



REPORT

PROJECT 'SIEMBRA':

YOUNG PROFESSIONAL VOLUNTEER PROGRAM
FOR THE SICA REGION: CONTRIBUTING
TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF RURAL AREAS
THROUGH 'SERVICIO PAÍS' OF CHILE.



Santiago, Chile. November 14th, 2020

At the end of 2010 we began a new journey, seeking to build relationships of work and collaboration with a variety of actors in Latin America and the rest of the world and thus share development objectives and programmatic stakes in a two-way exchange of learning and cooperating.

During this decade, we have developed and implemented a technical assistance line in different Latin American countries for the development of young professional volunteer programs, through which we aim to share the 25-year experience of our program 'Servicio País', which leads young professionals to areas of our country with high poverty and isolation rates to promote inclusive local development processes. A central ally in this objective has been the Chilean cooperation, that through the fund 'Fondo Chile' of the Chilean International Cooperation Agency (AGCID) and the UNDP, have supported the implementation of this work.

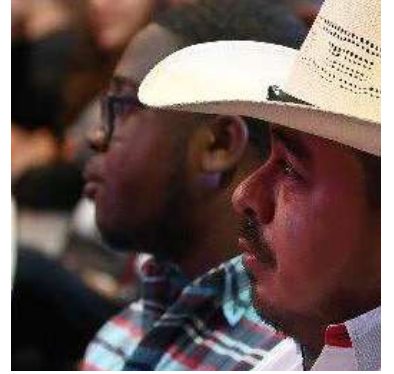
Through these 25 years we have mobilized more than 6,500 professionals for a period of 12 months to work jointly with their communities in projects that contribute to the reduction of social gaps and the development of these localities, based on the strategic alliance with the Chilean state and local governments.

The memoir that we are presenting below is the fourth experience supported by the fund 'Fondo Chile'. Project 'SIEMBRA', presented here, is developing in Central America with the purpose of creating a new model of social intervention with young professionals, who will dedicate one year of their life to contribute to the rural territorial development of the region.

Additionally, we would like to remark previously implemented projects, such as the **Programa de Voluntariado y Servicio Cívico 'AROVIA'** [Program of Volunteerism and Community Service 'Arovia'], developed jointly with the Government of Paraguay and focused on articulating public and private supply in the area based on the local needs, conducting an instructive process on public administration for professional volunteers and local actors who were participating in the intervention. In addition, with AGCID, we implemented the **'Programa Cooperantes de Chile-Chile Voluntarios'** [Program Chilean Aid Workers-Chilean Volunteers], aimed at pilot testing a work scheme of young professionals providing technical assistance for the projects implemented by the agency. Finally, we would like to remark the joint operation, with the UNDP in Colombia, of 'Manos a la Paz' [Hands for Peace], a program oriented towards strengthening the capacities of institutions, local authorities and social actors in prioritized territories to contribute to the peaceful transformation of the contexts and their conflicts, and the construction of a culture of peace and development, connecting Colombians with different backgrounds (students, professionals, volunteers) to each other, with a strong social commitment to collective creation and incorporation of the national reality.

We hope the following pages can express the meaning of this last experience of construction, dialogue and innovation, developed upon the heart of Central American rural areas and their inhabitants. This has been a great experience for our institutional work and for learning. I have nothing else to say than thank you to all the people who have made this possible and especially to the fund 'Fondo Chile', which has trusted in our work and in the work of our partner at the Central American level.

Catalina Littin Menz
Executive Director
Fundación Superación de la Pobreza







Communitary activity in Copanch'orti' within the framework of the Youth Exchange, January 2020

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INTRODUCTION

The 'Programa de Voluntariado Profesional Juvenil para la Región SICA: Contribuyendo al Desarrollo del Mundo Rural desde el Servicio País de Chile' [Young Professional Volunteer Program for the SICA region: Contributing to the Development of Rural Areas through 'Servicio País' of Chile], or Project 'SIEMBRA', is a joint initiative by the foundation 'Fundación Superación de la Pobreza' (FUSUPO) and the Executive Secretariat of the Central American Agricultural Council (SE-CAC), part of the Central American Integration System (SICA) and local partner of this project. The project also has other associate institutions. In Chile, Centro Internacional de Economía Social y Cooperativas [International Center for Social and Cooperative Economy] (CIESCOOP) from Universidad de Santiago and the municipalities of Arica and Romeral. In Central America, the Mancomunidad de Municipios Garífunas de Honduras [Association of Garifuna Municipalities of Honduras] (MAMUGAH) and the Macomunidad Copanch'orti' [Association of Municipalities of Copanch'orti'], Guatemala. The overall budget was USD 376,537, funded as follows: 'Fondo Chile' funded USD 220,154; partner institutions contributed USD 23,716, and other money contributions totalized USD 132,667.

The general objective was: "Contributing to expand the supply provided by the Central American Strategy for Rural Territorial Development (ECADERT) to SICA countries in order to achieve the objectives and results of the Regional Action Plan for Rural Youth, based on the creation of a new **technical-methodological instrument including young professional's volunteer social action** and, consequently, creating innovative peer work and new opportunities for social and generational integration at a local, national and regional level". In order to achieve this, we defined three main components that enable creating our own model, capable of addressing the challenges, particularities, differences and similarities of the rural areas in Central America, specifically focused on young people. Thus, the following specific objectives were defined:

1. Supporting the development of the Professional Volunteer Program in the Central American Agricultural Council, within the framework of ECADERT, by transferring the tools, lessons, experiences and good practices of the program 'Servicio País' of the foundation 'Fundación Superación de la Pobreza', Chile.

