrama 3. ERICA's Program Theory of Change



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The plan of analysis used in the evaluation has run on two planes of action. (1) Strategic level: institutional partners of the platform and DIRENA, and (2) Operative level: 22 PPT, of which 8 correspond to a qualitative sampling¹. In both levels, triangulated information has been removed, both qualitative speeches, as of quantifiable data, statistically unrepresentative.

This evaluation is based on mixed methodology: qualitative and quantitative. Extracting quantifiable nature findings was performed using a survey among the key individuals who have been part of the program from the various institutions and offices. The purpose was to obtain numeric assessments inter-subjective opinions among the different actor respondents.

In qualitative terms, to collect the information the team used the following techniques: 119 semi-structured interviews; three focus groups; and two participant observations. Besides these techniques, an analysis of all secondary documentation provided for this evaluation was included for the evaluation.

¹ Purposive sampling of critical cases without statistical significance, selects cases that have particular characteristics from which can be illustrated with rigorous evaluative programmatic events capable of responding to the objectives proposed by the evaluation. The criteria for selection were: (1) pre-2010 / post-2010 (when systematization and strategic thinking was made), (2) PPT distributed in 3 lines of action, (3) 7 PPT and 1 OAI (4) lessons learned (PPT with built-in transverse approaches, PPT insurmountable obstacles, successful replication and scaling PPT, and PPT to transfer innovative strategies).

3. CONCLUSIONS

3.1 CONCLUSIONS RELATED TO PROCESSES

1. The knowledge transfer cycle has had an adequate technical basis for an appropriate institutional execution. In fact, transfers have been properly focused on the institutional strengthening of partners as well as other departmental stakeholders and identified populations with high potential to develop the topics through the flow of knowledge - without funding personnel, nor structure, nor contracting products to Spanish experts. Instead, it has opted to support teams and institutions.
2. The design and start of the transfers are supported on solid pillars. On the one hand, work has started from a detailed diagnosis, able to articulate the needs of the partners on program lines, and responding to a mapping of actors and Spanish best practices. Next, the selection process of the best practices has been resolved in accordance with relevant technical criteria, agreed between the partners, such as: fitting into the themes, institutions capabilities, adaptive potential of good practices to Antioquia, and impacts on development.
3. The formulations of the PPT have been made collegially between Spanish-Colombian technical peers, being adequately resolved in terms of: needs, activities, resources and time. However, they have been limited in analytical terms, when it comes to identifying barriers to change and expected pre-conditions for sustainability to be predicted.
4. In terms of the implementation process of the PPT / OAI, assorted transfer strategies were used, it did not have specific rules or guidelines. Some PPT are remarkable mainly due to:
 - i) the technical accompaniment of a replica, by the Spanish partners, is included in the transfer process;
 - ii) extensive multilevel awareness-raising (including both technicians' and managers' profiles) between the participating institutions;
 - iii) extensive implementing cycles incorporating the replica within the transferring process with an emphasis on ensuring the sustainability of results that goes beyond the formal closure of the PPT, as per the scheduled formulation. The heterogeneity has been nourished by the expertise of the Spanish and Colombian partners and by the casuistry of the intermediary and ultimate recipients involved. These strategies have sought to support a collegial work between senders and receivers, highlighting the fact-finding mission trips (knowledge of best practices and training), and virtual media (video and e-mails). The "tropicalization" has been taken as a central phase of the process, resolved by linguistic, institutional, legal and eco-geographic adaptations from a logic socio-cultural translation into an array of "Antioqueña" knowledge.

