

ADAPTABILITY OF INFORMATION SYSTEMS TO THE QUANTIFICATION EXERCISES OF SOUTH-SOUTH COOPERATION

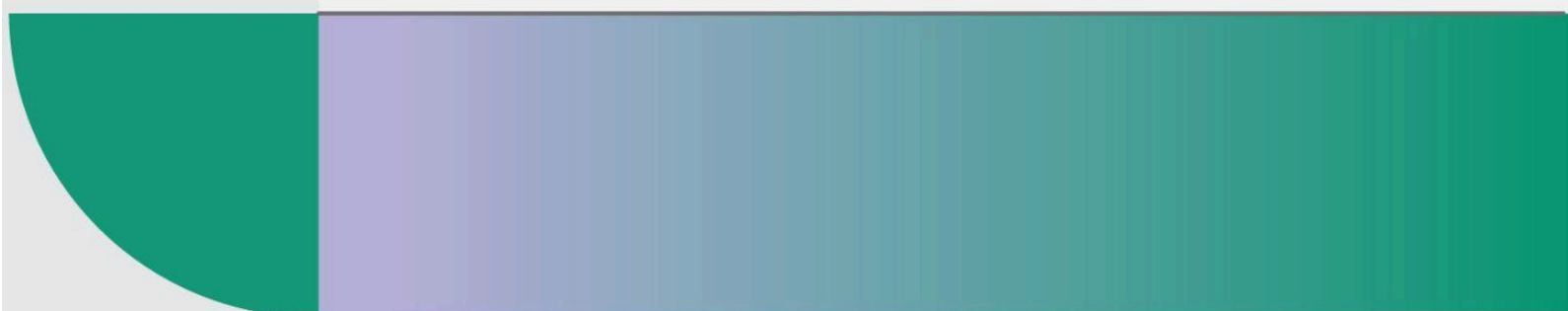
Report on the voluntary survey carried out by the PIFCSS countries
January 2025

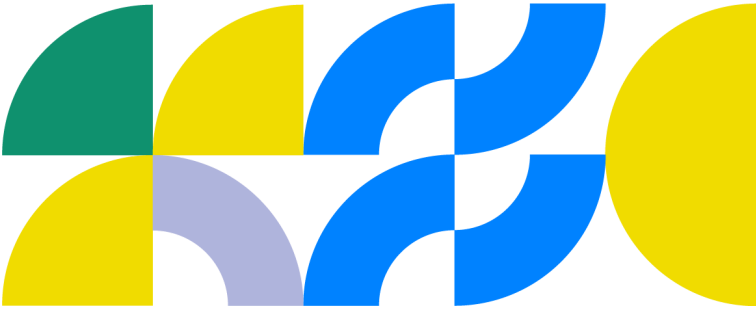
IBERO-AMERICAN PROGRAM FOR THE STRENGTHENING OF
SOUTH-SOUTH COOPERATION (PIFCSS)



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SOUTH-SOUTH COOPERATION

Disclaimer: This report is the result of the Voluntary Survey conducted by countries interested in assessing the adaptability of their information systems to global and regional exercises for measuring South-South Cooperation. This initiative was developed by the PIFCSS as part of its commitment to innovation in knowledge management and strengthening of South-South and Triangular Cooperation in Ibero-America. The action responds to an explicit request from the Programme's member countries, who included it as a priority in the 2024 Annual Operational Plan, with the aim of improving the quality, availability, and comparability of cooperation data in the region.

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Foreword

In a constantly evolving world, South-South cooperation (SSC) has established itself as a fundamental pillar for strengthening solidarity and knowledge sharing among the countries of the Global South, fostering lasting solutions to development challenges. However, for its impact to be fully recognized and its contribution to sustainable development to be fully visible, it is essential to have robust, interoperable information systems that are potentially aligned with international standards. Only in this way will it be possible to accurately measure the scope of SSC and enhance its role as a driver of global transformation.

From the Ibero-American Program for the Strengthening of South-South Cooperation (PIFCSS), we have assumed the commitment to promote the **strengthening of the capacities** of the 21 member countries, promoting spaces for dialogue, collaboration and exchange. In this line, the *Voluntary Survey on the Adaptability of Information Systems to SSC Quantification Exercises* arises as a strategic initiative to analyze the progress, challenges and opportunities faced by Ibero-American countries **in the collection, management and reporting of SSC data**.

This exercise, developed within the framework of our Annual Operational Plan 2024, responds to the demand of our member countries for a detailed diagnostic to improve the quality and comparability of information in the region. The findings presented here reflect a **heterogeneous reality**, where some countries have made significant progress in consolidating their information systems, while others still face technical, regulatory and resource limitations.

Beyond this diversity of contexts, what is evident is the **shared interest of the countries in strengthening their measurement and reporting mechanisms**. In this regard, this report not only provides an overview of the current state of national systems but also makes concrete recommendations for strengthening them, promoting innovative solutions adapted to the needs of each country.

From PIFCSS, we reaffirm our commitment to continue accompanying the countries in this process, **facilitating access to tools, methodologies and experiences that will enable them to improve their information management capabilities**. We hope that this survey will be a valuable input for decision-making and that it will serve as a starting point for new cooperation initiatives in this area.

We thank all the countries that participated in this process, as well as the technical teams that contributed their knowledge and experience. Their collaboration is essential to **continue moving towards more robust information systems** that accurately reflect the scope and impact of South-South cooperation in our region.



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Voluntary survey to verify the adaptability of information systems to existing South-South Cooperation quantification exercises

Introduction

International development cooperation has undergone profound transformations in the 21st century, which has generated the need to review and update the methodologies used to measure and analyze development flows. In this context, the creation of the **TOSSD (Total Official Support for Sustainable Development)** and the growing relevance of the **Voluntary Framework for Measuring South-South Cooperation (VMSC)**, promoted by the United Nations, have motivated Ibero-American countries to participate in the debate and explore new ways of capturing the diversity of financial and non-financial flows associated with this cooperation modality.

This report presents the results of a survey of **Ibero-American International Cooperation Governing Bodies**, whose main objective was to assess the willingness, capacity and challenges faced by national information systems to report on South-South cooperation (SSC). The analysis focuses on two key frameworks: **Indicator 17.3.1 of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) Voluntary Framework** and the **TOSSD**. In addition to examining the level of country involvement in current quantification exercises, the report identifies strengths and weaknesses in SSC data collection, management and reporting, considering aspects such as technical infrastructure, regulatory frameworks and inter-agency coordination mechanisms.

The **Voluntary Survey** is part of PIFCSS's commitment to innovation in South-South and Triangular Cooperation and was developed in response to the demand of its member countries, who included it in the **2024 Annual Operational Plan** as a priority action to improve the quality and comparability of information in the region.

Based on this diagnosis, participating countries will be able to identify critical points in their reporting processes, design specific strategies to strengthen their capacities, improve data quality and, consequently, contribute to a more accurate and complete representation of SSC activities within the framework of international cooperation.

The report includes a detailed analysis of the responses obtained, a comparison between the different national approaches, and a set of **conclusions and recommendations** aimed at strengthening the countries' capacity in this area, reaffirming PIFCSS' commitment to the development of more robust, interoperable information systems aligned with international standards.

SSC measurement and quantification exercises.

1. The International Task Force on Total Official Support for Sustainable Development (IFT-TOSSD):

Since 2012, the OECD has promoted a reform to **update the way in which Official Development Assistance (ODA) is measured**, incorporating the quantification of financial flows for sustainable development, whether from national sources (from the North or the South), multilateral organizations or the private sector. TOSSD (Total Official Support for Sustainable Development) is thus proposed as an **international standard for measuring the totality of all resources earmarked for promoting sustainable development**. It includes, among other issues, a change in the way of calculating the concessional component of credits that used to be counted as ODA, adjustments in the calculation of peace and security expenditures, and the inclusion of funds earmarked for the private sector and foreign direct investment, among other issues.