2. Creating a learning process about the reality of the two kind of territories prioritized by ECADERT, i.e.: (i) a similar territory in different countries and, (ii) a focalized territory, fostering the appropriateness of the Professional Volunteer Model for the SICA region.

3. Creating new knowledge and productive, innovative models for the rural youth as part of territorial rural development.

Therefore, the final product of this project is the new **Program of Young Professionals in Voluntary Social Action for rural development in the SICA region**, which constitutes a regional public good provided by the SE-CAC for the rural areas of the eight countries in the Central American Integration System (SICA): Belice, Guatemala, Honduras, El Salvador, Costa Rica, Panama, Nicaragua and Dominican Republic.

It is worth mentioning that, as an intermediate result and as part of the implementation of this project (Component 2), a direct intervention with two duo of young professionals was executed in two of the territories defined as 'prioritized' by ECADERT. This intervention was a pilot testing and had the aim of learning some lessons for the development of the model. These territories were:

(1) Guatemala: in alliance with Mancomunidad Copanch'orti', formed by the municipalities of Camotán, Jocotán, Olopa and San Juan Ermita.

(2) Honduras: in alliance with Mancomunidad de Municipios Garífunas de Honduras (MAMUGAH), formed by the municipalities of Balfate, Iriona, Limón, Santa Fe, Santa Rosa de Aguán, Trujillo and San Francisco.

Based on what we have described, there are different direct beneficiaries of Project 'SIEMBRA': the SE-CAC's own institutionality which is reinforced with a new instrument that aims to strengthen their plans and strategies. Moreover, the Ministries of Agriculture and, more specifically, institutions in charge of implementing ECADERT in the rural areas of their countries are also beneficiaries of this project. Other stakeholders directly benefited by the implementation of the project are the communities where the pilot tests were conducted:

I) The focalized Copanch'orti' territory in Guatemala, with a total population of 161,036 inhabitants, mostly Chorti' and mixed race people. This area has one of the higher poverty rates in the country (over 80%), is highly vulnerable to climate change, being part of what is called the Central American Dry Corridor. II) The similar Central American Garífuna territory, hosting 230,000 inhabitants living in four different countries: Belice, Honduras, Guatemala and Nicaragua.

Consequently, the group of indirect beneficiaries of this project is formed, on the one hand, by the whole population of territories prioritized by ECADERT in the SICA countries, who have a new instrument at their disposal, designed to contribute with achieving the objectives and goals of their Rural Territorial Development Plans. On the other hand, the entire SICA region, since this new program has the purpose of having a positive impact for the social, territorial and generational integration in these countries through the action of the youth.

Lastly, this project was oriented towards the thematic area '**Social Development**', one of the areas prioritized by the call for projects of the fund 'Fondo Chile' in 2018. From such perspective, we aim at reducing the developmental gap between urban and rural areas in the SICA countries, focusing particularly in the inclusion of rural youth, women and men, so they can have access to opportunities linked to their needs and potential, and based on peer work by young professional volunteers, mostly from urban contexts.

Hence, project 'SIEMBRA' contributes specially to Sustainable Developmental Goal 11, particularly Target 11a: "Support positive economic, social and environmental links between urban, peri-urban and rural areas by strengthening national and regional development planning". In effect, the new **Program of Young Professionals in Voluntary Social Action for rural development in the SICA region** will allow the region to redistribute its professional capacities, to promote generational, social and territorial integration based on the action of the youth, and to create development opportunities for urban and rural young people in the region.

This international cooperation project was executed thanks to the fund 'Fondo Chile', an initiative of the Chilean government through its Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Chilean International Cooperation Agency for Development (AGCID), and in alliance with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). That enables the participation of the organizations of the Chilean civil society in south-south cooperation, through the financing of projects that are postulated in its annual call.



Dialogue between FUSUPO and SE-CAC on the rural reality of the Metropolitan Region of Chile, junio 2018

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Fundación Superación de la Pobreza would like to thank the Executive Secretariat of the Central American Agricultural Council, who learned about our job through third parties and trusted in our institutional capacities for the implementation of this joint initiative. In addition, we are grateful to CIESCOOP for getting involved in this new challenge for their academic experience and specialized consultancy services. We would also want to acknowledge the municipalities of Arica and Romeral for accepting our invitation to be partners in this project. These municipalities have been our allies and are territories where our program 'Servicio País' has been implemented for many years.

Additionally, we would like to express our gratitude to the associations of municipalities Maconunidad Copanch'orti' and MAMUGAH for receiving this project and getting involved in this challenge by assuming the responsibility of accepting two professionals in their work teams, providing their actions with technical and locally-appropriate support, orienting them towards the territorial development goals.

At this point, we need to acknowledge especially all the professionals who decided to be 'SIEMBRA' volunteers —Nelsi, Edgar, Verónica and Paulo, who, we hope, will eventually become the first generation of the Central American program of young professionals. Their charisma, resilience, joy and commitment made this experience such a success. With these features, they consolidated a way to approach the territory, to accompany its stakeholders and to bring opportunities closer to everyone. Likewise, we would want to thank Sebastián, our field coordinator, who was permanently learning how to unlearn, in order to build a new collective knowledge.