5. The program has been characterized by (i) having a collegial and horizontal nature, (ii) having a public-private nature, (iii) being interdisciplinary in terms of local economic development, and (iv) having a territorial intention towards equity, but with little decentralization and territorial role in practice, and limited direct engagement of one of the themes (technological development and innovation) in the redistributive target. For this purpose, it has been characterized by flexibility in management, a light structure supported on institutional partners, and a “solidary budget” between the partners, whose allocation has not sought proportionality to the co-financing provided. Given the nature and characteristics, ERICA has created opportunities and mechanisms of collegial decision-making, and has mobilized efforts to create learning spaces, pending a deepening of the knowledge management platform and processes of communication and dissemination.
6. ERICA is characterized by limited standardization procedures. This has provided flexibility when defining protocols and the dynamics of techno-administrative management capable of the progressive needs of the platform and transfer response. Therefore, there is scope for the creation of new management tools serving the technical teams related to transfers, without risking too much bureaucracy.
7. The program has spent the budget of € 1,833,845 exceptionally efficiently if one takes into account that it has benefited with the participation of 5 first-level institutional partners around a strategy of collegiate space for the department for 8 years, and has successfully run a total 22 PPT / OAI. Human resources hired to support ERICA (2 to 3 people, depending on number of PPT / OAI running) have been appropriate to reinforce the transfer teams, and to strengthen the dynamics and dialogue of partner representatives. This has been possible thanks to the logic of not supplanting nor creating parallel structures, rather, the emphasis has been on accompaniment.
8. The role of coordination amongst actors has been central in the program. Its main effort has been the construction and consolidation of strategic alliances for regional development. For this, it has served two levels with equal care. First, the political-institutional level emanates from the operation of the platform and in which rests the decision-making body (Management Committee), composed of representatives of institutional partners and which provides inter governance. A second level is composed of technical teams directly allocated to boost transfers. The elimination in 2011 of the advisory body formed by technical professionals, institutional focal points, represented a breach in the trust of these strategic intermediaries between ERICA and the public institutions, subject to changing political cycles from each legislature (each 4 years).

3.2 CONCLUSIONS ASSOCIATED WITH RESULTS

9. The staff involved in the program had a high degree of learning perception, both in terms of personal as well as institutional learning, with slightly less in the latter. The nature of learning comes from sectoral issues worked through the PPT / OAI content as well as those inherent in the management of projects and the program itself. Similarly, the capacity developed by the institutions to be participants in an inter model is high; strengthening institutional capacity to manage development projects and inter skills.

10. The sustainability of organizational learning is highly valued, but slightly below the level of personal learning. The installation of capacities within the institutions has been adequate for the development of the PPT / OAI, but requires a strategic approach to conservation to avoid being lost or diluted with the passage of time, especially for mobility of teams.
11. Understanding the pattern of transmission of knowledge by the Antioquia institutions has allowed them to be applied by replacing more welfare-oriented models. This has promoted interdepartmental working and it has served to guide or confirm the ideas that institutions had to innovation, entrepreneurship and local development. Academic institutions highlighted that the project has enabled them to develop a model that transcends research projects and leads them towards innovation and social development.
12. Spanish entities involved in knowledge transfer recognize that the experience has been an important challenge, which becomes learning by forcing them to reflect on their working methods. Also, it expands the territory to which its capacity to act is directed and opens doors to new areas of interest. Finally, the prejudiced view is modified to countries like Colombia, generating greater confidence in proceeding with international collaborations.
13. The PPT / OAI developed under the umbrella of the ERICA program have a medium-high relevance to identified needs. The projects focused on rural areas of the sub regions have greater relevance than the average of those implemented in the city of Medellin, not forgetting that in this city there are 8 projects with a medium-high level of relevance.
14. The program has particularly addressed the needs linked to innovation, while basic needs such as electricity, water, infrastructure and connectivity have had less coverage for the whole PPT / OAI implementation. All professionals involved perceive the PPT that were ultimately selected were the best option, as their ability to respond to what was demanded from the institutions was high, and adaptation processes that took place were adequate.
15. PPT have been transferred in all cases, and only one OAI has not completed the transfer process. Of these, 11 have achieved sustainability at the time of the evaluation, and 6 of them have reached the level of institutionalization. Unfortunately, PPT which have failed sustainability are found in rural areas where actions of equality and improvement of the population are most needed.
16. This program, focused on knowledge transfer, has had a high efficiency. The relationship between results and the investment has achieved a higher level than those that could have been obtained by an instrument of cooperation based solely on resource transfer. (See conclusion 8- process).
17. The results offered by the program relating to the ability of projects to generate direct economic and institutional improvements have significant potential as generators of development opportunities. It is a model that, properly applied, can contribute to the generation of economic welfare, but needs a vision and efficient mechanisms of monitoring to guide that wealth contributes to the decline of the socioeconomic gap in Department.
18. Capacity must be improved to achieve sustainability of the pilot projects, and preferably deepen their replication and scaling. The lack of implementation leads to frustration and distrust of both the staff involved and the target population, producing negative results that are clearly unintended.

19. From the network study, it can be concluded that there is scope to increase inter-institutional relations through the collaboration of two or more partners in coordinating the PPT / OAI; including union sectors, with an economic role in the region that demonstrates an alliance while committed to formal and quality employment. In addition, including CSOs can direct the program in the interests of fairness.
20. The program has generated widespread satisfaction shared by all institutional partners regarding the ability of joint work that has developed since the interagency platform and its survival over a number of years. Similarly, there is a shared perception that it has been a complex task, in many cases requiring a great deal of effort, but was offset by the results that have been obtained.