Within the framework of these debates, the challenge arose **as to how to adequately integrate the contributions of SSC into development metrics**. In particular, the discussions around the measurement of SDG 17 in the framework of the United Nations Statistical Commission have made it clear that attempts to reduce all cooperation modalities to monetary terms drastically underestimate the value of innovative processes and the particularities of SSC, rendering invisible much of its contribution and ultimately harming the foreign policy of Southern countries.¹

In this context, the development of a **reliable indicator to measure SSC** has been a priority. However, attempts to move in this direction have not been without controversy, as was the case in 2019 when it was proposed to replace indicator 17.3.1, *"Foreign direct investment, official development assistance and South-South cooperation as a share of gross national income,"* as a way to measure the mobilization of "additional financial resources from multiple sources for developing countries" with TOSSD. This initiative generated an intense debate, which showed the need to reach a consensus representative of the approaches of the countries of the South on the best way to measure the mobilization of additional financial resources. In view of this situation, in 2020, a sub-working group was formed within the framework of the United Nations Inter-Agency and Expert Group on SDG Indicators (IAEG-SDGs), composed of several developing countries, to develop a more inclusive conceptual framework. This effort culminated in 2021 with the adoption of an **initial framework**, which was formally endorsed by the UN Statistical Commission in 2022.

¹ Lopez Correa, Marcio (2017), "La cuantificación de la cooperación Sur-Sur y sus consecuencias para la política exterior de los países en desarrollo," Policy Brief N°41, Centro del Sur.

1. SSC quantification exercise within the UN framework:

The **Voluntary Framework for Measuring South-South Cooperation** seeks to broaden the generalized view on the measurement of contributions to development, complementing traditional financial measures with a more holistic perspective that also considers the **non-monetary contributions** of South-South Cooperation.

Currently, **SDG indicator 17.3.1 is limited to measuring financial flows** to developing countries, excluding any type of non-cash contribution:

- 17.3.1a: Official sustainable development grants
- 17.3.1b: Official concessional sustainable development loans
- 17.3.1c: Official non-concessional sustainable development loans
- 17.3.1d: Foreign Direct Investment
- 17.3.1e: Mobilized private finance (MPF) on an experimental basis
- 17.3.1f: Private grants

The Voluntary Framework proposal offered an innovative solution by categorizing the contribution modalities into three well-defined groups. The measures proposed to measure monetized flows were grouped into **Cluster A**. To recognize the importance of **non-financial contributions** in SSC, two additional groups were proposed: **Group B** focused on non-financial modalities that can be monetized, while **Group C** focused on non-financial modalities that cannot be monetized.²

This typification into three groups allowed for a better understanding and recognition of the diversity of SSC modalities and sought to facilitate the measurement and analysis of these flows in a more accurate and complete manner.

During 2023–2024, within the framework of the **United Nations Development Account Project** to test the Voluntary SSC Framework implemented by UNCTAD, a pilot phase was carried out in which several countries in the Global South, including Brazil, Mexico and Colombia, used their information systems to collect the required data.

The results of these pilot tests were presented in June 2024 at the Interregional Expert Meeting on Measuring South-South Cooperation held in Qatar. The final report of the meeting notes the diversity of contexts, institutional structures, and specific needs of each nation in the processes of data collection and reporting. It also mentions some **common challenges**, such as the lack of human and financial resources, the need to improve

² De Mello e Souza, André (2024), "Reporting on SDG indicator 17.3.1: Background," presentation on Preparatory Expert Meeting from Brazil to Qatar, retrieved from https://unctad.org/system/files/non-official-document/D1_S2_1_Background_SDG17.3.1_reporting_Andre_de_Mello.pdf.

inter-institutional coordination, the lack of data standardization, the absence of data exchange agreements, and the need to develop technical capacities.³

These preliminary experiences reveal **three key dimensions** that need to be considered when participating in existing SSC quantification exercises to ensure data reporting: a) the characteristics of the information systems to collect the necessary data, b) the institutional capacities needed for their implementation, and c) the existence of regulatory frameworks governing the characteristics of centralized data reporting and its coordination.

Methodology

To achieve the survey objective, PIFCSS designed an online questionnaire that addressed the following aspects:

- **Participation in quantification exercises:** Willingness to participate in TOSSD reporting and SDG indicator 17.3.1.
- **Legal and regulatory framework:** Existence and effectiveness of legal frameworks for international cooperation reporting.
- **Information systems:** Availability, scope and characteristics of databases used to record SSC.
- **Institutional capabilities:** Availability of trained personnel and financial resources to participate in quantification exercises.
- **Inter-institutional coordination:** Existing coordination mechanisms between the different institutions involved.

The form made up of three sections and 23 questions was first submitted to the Evaluation and Measurement Reference Group (GREM)⁴ of the PIFCSS for approval and then sent to the International Cooperation Governing Bodies of the Program member countries. The questionnaire was open in two different periods, from November 20 to 27, 2024 and from January 9 to 22, 2025. The reopening of the survey was decided due to the low response rate obtained in the first period, in which only seven countries participated. In order to achieve a more representative sample, a new response period was opened to give all countries the opportunity to participate, especially those that may have faced technical or organizational difficulties during the first period. Despite responding at a later time, the only country participating in the second deadline did not show significantly different response patterns from the rest of the countries, suggesting that the information collected is comparable and consistent.

³ United Nations (2024), "Report: Interregional expert meeting on the measuring of South-South cooperation," Doha, Qatar, retrieved from https://unctad.org/system/files/non-official-document/2020604_doha_ssc_expert-meeting_finalreport_en.pdf.

⁴ GREM is made up of Argentina, Brazil, Colombia, El Salvador, Mexico and Uruguay.

The data collected was analyzed individually. That is, each question in the questionnaire was examined separately to identify common trends and patterns in the countries' responses.

The voluntary nature of the survey influenced the participation of the countries, resulting in a partially representative sample. The low response rate raises questions about interest in and understanding of the topic. Also, the information is based on self-assessments, which introduces a possible bias. However, despite these limitations, the study provides valuable information on the measurement of SSC in Ibero-America and constitutes an essential starting point for future research and improvement actions.

A **second phase of the questionnaire** is planned for those countries that express interest in deepening the diagnosis. This stage will seek to gather specific information on the type of data they collect in their information systems in order to have a more detailed and complete picture of their capacities and needs in the context of SSC quantification.

Survey results

Of the twenty-one PIFCSS member countries, **eight (Argentina, Chile, Colombia, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, and Uruguay)** responded to the questionnaire, representing 38% of the total universe of countries. Therefore, the conclusions of the report cannot be considered representative for a general diagnosis of the countries of the region.



1. Participation in exercises

This aspect was surveyed on the basis of two main closed questions about the interest of the countries in participating in each of the central SSC quantification exercises and two spaces for expanding the answers so that each respondent could explain the positions of their countries.

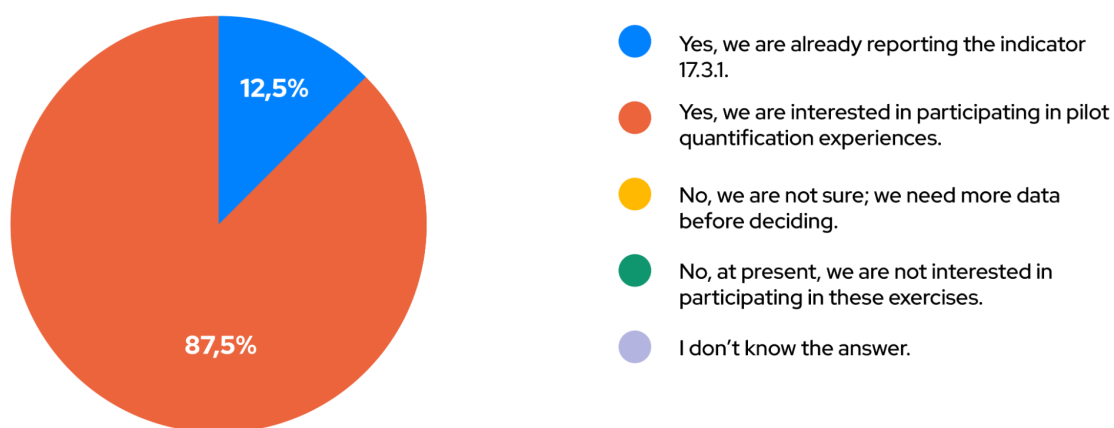
1.1 Interest in reporting to Indicator 17.3.1

The analysis of the first question of the questionnaire reveals a **high level of interest from** the surveyed countries in reporting Indicator 17.3.1 in UNCTAD's Voluntary Framework. All countries responded affirmatively, with the exception of Colombia, which is already doing so. Most countries expressed interest in participating in pilot experiences but mentioned that they face challenges related to resources, legal frameworks or capacities to carry out quantification. This is the case of Guatemala, which reports the use of a proxy indicator due to the lack of a specific quantification for all dimensions of indicator 17.3.1. Argentina also noted that, despite the interest in the area, the country **does not currently subscribe to the 2030 Agenda**, which represents a direct barrier to reporting the indicator and evidences the need for greater awareness and political alignment with the global goals.