Moreover, we want to acknowledge all the Central American social organizations and public, academic and private institutions who believed in project 'SIEMBRA' and accepted, in each territory, the constant invitations of our volunteers to join and contribute to the revitalization and development of their areas.

Finally, we thank the more than 6 thousand professionals who have brought the program 'Servicio País' to life, a program that have generated important lessons and beliefs through its 25 years. This allows us to participate now in a high-quality technical dialogue to reflect on the best alternatives and practices for achieving the objectives of each territory in which we get involved.

Project 'SIEMBRA': Young Professional Volunteer Program for Rural Development of the SICA region.



Check out the Audiovisual experiences



Team of Project 'SIEMBRA', from left to right: Nelsi Caal volunteer, Ricardo Montero SE-CAC, Renee Fresard FUSUPO, Vanessa Sierra MAMUGAN, Verónica Pulgar volunteer, Diego Agustín Copanch'orti, Paulo Leiva volunteer, Edgar Cache volunteer and Sebastián Vega, Coordinator in field FUSUPO.

PROJECT ACHIEVEMENTS



Context and Problem Addressed:

In 2015, the rural youth in the SICA countries represented 5.6 million people, almost 30% of overall rural population (ECLAC). This group has to face a series of challenges related to access to opportunities, which is even more challenging in the case of young women, who are subject to even more limitations. A great part of these young people (both men and women) live in poverty, due to, among others intervening factors, a lost in small-scale rural production's competitiveness, low income, unpaid work, instability of work conditions and limited access to education. Such context reduces their autonomy and ability to get better opportunities to exercise their rights, to increase their income and to contribute to the development of their families, communities and rural organizations.

Despite this situation, it is also clear that, compared to previous generations, the current youth is better prepared in terms of human capital, has a better self-esteem and have established new forms of relation with the state and other actors of the rural environment. They have more skills for both face-to-face and virtual social interaction, and more access to globalized information. It is also emphasized that, in many countries of the region, many "young people are actively engaged in agricultural and rural development projects, showing the importance of their contribution to social and economic well-being of their communities and territories. Also, many young people have taken the initiative to become valid intermediary of governments for negotiating proposals in favor of their life conditions and the development of their capacities". (Plan de Acción Regional, dirigido a la juventud rural en los países del SICA [Regional Action Plan for the Rural Youth in the SICA countries], 2017)



Acknowledging this issue that affects the rural youth and with the purpose of creating awareness on them and supporting their own strategies and the development of their capacities, the Central American Agricultural Council, based on the ECADERT framework, created the Action Plan for the Rural Youth. It accepts that "strengthening the institutions for human and social capital training of the rural youth is imperative, and this must be done by enhancing the social dialogue on public policy for development with their participation".

In effect, the Central American Agricultural Council created the Central American Strategy for Rural Territorial Development (ECADERT) 2010–2030. This strategy states its objective as follows: "To promote the social participatory management of area-based public policies that are inclusive and equitable, building consensus on projects for the future of rural areas, with planning and investment processes guided by a strategic vision for the institutional, social, economic, cultural and environmental transformation of rural Central America, propelled by the social and institutional stakeholders of the rural areas, enhancing their own cultural identity and their potential to achieve sustainable development." (ECADERT). For ECADERT, people are both the subject and object of the Rural Territorial Development. Consequently, is executed in close collaboration with the different stakeholders in the territory is promoted, including local authorities, civil, private and entrepreneur organizations, as well as young people and women, indigenous and afrodescendant people, among others.

Thus, ECADERT's Action Plan 2014–2018 included the incorporation of the rural youth into the implementation processes of the strategy in their three levels of action (regional, national and territorial), as well as the participation of existing institutions and programs in the region in ECADERT processes, with the purpose of unifying the efforts to address this group of people. Based on such principles, and after a series of Regional Meetings of Multiple Actors, with great participation of the youth, in February 2017, the Regional Action Plan for the Rural Youth in the SICA countries was created.



Regional Action Plan for the Rural Youth in the SICA countries

General Objective:

Promote social equity and inclusion for the rural youth through access to resources, assets and opportunities allowing them to develop their abilities and enhance their participation in decision-making and social activities, in full exercise of their rights.

Specific Objectives:

1. Promote a dialogue on policy and strengthen the institutions related to the rural youth in order to foster public empowerment for transformation based on the own requirements of the rural youth.
2. Promote the participation of the youth and their formal and informal organizations in order for them to gain greater influence in decision-making, by developing their abilities and creating equitable participation contexts in all levels, from the local up to national and regional levels.
3. Create a supply of products and services allowing youth people to develop diversified productive enterprises capable of warranting a decent income for their economic independence, as well as opportunities for social, cultural and environmental development.

As a consequence, ECADERT (2010–2030) and, particularly, the Regional Action Plan for the Rural Youth currently stands out as the main regional initiatives for approaching the territories from a perspective of inclusive rural transformation, regarding territorial rural development as the articulation and harmonization of sectorial policies based on participatory planning processes with social and institutional stakeholders sharing a common view of the territory.

Hence, this project contributes to widen and strengthen the responses provided by these mechanisms for regional development. This is possible thanks to the creation of an almost entirely rural youth-oriented instrument, committed to integrating and putting Central American urban and rural young people at the center of the discussion, as protagonists of their development and the development of their territories. This instrument is a regional public good for the countries that are part of the SICA region.