3.3 CONCLUSIONS ASSOCIATED WITH CROSS-CUTTING APPROACHES

21. The selection of the four cross-cutting approaches (gender, environment, social protection and peace-building) has been timely but their implementation has been limited and not very strategic. However, the explicit attention given in the program documentation to those approaches is already a value in itself. The four approaches are highly desirable for contributing to equity in Antioquia, from a nuanced impact on different views of inequality.
22. The cross-cutting approaches to gender and environment have been insufficiently embodied in the PPT / OAI, although efforts have been made, especially in relation to gender. The limitations for the application of these approaches stem from the lack of structural elements. Specifically, the program has lacked: staff knowledge, institutional will to truly prioritize, or technical structures formed by specialized institutions capable of advising on the mainstreaming.
23. The cross-cutting approaches to peace building and social protection are implicit though partially present in the visions of development and mission objectives of institutional partners. This has meant that, despite not having a structure as such, they have been considered as components inherent in some of the transfers. Thus, social protection has been inserted in the PPT / OAI in the entrepreneurship theme. While peace-building is indirectly treated in those PPT / OAI geographically located in Antioquia sub-regions outside the Valley of Aburrá, they aim to support a model of territorial development with equity. However, there is still ample room to deepen this mainstreaming.

3.4 CONCLUSIONS ASSOCIATED WITH SUSTAINABILITY

24. There is a clear interest from those currently represented on the steering committee for public Antioquia institutions to remain committed to the ERICA program through a second phase focused on rural areas. Even so, new policies need to be developed by the government resulting from the election process in order to ensure their presence in the future program and close the signing of a new commitment. For their part, COMFAMA and the Universities maintained their interest and commitment, which should materialize in balanced economic contributions with other partners including the Spanish cooperation.
25. ERICA is consistent with AECID working lines and can contribute to the definition of cooperation models executed from the agency. In this sense, it is a strategic program for its contribution to Spanish cooperation knowledge generation.

26. Sustainability can only be achieved if the pilot transfer is transcended and its consolidation ensures support for a while. Transferring knowledge without ensuring that power is going to "try" to be consolidated, only increases the frustration of technicians and the target population.
27. The program is able to become a transmitter of good practice, generating a multiplier transmission system of knowledge either to other areas of the country or outside it. Thus, it can contribute to the triangular cooperation and South-South cooperation through technical cooperation projects.
28. The sustainability of the program goes through an ongoing measurement effort (quantitative and qualitative) of progress and results, together with the task of publicizing their work and achievements. In a very active execution context of programs, promoted by both institutional and private initiatives, it is important to be a reference and recognized in the territory where it operates.
29. The sustainability of the program and its results would increase with a concentration of efforts in the same territory, where it is working to achieve the completion of projects with a multidisciplinary look for complementarity between them.
30. A strengthening of inter-platform leadership is needed, to prevent that falling upon the Spanish Cooperation. It must seize the new stage to restore the conditions for economic operation and functions of the committees. It highlights the very positive role played by the program team manager.
31. The sustainability of the program can be strengthened by linking the same to actions that are to be promoted from multilateral agencies, with an eye on the new proclamation of the SDGs by the UN.

3.5 CONCLUSION ASSOCIATED WITH ADDED VALUE

32. The ERICA program may be included in a comprehensive model of PPPD, though distinct from the standard prototype that the Spanish Agency makes this an instrument for development cooperation. Its assessment and study may contribute to a broader perspective of the role of partnerships in cooperation work.
33. The program has the added value to achieve institutional strengthening from a more flexible, endogenous and less dependent horizontal cooperation. It requires a major effort in coordination and an acceptance of shared responsibility.
34. The entry of new agents of cooperation in the context of budget cuts to finance projects and programs is perceived by the CSO sector representatives as an unfortunate competition. This threatens the exclusion of -regarding cooperation- NGO with large baggage and a long path, acquired at times and very hard exclusion contexts, where institutional presence was totally unsuccessful.
35. The value added of knowledge transfer is substantial compared to traditional models of cooperation. It is an inclusive and multidisciplinary model. It is effective because shortens learning processes, provides feedback, and is efficient in relation to the investment made. The model allows the circulation of knowledge through South-South and triangular cooperation, and blurs the relationship between donor and recipient.
36. The nature of the ERICA program (inter institutional strengthening, multiplicity of actors and looks, flexibility ...) together with its long experience make it a program prepared to face the new circumstances arising after the signing of the peace accords.