The responses uniformity reflects a **common interest** in measuring South-South cooperation, albeit with varying levels of preparedness.

Is your country interested in reporting the indicator 17.3.1 according to the Voluntary Framework to measure the SSC (UNCTAD)?

8 ANSWERS

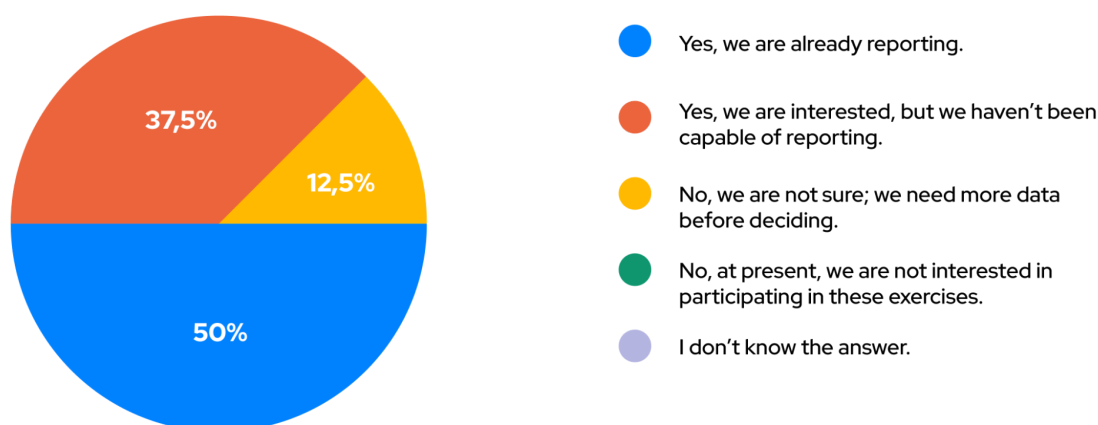


1.2 Interest in reporting to TOSSD

Although the TOSSD process is more consolidated, the responses among countries are not homogeneous. At least three groups can be identified. On the one hand, those that **actively report** (Chile, Ecuador, Uruguay and the Dominican Republic). On the other hand, those that stated that they **have the political will to report** but have not yet been able to do so due to technical limitations or discontinuity in the exercises (Argentina, El Salvador and Guatemala). Finally, Colombia **has not yet made a definitive decision**, indicating the need for more information.

Is your country interested in reporting to the TOSSD?

8 ANSWERS



Among the reasons for reporting TOSSD, the countries highlight the need to comply with international standards and to obtain a more comprehensive view of development cooperation. As for the barriers to not doing so, they have not been clearly identified, although the lack of an adequate roadmap to facilitate the process was noted. In addition, only Colombia mentioned that it is evaluating the political convenience of moving forward with this initiative.

1.3 Summary of interest in reporting on existing exercises

A comparison of the responses regarding the willingness of countries to participate in SSC quantification exercises shows that, although countries show a **high interest in reporting in both exercises**, there are differences in the consolidation of the processes and the barriers identified. In the case of Indicator 17.3.1, all countries expressed interest, but the only one that is already reporting is Colombia, while the others face technical and political challenges. In contrast, the TOSSD process is more advanced, with several countries actively reporting, although there are also technical limitations and the absence of a clear roadmap in some countries.

While interest is widespread in both processes, countries that already report, such as Colombia in Indicator 17.3.1 and Chile, Ecuador, Uruguay and the Dominican Republic in TOSSD, could serve as models for others on the road to reporting.

	Indicator 17.3.1 (UNCTAD)	TOSSD
Level of interest	High and uniform (all countries express interest).	Less homogeneous (three groups identified).
Countries already reporting	Colombia.	Chile, Ecuador, Uruguay, Dominican Republic.
Main barriers	Resources, technical capabilities, political alignment.	Lack of roadmap, technical limitations.
Reasons for reporting	Measurement of SSC.	Meet international standards, complete vision of cooperation.
Highlighted cases	The Argentine government does not subscribe to the 2030 Agenda.	Colombia (evaluates political suitability).

2. Regulatory and institutional framework

This section is based on five closed-ended questions and three expanded questions, designed to analyze the regulatory and institutional aspects related to the regulation, collection and reporting of data on South-South cooperation in the countries surveyed. In particular, we sought to assess the existence and effectiveness of national legal frameworks regulating international cooperation and assigning responsibilities for reporting and data collection.

In addition, in order to better understand the practical functioning of these frameworks and the opportunities for strengthening reporting, we inquired about the factors that facilitate or hinder compliance, the inter-institutional coordination mechanisms to ensure information collection, and the perception of the feasibility of modifying data management processes to optimize reporting. Finally, the availability of personnel trained to collect, analyze and report SSC data was explored.

2.1 Existence of a legal framework for reporting on international cooperation

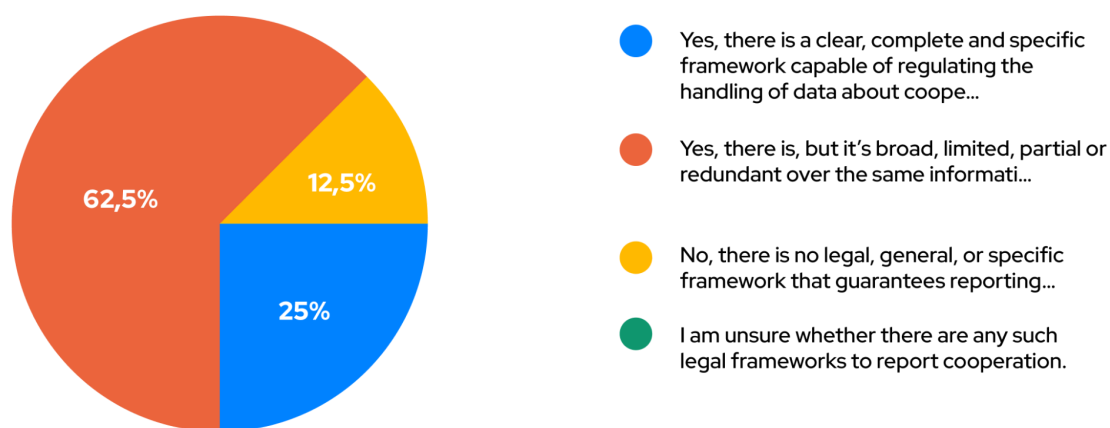
When asked about the existence of a legal framework that regulates international cooperation and establishes responsibilities for reporting and data collection, most of the countries surveyed (7 out of 8) indicated that they have some type of legal framework to regulate international cooperation.

However, only El Salvador and Ecuador stated that they have specific and complete regulatory frameworks, which in principle would suggest greater preparation for assuming reporting responsibilities. On the other hand, most of the countries (Argentina, Colombia, Dominican Republic, Guatemala and Uruguay) indicated that, although they have a legal framework, it is general, partial or limited, which makes it difficult to generate complete information on international cooperation.

Finally, Chile was the only country that acknowledged not having a legal framework, either general or specific, to guarantee the reporting of international cooperation activities, which represents a significant challenge for the collection and systematization of data in this area.

Is there any legal framework that regulates international cooperation and establishes responsibilities for the reporting and compiling of data?

8 ANSWERS



2.2 Effectiveness of legal frameworks

Analysis of the effectiveness of the legal frameworks for reporting and collecting data on international cooperation in the countries surveyed reveals notable variability. In general terms, most countries have **partially effective** regulatory frameworks.

For example, Colombia, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala and Guatemala have legal frameworks that, although generally respected, have limited or inconsistent mechanisms to ensure reporting and data collection, which affects their effectiveness. In this group, the cases of Ecuador and El Salvador stand out, which, despite having a clear, complete and specific regulatory framework that regulates the management of information on international cooperation and makes the reporting of activities mandatory, are only partially effective. In these countries, although the regulations are well defined, the lack of rigorous application and adequate control mechanisms prevents effective compliance.