General and specific objectives:

The strategy assumed for completing the creation of the "technical-methodological instrument including young professional's volunteer social action" (general objective of the Project 'SIEMBRA') should be able to address the challenge of being locally appropriate, and capable of adapting itself to national and local realities and having an acceptable standard for the eight countries of the region.

As a result, what today is the **Program of Young Professionals in Voluntary Social Action for rural development in the SICA region** was developed upon:

I- The experience and lessons acquired by the program 'Servicio País' during its 25 years, which were tested in the two pilot interventions. The interventions were based on: its theoretical framework, which has the same conceptual foundations than ECADERT; technical instruments for implementation, follow-up and supervision; and the professional experience of the people who have been directly involved in the implementation of the program, as well as the experience of young professionals who have participated in the program in previous years. In fact, a professional, who works as a Regional Technical Supervisor in 'Servicio País', was transferred to Central America for a year in order to perform as Program Field Coordinator. Additionally, the interventions included transferring two former professionals of 'Servicio País', each of who joined local professionals to work as part of a professional pair during 10 months in Honduras and Guatemala.

II- Studies and gathering of relevant data to inform decision-making and/or the design of any of its dimensions, namely:

a) A Cost of Living Analysis, conducted to establish a proposal of Monthly Allowance for young professionals participating in the program. After a general, compared review of the countries in the region, three possible scenarios were defined, related to different values of Monthly Allowance. The assignment of one scenario or another must be decided when implementing the program. This is a key aspect for developing the model, since young people deciding to be part of it must not see their personal wealth affected in order to participate in the development challenges of their countries.

Table 1: Proposal of Monthly Allowance for Young Professionals in US Dollar: Three Scenarios

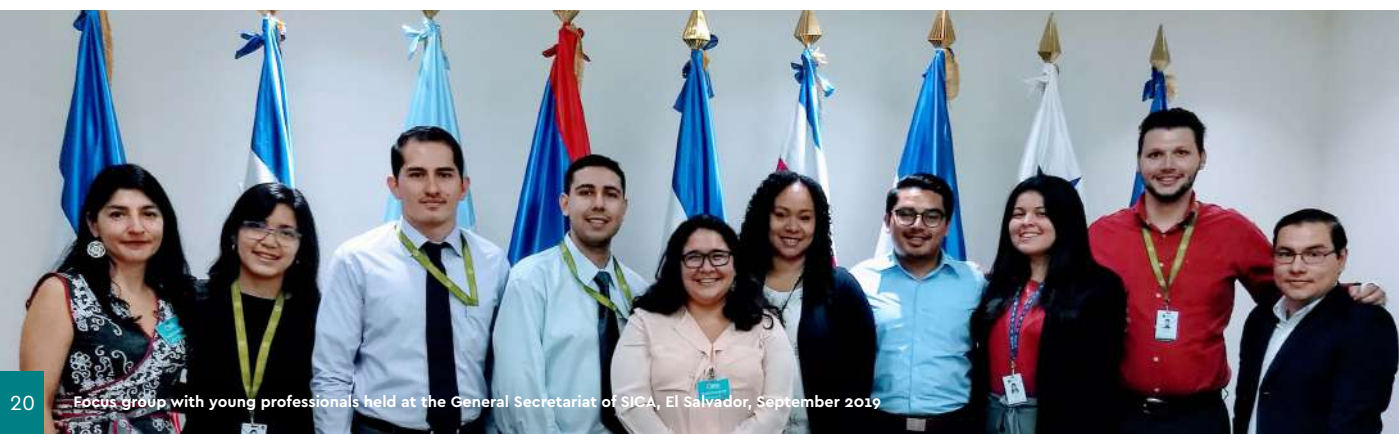
	Costa Rica	Honduras	El Salvador	Rep. Dominicana	Panamá	Guatemala
Lower value = Min. wage (FCE how it replaced)	\$ 546.9	\$ 352.2	\$ 304.7	\$ 287.5	\$ 370.5	\$ 398.1
Scenario 1: Lower value x 1.5	\$ 820.3	\$ 528.3	\$ 457.1	\$ 431.3	\$ 555.8	\$ 597.2
Scenario as % of FCE	3.5	5.9	1.5	2.3	1.5	2.5
Scenario 2: FCE x 1.5	\$ 350.6	\$ 135.2	\$ 452.3	\$ 276.3	\$ 555.8	\$ 356.1
Scenario as % of FCE	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.5
Scenario 3: FCE x 1.5 or Lower value	\$ 546.9	\$ 352.2	\$ 452.3	\$ 276.3	\$ 555.8	\$ 398.1
Scenario as % of FCE	2.3	3.9	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.7

NOTE: "Min. wage" refers to minimum wage and "FCE" refers to Family Consumption Expenditure.

b) Information elicited to learn about the general interests of Central American young professionals and to list the criteria and instruments usually used in selection processes in the region. To achieve this, two specific countries were visited (El Salvador and Costa Rica). The elicited information was complemented with data from Guatemala and Honduras (where pilot interventions were to be conducted) and previous information on Panama. This effort resulted in the development of a 'Job Profile Description' for young professionals who want to engage in the program, including six fundamental social and workplace skills that candidates must have. Additionally, it resulted in a staged selection process, which warrants equivalence, equanimity and transparency for the candidates regardless of the evaluator.