37. The program has had sufficient structural components to be able to develop its added value, being upgradable those related to cross-cutting priorities.
38. The level of interagency program management, value-added oriented, has worked very well through: the signing of agreements, consensus building, and management of funds and procedures. There is scope for improving the platform for small crises that have led to loss of confidence and weak commitments. It should make an effort to strengthen mechanisms for program sustainability and its component projects.

4. RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1 RECOMMENDATIONS ASSOCIATED TO PROCESSES

1. Incorporate in-depth diagnostic questions inside the formulation document of each transfer project pertaining to barriers to desired change. This assessment could comprise at least 3 different types of studies in order to anticipate conditions for sustainability: i) study of institutional, legal, technological, environmental, socio-cultural, gender, etc. viabilities, since they can severely determine the long-term success of the pilot project, ii) a contingency plan to deal with the difficulties that may arise, and iii) scaling-up strategy which should take into account the following two elements. On the one hand, interagency plans of high-level advocacy to maintain the interest of the partners in the transfer and to visualize its importance and potential impact, in order to contribute to resources commitment. And, on the other hand, a plan to raise additional resources to leverage funds that can guarantee the different levels of possible change: pilot sustainability, replication, institutionalization and scaling. (Operational-Institutional Partners -Technical Committee-).
2. It would be appropriate to strengthen the territorial profile of the actors involved in some of the transfers, especially in those which actively involved the last recipients. In this sense, it could be useful to add to the PPT / OAI some NGOs or foundations with territorial presence and extensive capabilities and equipment in terms of accompanying community work for the consolidation of learning. (Operational-Institutional Partners -Technical Committee-).
3. Develop checklists to guide the technical teams in the definition of the transfer strategies, with the aim to inspire the design and implementation of new transfers and to make them available to the technical teams. These checklists could incorporate some heterogeneous learning such as: guidelines on suggested ways to materialize the cross-cutting approaches, suggestions of transfer strategies and successful sustainability strategies. The use of information characterized as a lesson always requires, in addition to raising awareness, the creation of a strategy or improved plan to prioritize and progressively incorporate the recommendations, and on which to assign responsibilities, resources and time to ensure its adoption. (Operational-Institutional Partners -Technical Committee-).

4. Creating opportunities for frank and constructive dialogue is necessary to rethink the model of supportive contribution of ERICA with the intention to define a policy for the allocation of funds provided to be clear, explicit and considered fair by all partners, with the intention of providing the tracking process in decision-making. Thus, it could maintain a climate of trust between partners, especially timely in the face of changes of government in public institutions. Also taking advantage of this protocol of the management of the common purse, it would be opportune to review and develop consensus among the partners, the relevance of maintaining the common budget model currently in effect. (Strategic-Institutional Partners -Management Committee-).
5. Deepen a knowledge management strategy, not only through the development of analytical documents about the program with technical precision, but also with the support of the teams in the incorporation of recommendations, aimed to ensure an adequate permeation of the learning. It is also necessary to advance the visibility of the platform through a policy of internal communication and external diffusion with specific guidelines for different audiences. It would be useful to link the processes of diffusion of the program with evaluations of specific transfers, and in this way, to communicate the achievements based on evidences. (Strategic-Institutional Partners -both Management Committee and Technical Committee-).
6. Intermediate positions and strategies between flexibility and standardization should be created. In this regard, ERICA still has room to make progress in the creation of procedures, if those procedures are focused on orienting and recommending rather than forcing, especially in the case of PPT / OAI.

To this end, there are three conditions that can be considered to advance the design of methods: i) it should not come up to very operational areas, as this often imposes limits that are not always appropriate given the heterogeneity of the pilot projects, and it hinders creativity while limiting the freshness of the pilot experience, ii) it must be flexible and subject to changing procedures, iii) it is useful to create recommendations and suggestions for standardization, not as closed and monolithic elements, but as inspiring ideas when implementing the transfers (see recommendation 3). Under no circumstances should these procedures be understood as a permanent rule. To ensure this continuous reflection, it is necessary to have periodic reviews to assess their utility and to include possible adjustments. The procedures must respond to the evolving contexts. (Operational-Institutional Partners -Technical Committee-).