On the other hand, in Uruguay, the legal framework is considered to be **ineffective** because, although there are regulations, there are no clear mechanisms to ensure compliance, which leads to irregular implementation. Finally, Argentina faces an even more critical situation, with

legal frameworks that are not respected and that completely lack mechanisms to ensure their application.

Effectiveness of legal framework

- Partially effective: Framework already exist and are upheld in some cases, but most mechanisms that guarantee reporting are limited or are not routinely applied.
- Little effect: Framework is already established but lacks mechanisms that guarantee reporting, and, thus, his upholding is irregular.
- Ineffective: Although a legal framework already exists, they are not implemented, or they have mechanisms that guarantee their implementation.
- There not a specific legal framework for the regulation of these responsibilitie.
- Totalmente efectivos: La normativa es respetada y existen mecanismos vinculantes claros que...



In general, the responses indicate that the existence of regulations does not guarantee mandatory reporting, which necessarily leads to questions about the causes of non-compliance and possible strategies to overcome these barriers.

2.3 Factors affecting compliance with legal frameworks

When analyzing the factors that favor or hinder effective compliance with legal frameworks, three major challenges emerge that limit the ability of countries to collect and report data in a complete and consistent manner: **the lack of specific regulations, the absence of sanctions for those who do not report, and the lack of incentives and participation of key stakeholders.**

In the regulatory sphere, in some countries, such as the Dominican Republic, the legal frameworks are more oriented towards the demand for cooperation than its supply, which restricts the collection and reporting of data on SSC provided. Although there are mechanisms to manage supply, their development is still incipient, reflecting an incomplete regulatory process.

Another recurrent obstacle is the lack of a regime of consequences or sanctions for institutions that do not comply with their reporting responsibilities. Ecuador highlights that, despite having a regulatory framework, the absence of mechanisms that oblige public entities to report hinders effective compliance. Similar situations are reported in other countries, such as the Dominican Republic, where, although reporting mechanisms have been established,

there are no tools to make reporting mandatory or to sanction non-compliance. This reduces the incentive to comply with regulations and weakens their effectiveness.

Beyond punitive approaches, the existence of incentives for the participation of key actors also plays a fundamental role in the functioning of regulatory frameworks. Colombia highlights the lack of incentives and the need for more education on the benefits of reporting and data management, which shows that, in addition to clear regulations, it is crucial to foster a culture of transparency and collaboration. Guatemala points out that, although public institutions are obliged to report, other actors, such as the private sector and civil society organizations, do not do so, which limits the comprehensiveness of the information.

The responses indicate that compliance with legal frameworks is compromised by a combination of factors. The absence of clear regulations and sanction mechanisms, together with the lack of incentives and the limited participation of key stakeholders, create an environment that is not conducive to SSC reporting.

To strengthen data collection processes and encourage voluntary participation, it is necessary to implement strategies that encourage the active collaboration of the actors involved. This implies establishing clear motivational mechanisms, strengthening institutional capacities and promoting a culture of cooperation. In this way, it is possible to go beyond merely punitive approaches – often considered the most immediate solution to non-compliance – and move toward more comprehensive strategies that encourage the voluntary and effective adoption of legal frameworks.

2.4 Existencia de mecanismos de coordinación

When analyzing the coordination mechanisms for the collection and reporting of information on international cooperation, there is notable variability among countries. Although almost all countries have some type of mechanism, its effectiveness is limited.

The only country reporting **effective and well-established coordination mechanisms** is El Salvador, suggesting a solid and organized institutional structure for cooperation data management. It is likely that this strength is related to the robust regulatory framework governing SSC in the country.

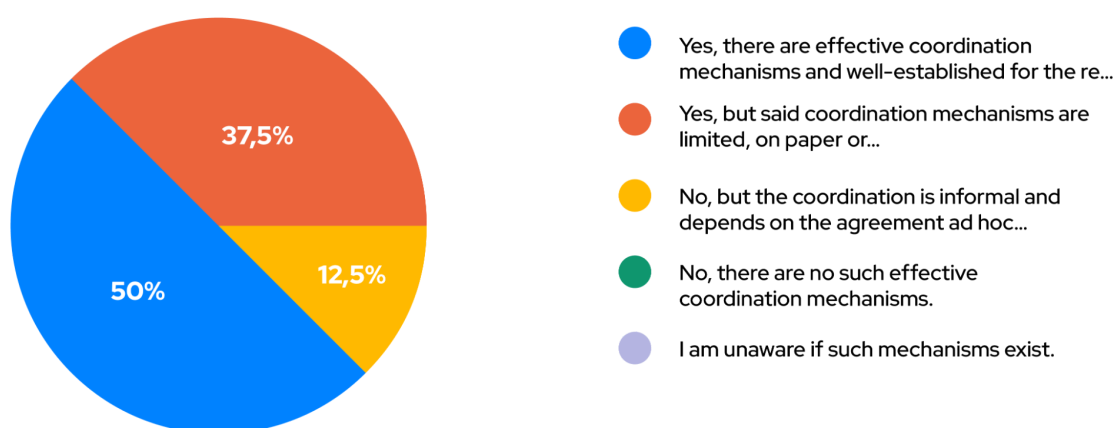
On the other hand, Uruguay, Dominican Republic, Colombia and Guatemala indicate that, although **coordination mechanisms** exist, **they are limited, formal or insufficient** to guarantee an efficient flow of information. This highlights the need for further analysis of each system to identify areas for improvement and strengthen coordination.

Finally, Argentina, Ecuador and Chile report that they **do not have formal coordination mechanisms**, although in practice coordination **occurs informally through ad hoc agreements**, which, according to the countries, tend to work well. Although this approach

allows for flexibility and adaptability, it also entails risks, since it depends on the willingness and capacity of the institutions to collaborate spontaneously, which could compromise its long-term sustainability.

Do effective coordination mechanisms exist between the different institutions involved in the cooperation to guarantee the reporting and information recompilation?

8 ANSWERS



2.5 Characteristics of coordination mechanisms

The responses to this question offer a limited but interesting insight into the coordination mechanisms that exist in some of the countries surveyed. Colombia stands out for mentioning a **formal and structured mechanism**: the National System for International Cooperation (SNCIC) that coordinates with the National Department of Statistics (DANE). This exercise suggests an organized institutional effort to ensure data collection and reporting, which could serve as a model for other countries.

On the other hand, Guatemala indicates that, although it has a legal framework that defines the functions of the institutions involved, it faces problems of information gaps and under-registration. **This gap between regulations and their implementation** suggests a necessary space for action aimed at strengthening practical registration capacities.

In the case of Ecuador, the response is more general and limits itself to mentioning the **exchange of information** as part of its coordination mechanisms. However, it does not specify how this exchange is carried out or whether there are formal structures to support it, which is consistent with its partial assessment of the effectiveness of its regulatory framework.

Finally, Argentina, Chile, the Dominican Republic, El Salvador, and Uruguay did not provide details on the characteristics of their coordination mechanisms, which is consistent with the answers provided in the previous questions and indicates that these mechanisms are not robust enough to be described specifically.

The disparity in responses suggests that, in most cases, cooperation data management remains fragmented and dependent on isolated initiatives rather than integrated systems. This poses a key challenge: to move towards more robust institutional models that not only define roles and responsibilities but also have standardized processes and sufficient resources to ensure the quality and availability of information.

2.6 Complexity in modifying information management processes

When analyzing the complexity of introducing changes in information management processes, the responses reflect a fairly broad consensus around the perception that these changes, although possible, present some degree of **complexity**.