<p>TECHNICAL SKILLS: The specific skills, features and knowledge required to appropriately and efficiently undertake a certain operation, activity or task</p>	<p>1. Planning and Organization: The candidate efficiently defines goals and priorities in his or her activities, considering the changes in the environment, as well as the program's strengths and weaknesses. He or she acts based on the deadlines and available resources, implementing control, follow-up and information check mechanisms.</p> <p>2. Information Analysis and Management: The candidate analyzes, connects and interprets information in order to understand different situations or events. He or she assesses the opportunities and solves problems with a logical and systematic approach. He or she is capable of interpreting information with different degrees of complexity in order to generate alternatives or proposals enabling individual or team decision-making.</p> <p>3. Creativity and Innovation: The candidate creates innovative solutions, suited to the program needs, and he or she is proactive in generating ideas that add value. He or she analyzes and understands the surrounding environment, consequently developing new concepts, methods and approaches for work.</p>
<p>TRANSVERSAL SKILLS: The skills allowing the individuals to interact properly with other people, both in and out the organization or team, by having effective communication practices and building interpersonal relationships properly.</p>	<p>1. Service-Oriented: The candidate knows and addresses the needs of different people, both from their teams and from the community and counterpart. He or she aims at a service standard exceeding the expectations in a timely and proper manner.</p> <p>2. Adaptation Capacity: The candidate displays a capacity for accepting and facing new situations and persons with flexibility and versatility, as well as for accepting changes in a positive and constructive manner.</p> <p>3. Teamwork: The candidate promotes relationships of collaboration and a harmonized work environment for achieving a common goal, taking into consideration the contributions of the different people integrating their teams or other work environments. He or she aligns their own objectives to those of the team, in order to contribute to their accomplishment.</p>

c) The development of the Program's communicational strategy, providing the key elements for the creation a recruitment campaign for young professionals and establishing the Program's general communicational foundations, allowing us to: communicate the reality of rural areas and the initiatives developed by the young professionals, and encourage new actors and institutions to support the program's activities and initiatives.



Focus group with young professionals held at the General Secretariat of SICA, El Salvador, September 2019

III- The implementation of pilot interventions in two different ECADERT territories —the focalized Copanch'orti' territory, in Guatemala, and the similar Garífuna territory, mainly based on Honduras. The interventions were planned for a duration of 10 months and the respective associations of municipalities present in the territory, which led the work of ECADERT in such territories, were asked to be the local institutions receiving the young volunteer pairs. These pairs were formed by selecting two young Chilean professionals who had participated in 'Servicio País' and two young professionals from each of the participating countries. As a result, we had:

a) Guatemala: Nelsi Ac Caal, social worker and member of the Mayan Poq'omchi' people, and Paulo Leiva, Chilean sociologist and former professional of the program 'Servicio País' in two different periods for the Municipality of Arica —in the intervention in the Valley of Codpa in 2014 and in the Valley of Azapa in 2015.

b) Honduras: Verónica Pulgar, Chilean social worker and former professional of 'Servicio País' 2016, in the intervention in Alto Biobío, an indigenous municipality in the southern part of Chile; and Edgar Cacho, Engineer in Renewable Natural Resources and member of the Garífuna people.

A work plan was agreed with both associations of municipalities, with the youth being the focus and specially providing technical assistance for those who had or wanted to develop associative enterprises. The 'Centro Internacional de Economía Social y Cooperativa', CIESCOOP [International Center for Social and Cooperative Economy], from Universidad de Santiago, collaborated with us by designing a plan for such territories. The lessons of this exercise allowed us to design the so-called 'Servicio de Apoyo y Fomento a Emprendimientos Asociativos y Cooperativas' [Service for Supporting and Promoting Associative Enterprises and Cooperatives], which has a detailed work method and a self-training plan including a library of digital resources for the Professional Youth's Volunteer Social Action Program.



Presentation of the project 'SIEMBRA' to the Mancomunidad Copanch'orti' management, February 2019



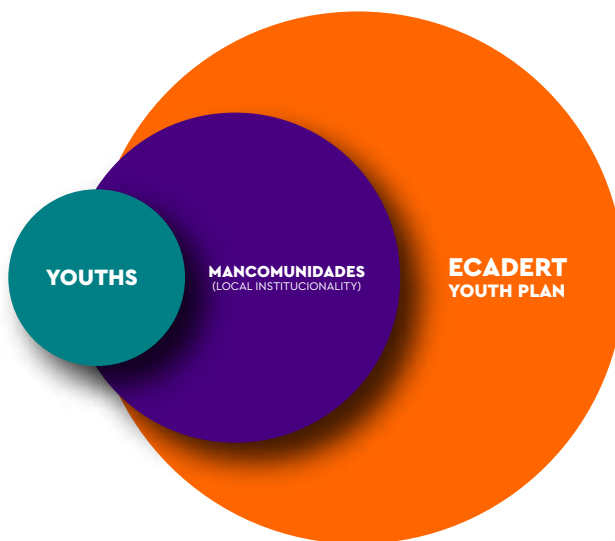
Ambassador Enrique Barriga at the inauguration of the project 'SIEMBRA' in Honduras, May 2019



Presentation of the Project 'SIEMBRA' to Mayors of MAMUGAH, February 2019

Ultimately, the implementation of these two interventions imply a double objective. Firstly, as stated above, testing tools and methodological approaches drawn from the experience of 'Servicio País' and the reality of the own territories. The second objective was observing the possible results of this model of promotional interventions in both territories, that is, whether they can effectively boost the results expected by ECADERT and the Regional Plan for rural youth development.