7. Anchor ERICA to the highest decisional positions of each partner institution. To do this, it would be useful: i) to conduct advocacy meetings with senior representatives of institutional partners (at least annually), ii) to emphasize, for those involved in ERICA, the need to strategically announce the program to the institutions responsible, iii) to maintain an invitation to high management positions and reflect on the role of the Management Committee and to limit it to purely strategic decisions. To assess the possibility of adjusting its frequency (e.g. quarterly) and to focus on validating the operational progress proposed by the Technical Committee (see Recommendation 6). (Strategic-Institutional Partners -Management Committee-).

8. Restore the Technical Committee as an advisory body, intermediaries between decision makers and the teams responsible for the execution of knowledge transfers. In addition, maintaining a space for professionals linked to institutional partners, it strengthens the platform in terms of knowledge management and reinforces the ownership of these technicians towards ERICA. It is essential to have the commitment of these intermediate technical profiles, as they are key actors to influence the decision makers of their own institutions, and fill gaps that occur between governments. The recovery of this committee will require a redefinition of roles and dynamics, with the intention of avoiding the problems that led to its elimination. (Strategic-Institutional Partners -Management Committee-).

4.2 RECOMMENDATIONS ASSOCIATED TO RESULTS

9. Review already implemented pilot projects that could not be sustained, despite the transfer having been made, and draw up a plan of consolidation. The result would be to leverage the work and resources invested, and a complete closure of the project that appraise the effort. For this purpose, it would be interesting that the management committee would hold a review of the PPT on the basis of the results presented by this evaluation and other available information about them. (Operational-Institutional Partners -Technical Committee-).
10. Mechanisms should be established to permanently control that projects are selected and developed adequately to meet the needs of the target population. Although the road to development is not unique and complementary actions are needed with multi-sectoral approaches, it is important not to lose sight of the risk to further deepen the socio-economic gap if economic development is promoted without measures to reorient the project results to reducing inequalities. (Strategic-Institutional Partners -Management Committee-).
11. Initiate a process to examine the possibility of expanding the group of institutional partners seeking greater social representation (professional associations, associations representing civil society, other government agents of cooperation) and an additional contribution of funds needed for continuity of the program. (Strategic-Institutional Partners) (Management Committee).

4.3 RECOMMENDATIONS RELATED TO TRANSVERSAL APPROACHES

12. Prioritize two cross-cutting approaches over the other two, and provide them with an appropriate structure, in order of accompany the realization of both, at all strategic and operational processes of the platform. This strategy does not imply that the two non-prioritized approaches will disappear, but rather keeps them as they are now, on a second level of attention as an inspiring dimension.

If prioritizing the environmental approach, one should keep in mind the following suggestions: (1) to include environmental trainings in all transfers, (2) to use environmental sustainability criteria to select companies or institutions to receive transfers, (3) to disseminate successful cases of sustainable development through meetings, forums and workshops, and (4) to build alliances and bridges of communication between participating institutions in order to share best environmental practices.

If prioritizing the gender approach, one should keep in mind the following suggestions:

(1) STRUCTURAL LEVEL (ERICA PLATFORM): (1.1) to provide a plan of continuous training on gender issues among the institutional partners, (1.2) to rebuild a gender mainstreaming group with a clear leadership from the platform.

(2) OPERATIONAL LEVEL (TRANSFERS): (2.1) to include positive actions to ensure the participation of women in training and activities of the PPT / OAI (especially the most vulnerable, such as women head of household) (2.2) to study the barriers that may hamper the access of women to participate in the transfers, and to create explicit strategies to reduce or eliminate them, (2.3) to include gender training for the latest recipients of the transfers, (2.4) In those PPT / OAI which include a sectoral diagnosis, information disaggregated by sex and age should be gathered to register expectations, interests and problems that differentially affect women and men according to their age groups. (2.5) To prioritize PPT / OAI that incorporate: i) an improvement in the living conditions of women by means of facilitating activities related to its triple role, ii) an improvement of the access and control over the decisions that affect the lives of the women, both in their homes and in the community and / or organizational spaces, iii) an access and control of personal income between the women enabling them to be free to organize their own life, iv) to support unions from economic sectors traditionally feminized, v) to insert into the transfers some organizations and women's groups when possible, vi) to inform women of their rights and empower them so they can diversify their livelihoods.

(Strategic-Institutional Partners -both Management Committee and Technical Committee-).