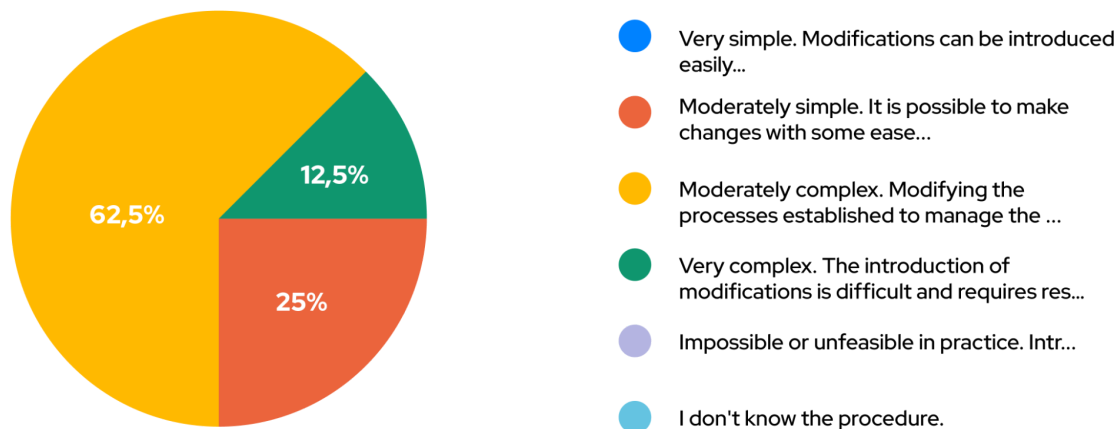
Most countries, such as Uruguay, Argentina, Colombia, Guatemala and Ecuador, describe this task as **moderately complex**. Although they recognize that it is possible to make adjustments, they emphasize that these involve **technical or administrative challenges** as well as requiring **significant coordination** between various national areas or institutions. This suggests that, although not impossible, the modification process demands considerable effort in terms of resources, time and inter-institutional collaboration.

On the other hand, El Salvador and the Dominican Republic consider that introducing modifications is **moderately simple**. Although they also recognize the need to **invest time and human resources**, they perceive that changes can be implemented relatively easily. This difference could be due to more flexible structures or less rigid processes that facilitate adaptation.

Finally, Chile stands out as the only country that qualifies the introduction of modifications as **very complex**. Despite having indicated the absence of formal coordination mechanisms, any alteration in its processes faces **significant barriers**, such as resistance to change, technological limitations and the need for major restructuring. This suggests a more rigid institutional and technical context, where changes require substantial effort and face greater obstacles.

How complex is it to introduce changes in the processes established for information management?

8 ANSWERS



These results suggest that the adaptability of information management systems varies considerably among countries, influenced by factors such as institutional structure, availability of resources and organizational culture. In this sense, the possibilities of advancing in regional processes should consider the specific context of each country when implementing changes in information management processes.

2.7. Trained personnel

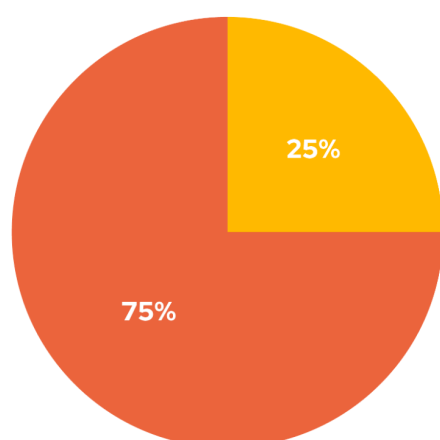
When assessing the availability of trained personnel to manage SSC data, a heterogeneous picture is observed in the countries evaluated. Although all have professionals with certain competencies, most agree that **the number of specialists with necessary skills for data collection, analysis and reporting is insufficient.**

In some countries, such as Argentina, Ecuador, El Salvador, Dominican Republic and Uruguay, the existence of qualified personnel is recognized, but the need to increase their number is highlighted. Chile and Colombia have personnel with certain competencies, although they do not have all the necessary skills to comprehensively address the processes of SSC data collection, analysis and reporting.

This suggests that, although the countries have trained personnel, their numbers are limited and their skills still need to be strengthened. To ensure effective information management in this area, it is essential to close existing gaps and develop more specialized technical capabilities.

Are there personnel trained for compiling, analyzing and reporting SSC data?

8 ANSWERS



- Yes, there is highly trained personnel with the right abilities necessary to...
- Yes, but the number of trained personnel is insufficient to cover...
- Yes, there is somewhat trained personnel, but not with all the skills necessary to...
- No, there is no such trained personnel necessary to realize...
- I am unaware if such trained personnel exist.

2.8 Summary of the normative–institutional dimension

The analysis shows that, although most countries have legal frameworks and coordination mechanisms in place, their effectiveness is limited by the lack of specific regulations, the absence of sanctions, the lack of incentives, and the limited participation of key stakeholders. In addition, the adaptability of information management systems varies significantly, and the availability of trained personnel is insufficient in most cases. To overcome these barriers, it is necessary to move towards comprehensive strategies that foster active collaboration, strengthen institutional capacities, and promote a culture of transparency and cooperation beyond punitive approaches. These efforts should consider the particularities of each country to ensure the sustainability and effectiveness of regulatory and institutional frameworks.

Appearance	Finding	Highlighted cases
Existence of legal frameworks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 7 out of 8 countries have some legal framework. ● Only 2 countries have specific and complete regulations. ● A single country with no legal framework. 	<p>El Salvador and Ecuador: Complete frameworks.</p> <p>Chile: No legal framework</p>

Effectiveness of the frameworks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Most have partially effective frames. • Only two countries have clear regulations, but with limited enforcement. • At least two countries with critical challenges (low effectiveness or non-compliance). 	<p>Ecuador and El Salvador: Clear frameworks, but limited implementation.</p> <p>Argentina: not respected frameworks</p>
Factors affecting compliance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of specific regulations. • Absence of sanctions. • Lack of incentives and participation of key stakeholders. 	
Coordination mechanisms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Only one country reports effective mechanisms. • Five countries have limited mechanisms. • Three countries rely on informal agreements. 	<p>El Salvador: Well-established mechanisms.</p>
Complexity to modify processes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Most perceive changes as moderately complex. • Only two countries consider them moderately easy. • One country considers it very complex. 	<p>El Salvador: Changes are moderately easy.</p> <p>Chile: Very complex changes.</p>
Trained personnel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All countries have trained but insufficient personnel. • Five countries emphasize the need for more professionals. • Two countries reported that personnel have a deficit of key skills. 	

3. Databases and information systems

This section analyzes in detail the characteristics of the information systems used to record and manage data on SSC in the participating countries. To this end, seven closed and two open-ended questions were asked to inquire about the existence of centralized databases, their technical characteristics, the type of information they contain, and the ease or difficulty of modifying them. The objective is to understand how countries collect, store and use SSC data, assessing their actual capacity to manage information for reporting exercises.

3.1 Existence of databases

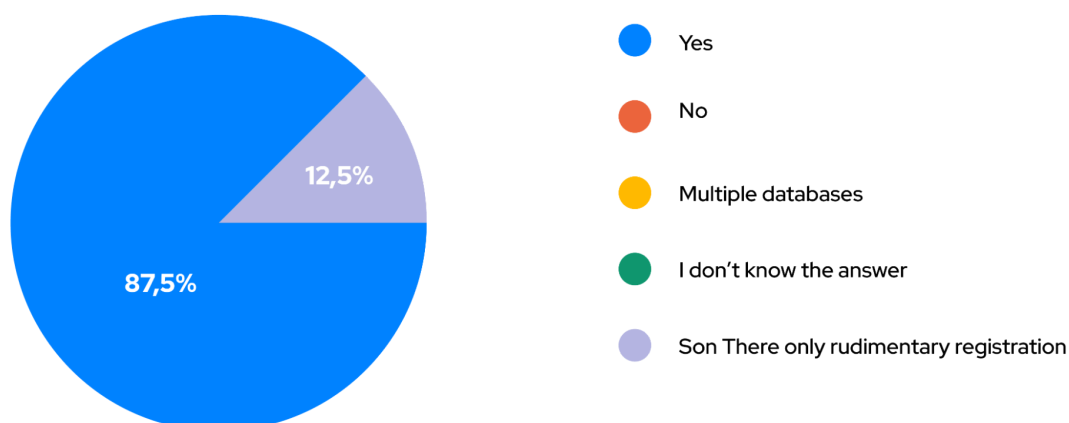
Most of the countries surveyed (7 out of 8 countries) reported having a **centralized database or information system** to record SSC initiatives, reflecting a generalized effort to maintain an organized record of these actions.

However, Guatemala submitted an atypical response, noting that its records are "rudimentary." This suggests that, although some documentation exists, it is limited in scope and possibly incomplete.

It is worth noting that no response indicated the total absence of a system, the existence of multiple dispersed bases, or a lack of knowledge of the subject. This suggests that, at least among the countries that responded, there is widespread awareness of the importance of having a centralized system to manage these initiatives.