Regarding this second objective, a work strategy based on a logic of concentric circles of action was developed, starting with the inner circle of young entrepreneurs in the territories. A second level of action was aimed at strengthening local institutions and their associated technical structure, which are the responsible for supporting young people in their territories (among other actors). Finally, the outer circle or third level was related to boost ECADERT and its Regional Plan for the Rural Youth.



Fundamental for installing and implementing the work strategies developed by the professional pairs was the permanent technical advice from the Project Field Coordinator, who addressed different institutional aspects beyond the volunteers' scope, provided technical support and the resources they needed for their activities. This was possible through technical visits, videoconferences and training, planning and systematization sessions for informing the model.

The results we obtained are significant in terms of revitalizing the territories based on the arrival of new actors and opportunities, the development of institutional capacities and young people's skills, and the institutional visibility and commitment to the youth. Among the main implemented activities, it is worth mentioning the following:

a) For the Youth:

Technical assistance was provided for young people or groups of young people with projects of or already-working family and/or associative productive initiatives, with the aim of reinforcing them, developing their capacities and including them in wider networks. Among these activities, we would like to highlight:

- . The creation and implementation of a Training Workshop on Social and Supportive Economy for Instituto Técnico en Recursos Naturales Maya Chorti [Technical Institute in Natural Resources 'Maya Chorti'] (INTERMACH) in Guatemala, a residential school teaching students from 14 to 18 years old (15 days at the institute and 15 days in their communities to apply what they have learned). The end of such workshops was intentionally synchronized with one of the visits of CIESCOOP, so the closure activity was a master class on social economy and cooperativism.

- . The joint implementation, with the Comisión Municipal de la Juventud de Trujillo, Honduras [Municipal Committee for the Youth], of a series of workshops for organizational strengthening, as well as a workshop on financial education and savings.

- . Relations with regional universities and other institutions providing specialized training were established. Such relations enabled the development and/or consolidation of alliances expressed in specific actions. For example, the arrangement of professional internships of the Centro Universitario Regional del Litoral Atlántico (CURLA), from the Universidad Nacional de Honduras, for conducting a social and commercial assessment of the Eco-park 'Kike', an initiative of Garífuna young people. Secondly, the creation of educational activities on entrepreneurship for young Ch'orti' students from the Centro de Desarrollo de Micro, Pequeña y Mediana Empresa [Center for the Development of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises] (PROMIPYME), Centro Universitario de Oriente (CUNORI), from Universidad de San Carlos. Thirdly, the contact with Asociación de Servicios de Desarrollo Económico de Chiquimula [Association of Economical Development Service Providers of Chiquimula] (ASEDECHI), a group organization formed by more than 16 cooperatives and associations.

- . Further activities were organized for establishing alliances and giving visibility, such as the two meetings for sharing experience between Ch'orti' and Garífuna young people. This implied important aspects, such as this being the first time that the youngsters travelled to other country. Additionally, two Youth Enterprise Fairs, one in Balfate and the other in Trujillo, were jointly organized with the municipalities, where young entrepreneurs not only could sell their products, but also receive supporting actions and connect with senior citizens around topics such as health, nutrition and rights.



Training workshop with young people from MAMUGAH, October 2019



Training in local economy and associative enterprises, young people from INTERMACH of Guatemala, January 2020.

b) For the Associations of Municipalities and Local Governments

- Planning mechanisms were established in both territories for the associations of municipalities' with the purpose of facilitating their work with young people: the Youth Area Strategy for Mancomunidad Copanch'orti' and the Work Strategy for Promoting Youth Development for MAMUGAH'
- The reinforcement and a closer approach of the national institutions for the youth to municipalities of both associations was promoted and facilitated' Thus' understanding agreements were signed with the Consejo Nacional de Juventudes [National Council for the Youth] (CONJUVE)' in order to create Youth Municipal Offices in Guatemala' Additionally' we trained municipal workers about the National Youth Policy and the instruments of the Instituto Nacional de la Juventud [National Institute for the Youth] in Honduras'
- The associations were supported for consolidating their alliances with other institutions' For example' the formal agreement between Mancomunidad Copanch'orti' and INTERMACH; the Work Plan designed for this association of municipalities to work with the Programa de Ejercicio Profesional Supervisado Multidisciplinario [Supervised Multidisciplinary Professional Internship Program] (EPSUM) of Universidad de San Carlos de Guatemala; and the arrangements for an alliance between the association of municipalities and the Instituto Técnico de Capacitación (INTECAP) of Universidad Rafael Landívar' in the Eastern region' for managing scholarships for young students in the Cho'rti' territory'
- A new local instrument was designed for supporting and promoting the youth —the method for local project grants for the youth of the municipalities of Irióna and Balfate' focused on Social and Productive Development' Cultural and Intercultural Development and Public Area Recovery' The rest of the municipalities of MAMUGAH were responsible for observing the operation of these two municipalities after the implementation of the instrument'



c) For ECADERT and the Regional Plan for the Rural Youth

The variety of actions conducted by the professional pairs have allowed the territories to advance towards the objective of these two instruments for the region, i.e., making the actions for the rural youth more visible and dynamic based on the development of strategies and plans, agreements with different institutions and, specially, the relations with national youth, academic and technical training institutions. Additionally, young entrepreneurs in the territories receive support and are articulated at a local level thanks to Exhibition Fairs and the creation of the project grant instrument for initiatives oriented towards promoting the Garífuna youth.