13. It is appropriate to reconsider the working dimensions of ERICA in order to give a more comprehensive response to all the factors of the department inequity, especially in a scenario of change of the orientation towards rural development program. Indeed, this multidimensionality of the Antioquia inequity, particularly in rural areas, is largely defined by the intersection of the social and environmental issues raised by the ERICA approaches (gender, environment, peace building and social protection). For this reason, it is suggested that these approaches become the main dimensions to respond to the general aim of the program of reducing the inequality in Antioquia and transcending the economic development as the only way to achieve it. These four dimensions would become backbones of Local Development (ERICA's dimension 1) at the rural level, and therefore, the local development actions would thus be inserted into the themes of gender, environment, social protection and peace building. The Entrepreneurship axis (ERICA's dimension 2) would be a component of social protection, while the Technology and Innovation Development (ERICA's dimension 3) should be reflected in terms of appropriate technologies, social and environmental innovation in a local scale. (Strategic-Institutional Partners -Management Committee-).

4.4 RECOMMENDATIONS ASSOCIATED TO SUSTAINABILITY

14. Sustainability requires the study of participation of new actors in rural areas (not necessarily to be included in the inter-platform) with which it will work in the new phase of ERICA. They must share interests with program objectives. Likewise, they must provide knowledge of territories, be recognized by its inhabitants as representing their interests, contribute to the economic or in-kind contributions, and to legitimize the work performed. (Strategic-Institutional Partners -Management Committee-).

15. Bring together efforts, in the territory where the intervention is decided to take place, from a holistic view and complementary interdisciplinary work. The post-conflict situation requires comprehensive actions to promote socio-economic recovery and also psychological recovery (individual and community) of the populations affected. To do this, ERICA must overcome the dispersion of projects and plan the interventions from various sectors in a complementary manner. (Strategic-Institutional Partners -Management Committee-).

16. To have at least a person from the facilitation team to ensure the implementation of recommendations, publicizing the program and its intentions, searching and preparation of possible candidates for new institutional partners, working on fundraising, deepening member coordination, managing the web platform, etc.. (Operational-Institutional Partners -Technical Committee-).

17. It would be of interest to make a lobbying effort between the new government teams with the mission to be known, regain influence and close new commitments for the newly opened legislature. In addition, seek the anchor or link to programs to other plans that can be promoted from multilateral cooperation (UNDP, ILO). (Strategic-Institutional Partners -Manager Committee-).

4.5 RECOMMENDATIONS RELATED TO ADDED VALUE

18. It is advisable to draw conclusions regarding the nature of the added value of ERICA, from results obtained in this work and the tacit and explicit knowledge from other sources, to develop a model that can reflect the categorization of the PPPD and contribute to expanding its conception. (Strategic- Spanish International Cooperation Agency and General Secretary of International Cooperation and Development).

19. The results of the ERICA program can provide data and insights on the instrument of technical cooperation as a model to replicate in middle-income countries but with issues that advise the presence of international cooperation. (Strategic- Spanish International Cooperation Agency and General Secretary of International Cooperation and Development).

5. LESSONS LEARNED

The dimensions of structure, process and results presented below, collect the key elements present in ERICA, complement other elements suggested by the evaluation team, which are displayed separately in the boxes below.

CRITICAL FACTORS IN THE STRUCTURAL LEVEL (BOTH POSITIVE AND NEGATIVE) TO CONSIDER IN CASE OF DUPLICATION OR SCALABILITY.

Strategic level (structural dimension)

- **Appropriate selection of institutional partners:** The conformation of a platform with the nature and characteristics of ERICA, must respond to a contextual interest; this means that it should not be confined to a predetermined list of actors. The institutional architecture must be based on the selection of key development actors related with the territory of action, and at the same time, must respond to a process of self-selection among them, based on confidence and mutual recognition.

Additionally, it is desirable to involve on the platform the different administrative levels of key public actors, interwoven with governmental powers, all of whom play a complementary role to assist in the processes of local and regional development. The private nature should also be represented by institutions that have a proven experience of commitment to the development process. Some examples of the private actors involved in ERICA are: public-private institutions, private universities, and union associations of small producers, which directly participate in the transfer level.

- **Platform funds agent must be agile, inexpensive and transparent.** Specifically, it should: (i) be an independent institution, not enrolled in the partners' team, (ii) be private and agile, (iii) demonstrate extensive experience in fund management and audit processes to ensure transparent management, (iv) have simple procedures, to minimize the administrative bureaucracy, and (v) be affordable.
- **Light structure:** The structure should be supported over the structural triangle listed below, with a prominence of bodies composed by the partner institutions staff: (1) Management Committee (decision-making body); (2) technical committee (advisory body) and specific contract employees: (3) facilitation team.