Does your country have a database or a centralized information system that registers SSC initiatives?

8 ANSWERS



3.2 Technical characteristics of the databases

The analysis of the responses on the technical and methodological aspects of SSC databases and information systems shows, as in other areas, a remarkable **heterogeneity in their development and functionalities**. Although all the countries surveyed have some type of system for recording SSC initiatives, their capacities, scope and content **vary significantly**, reflecting different levels of technological and institutional maturity.

El Salvador stands out for using an integrated system that covers the entire cooperation cycle, from the signing of agreements to the systematization of results and good practices, which is evidence of a more advanced and structured model. Chile, for its part, has an information system, although it faces limitations in its compatibility with other financial systems. The Dominican Republic adopts a hybrid approach, combining a system under development with an Excel matrix to compile data on SSC supply.

In contrast, Argentina and Colombia use parameterized spreadsheets, while Guatemala operates with rudimentary records in Excel, which significantly restricts their functionality. In the case of Uruguay and Ecuador, no detailed information is available on their systems, which might suggest that they use low-complexity registry tools.

The diversity in SSC information systems reflects **inequalities** in the countries' **technical and institutional capacities** and highlights the challenge of promoting standardized systems that improve the management and reporting of SSC data in the region.

3.3 Scope of the databases

The scope of the databases **varies significantly among countries, reflecting differences in the coverage and breadth of information systems used to record SSC initiatives**.

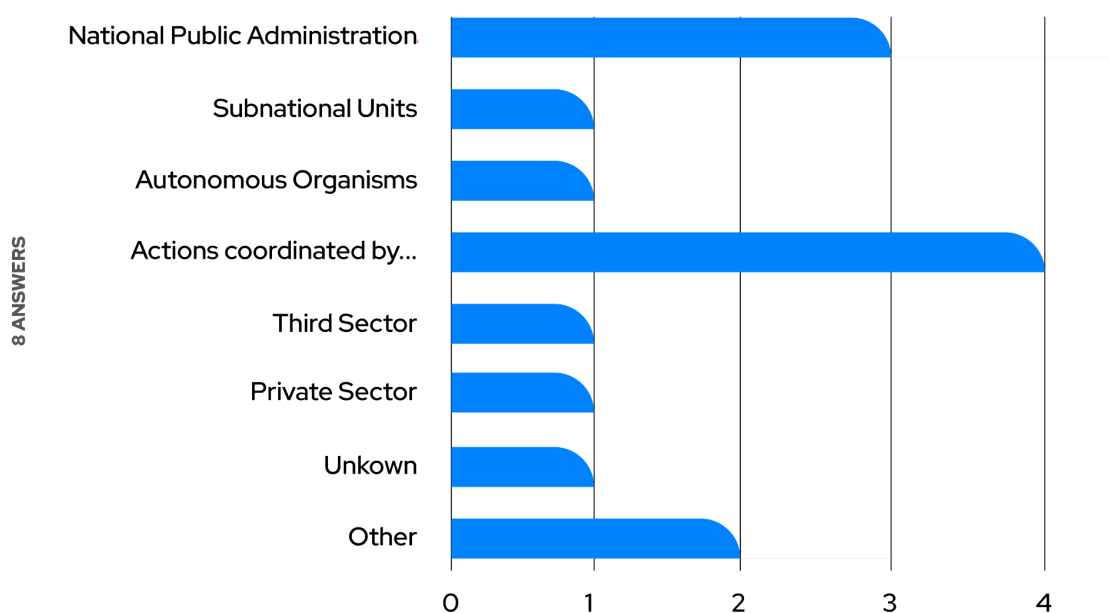
Uruguay and Ecuador stand out for having the **most comprehensive databases**. In the case of Uruguay, the database not only includes information from the national public administration but also from subnational units and autonomous agencies, which allows for a more complete record of initiatives. Ecuador incorporates data from the national public administration, the third sector and the private sector, reflecting an inclusive and multidimensional approach.

El Salvador reports that its database covers exclusively cooperation managed with central government entities, evidencing a **focus on national institutions**. Similarly, the Dominican Republic reports that its database covers a wide range of public institutions, although not all of them, suggesting gaps in coverage.

In contrast, Argentina, Chile, Colombia and Guatemala limit their systems to **initiatives coordinated directly by the SSC governing body**, excluding those of a decentralized nature.

In general terms, while some countries have developed systems with a broader and more diverse scope, others maintain more centralized and restricted approaches. These differences could make it difficult to build a comprehensive regional vision for SSC reporting.

What's the scope of the database?



3.4 Contents of the databases

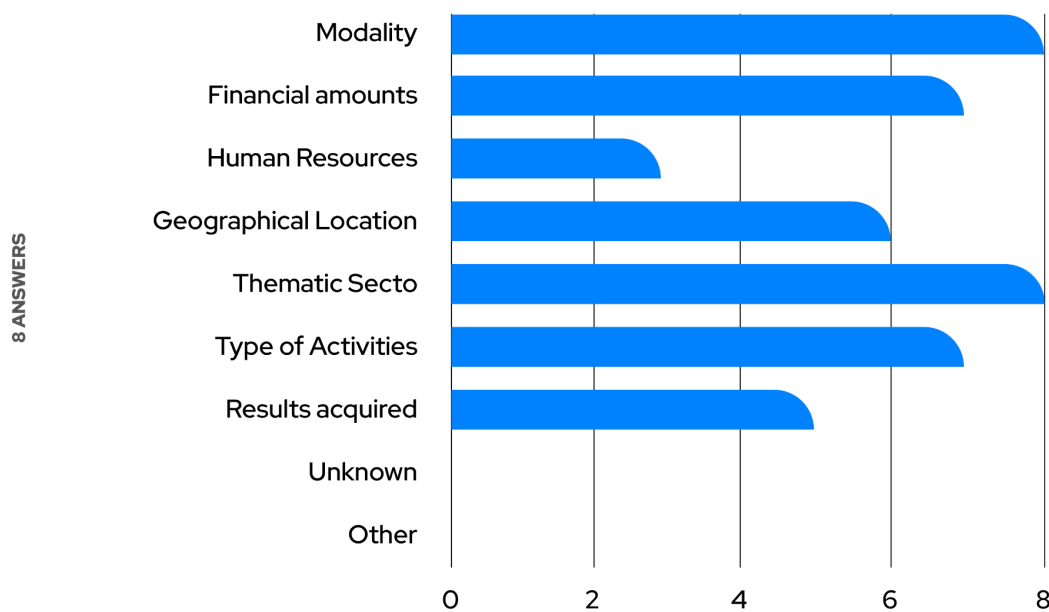
Analysis of the content of the databases reveals a high degree of similarity in the main fields recorded, although with some variations in the details. All countries include information on the cooperation modality (financial, technical, or triangular), the thematic sector and financial amounts, reflecting the importance of **classifying the type of support provided in traditional terms**. Disaggregation by type of activity and geographic location are also recurrent fields.

In terms of differences, some countries include **additional information that would facilitate reporting in the framework of quantification exercises such as the TOSSD or UNCTAD's Voluntary Framework**. For example, the Dominican Republic, Argentina and Chile include data on the human resources involved, which allows for a more complete evaluation of the efforts and capacities dedicated to each project. In addition, Uruguay, Dominican Republic, Argentina, Colombia and Chile record the results obtained, which demonstrates an interest in measuring the impact and effectiveness of the initiatives.

On the other hand, Guatemala and Ecuador do not mention the inclusion of results obtained in their databases, which could limit their ability to evaluate the success of the projects.

While all countries surveyed share a common core of information (modality, financial amounts, geographic location and thematic sector), differences in additional fields, such as human resources and results achieved, reflect different levels of depth and focus in information management. These variations may influence each country's ability to effectively analyze, optimize and improve its SSC initiatives.

What type of information does the database register?