Accountability of the SEIMBRA Project within the framework of the Exchange Experience between Local Governments, February 2020



Speech by the President of MAMUGAH and Mayor of Balfate, Daniel Gabarrete, at the closing of the SEIMBRA Project in Honduras, February 2020

IV- Exchanges of Experience and Technical Visits:

This component was intended to consolidate the different elements and processes developed within the Project by providing opportunities to develop networks, activate new stakeholders and making more visible the Project 'SIEMBRA' for the creation of Young Professionals Program, thus contributing to its positioning. Indeed, we held many activities to share the experience of 'Servicio País' and its impact on territories. That is why the next two partners of this project were the Chilean municipalities of Romeral and Arica, two territories where the program 'Servicio País' has been implemented for many years, with interesting results and a variety of supported components. Among the implemented activities, it is worth mentioning the following:

a) A technical visit to Chile, where the managers of both associations of municipalities and the technical counterpart of the SE-CAC in the Project visited the aforementioned municipalities. This allowed them to know firsthand the work conducted by both municipalities to support territorial development, as well as the role assumed by the program 'Servicio País' through its participating professionals. Likewise, they visited a couple of cooperatives with CIESCOOP in order to know their experiences. Finally, a seminar on the role of the youth in rural development was held, where the Mayor of Romeral, the Municipal Administrator of Arica and the managers of MAMUGAH and Copanch'orti' shared their experiences.



b) Visit for Sharing Experience between Local Governments: As part of the closing of the pilot interventions, the mayor of Arica and the Municipal Administrator of Romeral visited the territories where the pilot tests were being implemented. They attended to the accountability meetings with the Chilean ambassadors in Honduras and Guatemala. In these meetings, project 'SIEMBRA' professionals shared the complete experience and results of 10 months of work with the communities, local and national authorities, and international guests. The Chilean representatives also had the opportunity to meet their counterparts in the associations of municipalities, sharing tools and approaches to development for common dimensions in their activity. This was possible thanks to the particular selection criteria of Chilean municipalities for this project, which was focused on: work and technology for water management in contexts of scarcity; social, cultural and ethnic integration in the territories; organization and promotion strategies for emblematic agricultural products supported by local governments, among others.



Ambassador Javier Becker in accountability of the SIEMBRA Project in Copanch'orti 'within the framework of the Local Government Exchange Experience, San Juan Hermina de Guatemala, February 2020

c) Exchange of experiences between young people in the territories: Two encounters were organized, with the participation of eight young people from rural contexts who had associative or family enterprises. These activities sought to develop relationships and sharing experiences related to entrepreneurship. The encounter for sharing experiences with Honduras was intentionally synchronized with the visit of one of the Social Economy experts from CIESCOOP, who taught a master class in the territory, with the participation of visiting Guatemalan young people.



Young people from MAMUGAH visiting their peers from the Ch'orti territory, January 2020

d) As for the seminars and encounters, which had the objective of sharing innovative knowledge and models for territorial development, they could not be implemented as planned due to a variety of reasons. Nevertheless, we would like to highlight the following activities:

. The presentation of Project 'SIEMBRA' in the SICA's Regional Integration Forum 2019, as part of the panel discussion 'El futuro del Empleo para Centroamérica en la cuarta revolución industrial: priorizando a los Jóvenes' [The future of employment in Central America during the fourth industrial revolution: Prioritizing the Youth]. This forum also held the Encuentro SICA Joven [SICA Youth Meeting], where the volunteer pairs of the Project and the Field coordinator participated.



Renee Fresard, general coordinator of the SIEMBRA Project at the SICA Regional Forum, December 2019

The webinar: 'El Post COVID 19 es Ahora' [Post-COVID-19 era is now]: An online activity where our partner institution CIESCOOP presented a proposal for supporting associative and cooperative enterprises. Additionally, they presented the importance of implementing recovery strategies and creating policy for rural youth to cope with the pandemic. The participants totalized 267 people from Costa Rica, Guatemala, El Salvador, Honduras, Panama, Belice, Mexico, Chile, Argentina, Uruguay, Brazil, Paraguay, Puerto Rico, Spain, Ecuador, Peru and Canada.

Link to the Webinar:

<http://www.superacionpobreza.cl/el-post-covid-es-ahora/>





It is established that both the Project "SIEMBRA" and the Program of Young Professionals in Voluntary Social Action contribute to the following SDGs





11 SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES

Target 11a: Support positive economic, social and environmental links between urban, peri-urban and rural areas by strengthening national and regional development planning.

. Both pilot interventions connected the national public institutions with the territory, its local institutions and national universities.

. The Program of Young Professionals in Voluntary Social Action will be one of the main paths to unite young people from diverse urban and rural contexts to development initiatives permanently.



4 QUALITY EDUCATION

Target 4.4: By 2030, substantially increase the number of youth and adults who have relevant skills, including technical and vocational skills, for employment, decent jobs and entrepreneurship

. In the pilot interventions, concrete actions, workshops and technical assistance were implemented for developing the skills of the rural youth interested in starting or consolidating enterprises.

. The Program of Young Professionals in Voluntary Social Action seeks to be a training space for those who want to be part of this initiative for rural development with the youth as protagonists. Moreover, it includes a specific work model for supporting those in rural territories who are starting and/or developing associative enterprises or cooperatives, based on a social and supportive perspective of Economy.