- **Comprehensive assessment, as a fundamental input to guide the strategic vision of the desired change:** emphasis on proper selection of converging lines of action that are a complete priority for the institutions involved.
- **Observatory of good practices in Spain:** The most appropriate manner to identify good practices is through a structure for Technical Cooperation in Spain (under construction). The structural absence of such observatory can be replaced by specific consultancies, and on a daily basis, by constant remote updates (virtual mapping of the good practices, to complement video conferencing with the Spanish institutional partners).

Lessons learned identified by the evaluation team in terms of the structural dimension (strategic level)

- **Inter-institutional trust** is the central structural binder for a proper operation of the platform. That trust among the platform members, in addition to the horizontal dynamics, are prerequisites for the appropriation of the institutions participating, its responsibility and its co-leadership. Taken together, all these elements form the basis of the platform sustainability. In this scenario, the Technical Committee is key to maintaining trust. The participation of the members in this committee allows, among other important contributions, to maintain the platform ownership. This ownership is a mainstay for the institutionalization of the program within public institutions, with high staff rotation and constant changes of the political vision linked with the government periods. In this unstable scenario, the technical professionals can be key strategic allies.
- **Permeability to the context and constantly changing:** The platform should act as a living system, being permeable to the environment in which it operates. This means that it must be opened to new institutional additions, structural changes and strategic twists of its policy, according to the emerging contexts. To achieve this purpose, besides creating strategic dialogue spaces, where permanent readings of the context could be introduced and acted upon accordingly, there should be a shared conviction on the idea that the impact on development is only possible from interagency co-leadership.
- **The interest and interagency thematic confluence should not overshadow the expected ultimate impact.** It should raise a ToC to respond to a horizon of equity.
- **It is necessary to incorporate territorial actors to impact the sub-regional development** through the strengthening of their capacities.
- **Encourage only two simultaneous approaches, providing them with structure:** guaranteeing a staff with skills and / or adding the collaboration of expert institutions.

Operative level (structural dimension)

- **Minimum procedures:** formulation and monitoring tools with procedural clarity, principally not formalized in documents.
- The recruitment nor infrastructure are not financed, except for specific cases. This helps to maintain the focus on the flow of knowledge, as long as there is a proven availability of elements, around which can be ensured the sustainability of the transferred projects

CRITICAL FACTORS IN THE PROCESS LEVEL (BOTH POSITIVE AND NEGATIVE) TO CONSIDER IN CASE OF DUPLICATE OR SCALABILITY.

Strategic level (process dimension):

- **Clear selection criteria of the good practices, accepted by all partners:** These criteria include: ability to respond to the identified needs; thematic insertion around the axes of the program; receptive and flexible participation of the issuing institutions with the approach of the program; sectoral participation of key actors in the field of performance (sub-regional, if they are located in a territory); adaptive potential to the local environment; geographic location that falls on a specific target population; expected impact on development; and the presence of cross-cutting approaches.

Lessons learned identified by the evaluation team in terms of the process dimension (strategic level)

- **Interinstitutional dialogue should be critical, proactive and oriented towards technical excellence:** There is a critical need to issue adjustments and considerations on transfers made by other platform partners, based on an assertive dialogue. The AECID as an external actor of the Antioquia context, playing a key role when it comes to remaining a key neutral actor in the platform, to mediate for the settings.
- **Clear and explicit fund management regulations.** These regulations must be especially clear if opting for a joint budget (a common purse). The lack of clarity and / or misinterpretations could be detrimental to the confidence among platform members, the central adhesive for the sustainability of the platform.

- **Institutional ownership of the program:** It is necessary to encourage participation of high level management positions in the Management Committee to facilitate greater decision-making. Moreover, keeping the dialogue between high-level, strategic decision-making peers, can influence and construct an interest towards the platform within their respective institutions.
- **Communication strategies and plans,** which show and share both the learning and the achievements, as well as to value the collaborative workspace of an innovative platform.