3.5 Access to information

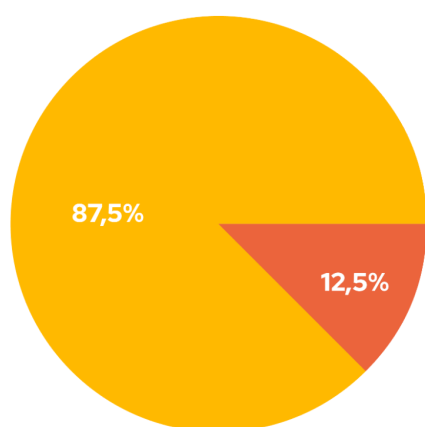
Regarding access to information by the governing body, most countries (Argentina, Chile, Ecuador, El Salvador, Dominican Republic and Uruguay) report full access to their databases, which facilitates control and centralized management of SSC activities. However, in Colombia, access is subject to special permissions, which could affect the efficiency of data collection and analysis. For its part, Guatemala indicates that it is unaware of the situation, suggesting possible limitations in information management.

3.6. Integration and interoperability

The question on the integration of information systems shows a marked trend: with the exception of Uruguay, which reports partial progress in connecting its systems, the rest of the countries surveyed (Argentina, Chile, Colombia, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala and Guatemala) indicate the absence of integration. This uniformity in the responses evidences a significant gap in the maturity of government information systems in the region, which considerably limits the ability of these countries to efficiently report their contributions to development.

Are the existing information systems integrated, or can they do it with other national systems (e.g., budgetary or statistical)?

8 ANSWERS



- Yes, they are completely integrated
- Yes, but only through partial integration. They are integrated in only some aspects, but the connection with other national systems is limited or incomplete.
- No, they aren't integrated
- No, but they can be integrated, though it hasn't been done yet
- I am unaware if systems can be reintegrated

3.7. Quality control

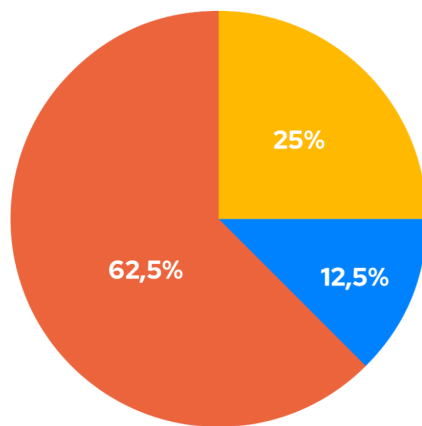
With regard to quality control mechanisms to ensure that the information recorded in the databases is accurate, complete and reliable, the responses of the countries surveyed reflect a **heterogeneous situation**, with some outstanding cases and others showing significant limitations.

Uruguay stands out as the only country with a comprehensive information quality assurance system, which includes data validation controls, external audits, standards and well-defined protocols. This structured approach contrasts with that of most countries, such as El Salvador, Dominican Republic, Argentina, Colombia and Ecuador, which, although they have **control mechanisms**, consider them **limited or insufficient** to fully guarantee the accuracy and reliability of the information. At the other extreme, Chile and Guatemala show a notable absence of formal controls, which highlights a vulnerability in data management.

This disparity in control mechanisms represents an additional challenge for the production of reliable data in the framework of international exercises such as the TOSDD or the Voluntary Framework (UNCTAD).

Are there quality control mechanisms available to guarantee the information is precise, complete and trustworthy?

8 ANSWERS



- Yes, there are data validation mechanisms, external audits, standards, and protocols well-defined that ensure
- There are control mechanisms, but they are limited or insufficient to completely guarantee the precision...
- There are no formal quality control mechanisms to guarantee that...
- I don't know / I am unaware if there are quality control mechanisms for...

3.8 Change management

In relation to the complexity of modifying established databases or information systems, the responses of the countries surveyed reveal **different levels of flexibility and adaptability**.

The Dominican Republic, Colombia and Guatemala describe the process as **simple**, indicating that modifications can be made with minimal resources and time. However, in the case of the Dominican Republic, this statement should be qualified because, although changes at the conceptual level are not technically complex, their implementation requires additional human resources and time. In addition, when modifications involve adjustments to the IT tool, it is necessary to coordinate with the technological areas, which adds a layer of administrative complexity.

Similar situations exist in Argentina, Chile, El Salvador and Uruguay, where the process is perceived as moderately complex due to the need for additional resources and coordination between different areas. Although the possibility of making changes exists, these require an organizational and logistical effort that could slow down implementation or limit the capacity to respond to new needs.

Finally, Ecuador stands out as the only country that describes the process as **highly complex**, noting that any modification requires a significant technical, financial, and/or administrative effort. This suggests that its system is less flexible and faces greater difficulties in adapting to changes or updates.

In conclusion, while some countries have more agile systems, others face moderate or high levels of complexity, which may affect their ability to keep databases updated and aligned with the evolution of SSC initiatives. These differences reflect variations in each country's technical infrastructure, available resources and administrative processes.

3.9 Comparative synthesis of the region's information systems

The analysis shows a **marked heterogeneity** in SSC information systems among the countries surveyed. While some have more advanced and structured systems, others rely on basic tools and face significant limitations. Lack of integration, absence of robust quality controls, and limited flexibility to manage change are recurring challenges that affect the effectiveness of these systems and restrict their ability to report information effectively in international exercises.

Category	Key findings	Highlighted countries
Existence of Databases	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Most countries have a centralized database or system. 	Guatemala: Rudimentary records.
Technical characteristics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Heterogeneity in capabilities and functionalities. 	El Salvador: Integrated system covering the complete cycle. Argentina/Colombia: Spreadsheets.
Scope	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2 countries have comprehensive databases (including public, private and subnational sectors). 4 countries limit their scope to actions coordinated by the lead agency. 	
Content	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All of them record the traditional categories: modality, amounts, thematic sector and location. Other countries also include human resources and results. 	Dominican Republic/Argentina/Chile: Human resources. Uruguay/Argentina/Colombia/Chile: Results.
Access	Most governing bodies have full access to the information in the databases.	Colombia: Conditional access.
Integration	Most countries lack integrated systems.	Uruguay: partial integration

Quality control	Diversity in situations with emphasis on countries with significant deficiencies in data quality control mechanisms.	Uruguay: Integral system. Chile/Guatemala: No formal controls.
Change management	Two countries find it easy to make changes. Four countries consider them moderately complex. One country considers them highly complex.	Ecuador: Highly complex changes

Conclusions and recommendations

Before presenting the conclusions and recommendations, it is important to highlight the **low representativeness** of the survey, since only 38% of the PIFCSS member countries participated in the questionnaire. In addition, the results reflect a **marked heterogeneity** in the development of international cooperation information and reporting systems. While some countries have integrated and robust tools, others still rely on rudimentary methods, such as spreadsheets. This diversity responds to differences in resources, regulatory frameworks, political will and institutional capacities, which makes it difficult to generalize the findings to the entire region. Nevertheless, the data obtained provide valuable information on the progress and challenges in the countries surveyed.

The countries that responded expressed interest in participating in **SSC measurement and quantification exercises**, although with different levels of preparation and consolidation of the processes.

The countries that responded expressed their interest in participating in **SSC measurement and quantification exercises**, although with different levels of preparation and consolidation of processes. In the case of the **Voluntary Framework**, Colombia is the only country that is already reporting, while the others face technical and political challenges that have hindered its implementation. In contrast, the **TOSSD** process is more advanced, with several countries—including Chile, Ecuador, Uruguay and the Dominican Republic—already actively reporting. However, technical limitations and political resistance persist in some countries to joining these exercises.

On the other hand, although most countries have some **regulatory framework and coordination mechanisms** in place, these are often **partial or ineffective**. The lack of enforceability, incentives and sanctions hinders compliance, while gaps in the coverage and scope of information systems limit the quality of the data collected. Hence the importance of involving non-governmental actors, such as the private sector and civil society organizations,

in data collection and reporting processes to improve the completeness and representativeness of the information.

Gaps were also observed in the **trained personnel and technology** used. Despite having personnel with basic skills, most countries face a shortage of human resources trained to manage complex information systems.

On the other hand, although most countries have some type of **regulatory framework and coordination mechanisms**, these are often **partial or ineffective**. The lack of enforceability, incentives and sanctions hinders compliance, while gaps in the coverage and scope of information systems affect the quality of the data collected. This highlights the importance of involving non-governmental actors, such as the private sector and civil society organizations, in data collection and reporting processes in order to improve the completeness and representativeness of the information.

Gaps were also identified **in the availability of trained personnel and in the technological tools used**. Although many countries have personnel with basic skills, most face a shortage of human resources specialized in the management of complex information systems. Furthermore, technological tools vary significantly, ranging from rudimentary systems to more advanced platforms that still present **interoperability** problems. These limitations are compounded by **the lack of integration between systems** in most countries, which complicates data collection and analysis.

Finally, with a few exceptions, data **quality control mechanisms** are insufficient, which compromises the reliability of the information reported. Although the countries' capacity to modify their information systems varies significantly—with some considering it feasible to introduce improvements and others facing technical and administrative difficulties—the diagnosis made through the survey allows us to identify several areas for improvement. These include both the strengthening of technological infrastructure and the development of institutional capacities, with the aim of generating information systems that are not only effective in the short term but also sustainable in the long term.

Recommendations for PIFCSS

The report highlights the need for strategic support to help countries overcome existing barriers in their information systems, promoting their strengthening and harmonization at the regional level. Although there is no single solution applicable to all countries and each intervention must be adapted to its specific context, PIFCSS can contribute to the development and improvement of these systems through the following actions:

- **Technical capacity building:** Implementing training programs for technical staff in key areas such as data collection, analysis and reporting, with a focus on advanced skills development.
- **Knowledge sharing and mutual assistance:** Facilitating cross-country learning through the MECSS, promoting the design of specific roadmaps for the development and implementation of information systems adapted to local needs and contexts.
- **Technical and financial assistance:** Providing support for technological modernization, including the implementation of interoperable systems adaptable to international standards for data classification and cataloging.
- **Political awareness:** Supporting cooperation governing bodies in their efforts to involve national decision-makers, highlighting the strategic benefits of improving the reporting of cooperation indicators.

Through these actions, PIFCSS can play a key role in improving SSC information systems, promoting their efficiency, comparability and long-term sustainability.

APPENDIX: Questionnaire for voluntary survey⁵

1. Country to which it belongs

2. Name of the institution to which it belongs

3. Is your country interested in reporting to Indicator 17.3.1 according to the Voluntary Framework for Measuring SSC (UNCTAD)?

- Yes, we are already reporting to Indicator 17.3.1.
- Yes, we are interested in participating in quantification pilots.
- We are not sure; we need more information before deciding.
- No, we are not currently interested in participating in the exercises.
- I do not know the answer.

4. Please expand your response by commenting on the reasons or barriers to reporting indicator 17.3.1.

5. Is your country interested in reporting to TOSSD?

- Yes, we are already reporting
- Yes, the will exists, but we have not yet been able to report.
- We are not sure; we need more information before deciding.
- No, we are not currently interested in participating in the exercises.
- I do not know the answer.

6. Please expand on your response by commenting on the reasons or barriers to reporting TOSSD.

⁵ The list of questions included in the form is detailed below so that countries can prepare their responses. However, to the extent technically possible, it is requested that the survey be completed through the online form.

Regulatory and institutional aspects:

7. Is there a **legal framework** that regulates international cooperation and establishes responsibilities for reporting and data collection?
 - Yes, there is a clear and complete specific legal framework that regulates the management of information on international cooperation and makes the reporting of activities mandatory.
 - Yes, it exists, but the framework is either too general or too partial or limited, resulting in incomplete information on the country's international cooperation.
 - No, there is no general or specific legal framework that guarantees the reporting of this type of activity.
 - I do not know if there are legal frameworks for reporting cooperation.

8. To what extent are the existing legal frameworks for reporting cooperation effective in ensuring compliance with reporting and data collection responsibilities?
 - Fully effective: Regulations are respected, and clear binding mechanisms are in place to ensure compliance.
 - Partially effective: Regulations exist and are respected in some cases, but sanctioning mechanisms are limited or not consistently applied.
 - Not very effective: Regulations are in place but lack effective sanctioning mechanisms, and enforcement is irregular.
 - Ineffective: Although there is a legal framework, it is not respected, and there are no mechanisms to ensure compliance.
 - There is no specific legal framework for the regulation of these responsibilities.
 - I do not know the answer.

9. To the best of your knowledge and ability, please mention what factors or barriers you consider promote or hinder effective compliance with legal frameworks for data collection and reporting.

10. ¿Are there effective coordination mechanisms between the different institutions involved in the cooperation to ensure reporting and information gathering?

- Yes, there are effective and well-established coordination mechanisms for reporting and data collection.
- Yes, but the coordination mechanisms are limited, formal or do not allow for effective coordination to facilitate the flow of information.
- No, but coordination is informal and depends on ad hoc arrangements that usually work well.
- No, there are no effective coordination mechanisms.
- I do not know if there are any coordination mechanisms.

11. If available, please briefly describe the characteristics of the coordination mechanisms for the collection and reporting of information in your country.

12. How complex is it to **introduce changes** in the processes established for information management?

- Very simple. Modifications can be introduced easily, with quick changes and without major obstacles.
- Moderately simple. Modifications can be made with some ease, although an investment of time and human resources is required to adapt them.
- Moderately complex. Modifying the established processes for information management circuits is possible but involves some technical or administrative challenges and requires coordination among several areas or national institutions.
- Highly complex. The introduction of modifications is difficult, requires major restructuring and faces significant barriers, such as resistance to change or technological limitations.
- Impossible or unfeasible in practice. Introducing modifications is practically unfeasible due to the rigidity of the systems, regulatory restrictions or high costs.
- I do not know the procedure.

13. Are there qualified personnel to collect, analyze and report SSC data?

- Yes, there are highly trained personnel with the necessary skills to effectively collect, analyze and report SSC data.
- Yes, but the number of trained personnel is insufficient to cover all data collection and analysis needs.
- There are personnel with certain competencies, but not all the skills necessary to fully address SSC data collection, analysis and reporting.
- No, there are no personnel with the necessary training to perform these tasks effectively.
- I do not know if qualified and trained personnel are available.

14. If you wish, you may incorporate additional comments on the regulatory and institutional aspects of recording, quantifying and reporting SSC.

Technical-methodological aspects of the information systems

15. Does your country have a centralized **database or information system** that records SSC initiatives?

- Yes.
- No.
- Several databases.
- I do not know the answer.

16. To the best of your knowledge, describe the technical characteristics of the database(s) (whether it is an Excel or some other simple database or whether it is a proprietary technological development, etc.).

17. What is the scope of the database(s) (you may indicate more than one option)?

- It covers the entire national public administration.
- Covers the cooperation of subnational units (provinces/states/cities).
- Covers autonomous agencies
- It is limited to SSC actions involving lead agency coordination.
- Covers the third sector
- Covers the private sector
- Other (specify).....
- I do not know the scope of the database(s).

18. Does the SSC lead agency or body have **access** to such information?

- Yes, you have full access.
- Yes, but access is limited or requires special permissions on a case-by-case basis to access the information.
- It is not possible to access this information.
- I do not know the answer.

19. Are there **quality control** mechanisms in place to ensure that the information is accurate, complete and reliable?

- Yes, there are data validation controls, external audits, standards and well-defined protocols that ensure the accuracy, completeness and reliability of the information collected.
- Control mechanisms are in place, but they are limited or insufficient to fully ensure the accuracy and reliability of the information.
- There are no formalized quality control mechanisms to ensure that the information is accurate, complete and reliable.
- I do not know if there are quality control mechanisms for this purpose.

20. Are existing information systems integrated, or can they be integrated with other national systems (e.g., budgetary, statistical)?

- Yes, they are fully integrated.
- Yes, but integration is partial. They are integrated in some aspects, but the connection with other national systems is limited or incomplete.
- No, they are not currently integrated.
- No, but it is possible to integrate them, although it has not yet been done.
- I do not know if the systems can be integrated.

21. How complex is it to **introduce modifications** to established databases or information systems?

- It's simple; modifications can be made with minimal resources and time.
- It is moderately complex; it requires additional resources and coordination between different areas.
- It is highly complex; modifications involve great technical, financial, and/or administrative efforts.
- It is impossible or very difficult; the systems do not allow for modifications or are limited by rigid regulatory or technological frameworks.
- I do not know / I do not know how modifications to databases or technical systems are handled.

22. What **type of information** does the database contain? If there is more than one database, please indicate the information available in all the databases.

- Modality (financial, technical, triangular)
- Financial amounts
- Human Resources
- Geographical location
- Thematic area
- Type of activities performed

- Results obtained
- Other (specify) _____
- I do not know the type of information required by the database(s).

23. Thank you very much for your time. Please leave here any additional information or comments you consider relevant.