Operative level (process dimension):

- **Prioritizing co-led implementation of PPT / OAI among institutional partners,** as space for creation and consolidation of strategic sectoral relations for the territory.
- **Work on concrete practices in specific development environments.** Conception of learning as an experiential guided cycle with a tangible and pragmatic horizon.
- **Transfer strategies based on the facilitation of the teamwork between transmitters-receivers institutions:** The focus of the transfer processes aims to ensure non-impersonation, since the purpose is to strengthen the institutions of Antioquia. To do this, virtual and in-person spaces are employed, prominent among which are the mission journeys. These missions have defined objectives and broad timetable, and the participation of specialized technical profiles, as well as a theoretical and practical training.
- **Emphasis on linguistic, institutional, legal and methodological adaptation of the Good Practices.** The transfer aims to insert learning into the specific context of the receiver territory.. More than an adaptation, in some cases one can even produce a new creation, inspired by inputs and external experts.

Lessons learned identified by the evaluation team in terms of the process dimension (operative level)

- **Transfer articulation with a strategic vision:** Focus on few transfers, articulated between themes and territorial spaces.
- **Expand the transfer cycle to give technical advice to replication, rather than just a pilot.** This replica should be made by the receiver institution, while the transmitter must be in attendance to solve particular doubts arising from the implementation of the acquired knowledge.
- **The transfer project diagnostics should detect all the obstacles that could complicate the expected change,** from an exercise of deep and interdisciplinary analysis. This must be especially taken into account if the last community recipients (neighborhood associations, unions, etc.) participate as community expectations, interests and engagements are mobilized and to which must be provided responses.
- **Emphasize the construction of sustainability strategies and the scaling of the pilot experiences.** Define from the formulation, studies of: viabilities (sustainability), contingency plans and strategies for the scaling.
- **Implement Monitoring and Evaluation processes,** capable of identifying the impacts of the transfers in terms of development results; as a basis for communicating the success of the program, and add the will and interests for the complex articulation.
- **Expand the capture of Good Practices oriented by a South-South cooperation approach;** especially in scenarios with little resemblance to the Spanish context in socio-economic terms, socio-cultural, political, institutional, environmental, etc.
- **Ensure effective mainstreaming of two cross-cutting approaches,** within the transfers frame, working closely with the technical teams of the projects.

CRITICAL FACTORS IN THE RESULTS LEVEL (BOTH POSITIVE AND NEGATIVE) TO CONSIDER IN CASE OF DUPLICATE OR SCALABILITY.

Strategic level (results dimension):

- **Intensify the interdisciplinary strategic vision of the territory among institutional partners.** The dialogue in terms of strategic actions (platform) and operative projects (transfers), allows the convergence towards agendas and joint development interests (especially of sectoral actions), and towards the creation of an imaginary and a common language among the participants in the technical and director spaces.
- **Strengthen the vision that the knowledge and harmonization of development agendas and actions are both key elements that act as an engine for regional development.**
- **Creation of a new cooperation model, based on a horizontal approach.** This extends the capability to imagine more horizontal relationships with external actors.

Lessons learned identified by the evaluation team in terms of the results dimension (strategic level)

- **Setting up a sustainable platform, with a long-term dynamics of strategic coordination between institutional partners,** could be evident by the dilution of the binder paper of the AECID, in terms of leadership and contributions of funds.
- **Creating a closer institutional relationship and alliance with strategic partner transmitters** (Spain, EU), could be deeper through the expansion of the transfers (pilot + reply).
- **Incorporating new institutions to the platform** will provide a more rapid and timely response according to the changing needs of the context.
- Including expert people and institutions on cross-cutting approaches in **the platform**, would support the achievement of results at this particular level.

Operative level (results):

- **Embedded useful sector knowledge for the regional development among institutional partners.** Validated models, actions and sub-sectoral issues, which were in early stage of integration among institutional partners.
- **Created and/or strengthened relations between technical peers in Antioquia,** more concretely, between institutional partners participating in co-led practices, potentially strategic for promoting specific sectors of intervention.
- **Capacity building among Spanish transmitters of good practices,** thanks to the visibility of the conceptual and methodological basis of their experiences, in contrast with a new reality of intervention.
- **Configured successful pilot experiences, potentially replicable and scalable.** In fact, it allows to materialize theoretical approaches in real cases models, through the transfer and adaptation of good practices.
- **Strengthened management capacity to implement development projects by universities,** for improving their performance extension.

Lessons learned identified by the evaluation team in terms of the results dimension (operative level)

- **Achieving the strengthening of the social and institutional network in the sub-regions** requires the incorporation of territorial actors, with territorial nature, presence, dedication and roles.
- **Setting up a comprehensive intersectoral development vision,** requires a coordinated work between transfer projects, capable of building bridges and cross-contributions of development issues.

Otros documentos relacionados se pueden encontrar en:
<http://www.cooperacionespañola.es/es/publicaciones>