1 NO POVERTY

Target 1a: Ensure significant mobilization of resources from a variety of sources, including through enhanced development cooperation, in order to provide adequate and predictable means for developing countries, in particular least developed countries, to implement programs and policies to end poverty in all its dimensions

. Project 'SIEMBRA' is a South-South Cooperation initiative that developed a Young Professionals program, aimed at reinforcing rural territorial development strategies in Central America, which has the purpose of reducing social gaps and promoting development poles capable of reducing poverty.



8 DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH

Target 8.6: By 2020, substantially reduce the proportion of youth not in employment, education or training

. Project 'SIEMBRA' has contributed to train and develop the professional and social experience of young people from rural and urban contexts.

. The Program of Young Professionals in Voluntary Social Action was designed as a program for training professionals through action, who in turn have the responsibility of providing educational and training opportunities for the youth in rural territories.



Target 2.3: By 2030, double the agricultural productivity and incomes of small-scale food producers, in particular women, indigenous peoples, family farmers, pastoralists and fishers, including through secure and equal access to land, other productive resources and inputs, knowledge, financial services, markets and opportunities for value addition and non-farm employment.

Target 2.4: By 2030, ensure sustainable food production systems and implement resilient agricultural practices that increase productivity and production, that help maintain ecosystems, that strengthen capacity for adaptation to climate change, extreme weather, drought, flooding and other disasters and that progressively improve land and soil quality



Target 12.2 By 2030, achieve the sustainable management and efficient use of natural resources



Target 14.b Provide access for small-scale artisanal fishers to marine resources and markets



Target 17.17 Promote the development, transfer, dissemination and diffusion of environmentally sound technologies to developing countries on favorable terms, including on concessional and preferential terms, as mutually agreed

These targets are constitutive part of ECADERT and the Regional Action Plan for the Rural Youth. Moreover, the main objective of the Program of Young Professionals in Voluntary Social Action is to strengthen such instruments in the territories where we are working.



Visit of young people from MAMUGAH to Copanch'orti 'in the framework of exchange visits between young people, January 2020.

A group of people, including men and women, are gathered in an outdoor setting with trees. The image is overlaid with a brown tint. A large white number '4' is positioned in the top right corner.

4

LOCAL ACTORS AND TESTIMONIES

The local partner of Project 'SIEMBRA' was the Executive Secretariat of the Central American Agricultural Council (SE-CAC), created in 1991 as one of the SICA Ministry Councils, responsible for the agricultural area and formed by the Ministries of Agriculture of the eight SICA countries. Its scope of action includes coordinating with other SICA institutions for creating and monitoring regional policy, strategies and/or actions, and promoting international cooperation projects with benefits for all the member states at a regional level. Since 2010, it is responsible for coordinating the implementation of ECADERT, aimed at providing opportunities and reinforcing the skills of people from rural territories for ultimately enhancing their life quality through supportive, equitable and sustainable development. Additionally, since 2015 it has led the activities and meetings that resulted in the approval of the Regional Action Plan for the Rural Youth in 2017.

SE-CAC has a vast experience in both technical and financial management of international cooperation projects, for which it has received the support of national and international institutions. The most prominent of these institutions is the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA) which provides the logistics, administrative and infrastructure resources for its operation. In the last four years, it has maintained an important portfolio of cooperation projects in execution, with the mandate of generating and articulating alliances and projects that contribute to the objectives of the rural territories of the Region.



Inauguration of the SIEMBRA Project in Honduras, May 2019

In 2017, SE-CAC learned about the Technical Assistance for developing professional volunteer programs provided by this Foundation since 2012, through the Program of Volunteerism and Community Service 'Arovia' in Paraguay, created with the technical assistance of our foundation and the financial support of the fund 'Fondo Chile'. Later, at the beginning of 2018, the first contacts were made and, in April of the same year, the Ministry Council mandated its Executive Secretariat to develop a young professional volunteer program. Consequently, a forum was organized in July 2018, in Santiago, Chile, titled 'Contribuciones al desarrollo rural: Experiencias en Centroamérica y Chile' [Contributions to Rural Development: Experiences from Central America and Chile], which was the context for a Cooperation Agreement between this Foundation and SE-CAC. Since that time, we have been focused on Project 'SIEMBRA'.

In consequence, after 'Fondo Chile' approved the project, SE-CAC was in charge of all the arrangements for implementing project 'SIEMBRA' in the region. This meant defining and including the territories where the pilot interventions would be conducted; dialoguing on the technical and political aspects of the project with the associations of municipalities receiving the volunteers; and facilitating the space in its work team for the Field Coordinator, which made it easier to manage the project in permanent articulation with other initiatives by the Secretariat. Additionally, SE-CAC has been part of the analysis of the lessons acquired with the pilot interventions, the revision of suitability of the final design of the program, the articulation with the different institutional strategies and, currently, the implementation of alternatives for funding the project from the second term of 2021.

Chilean institutions were also part of the design of Project 'SIEMBRA', as we mentioned above:

. International Center for Social and Cooperative Economy (CIESCOOP), who assumed the role of counseling the volunteer pairs for developing a technical proposal on supporting young people with associative enterprises. Afterwards, they had the role of eliciting the lessons that enabled the design of the model 'Service for Supporting and Promoting Associative Enterprises and Cooperatives', which is part of the Program of Young Professionals in Voluntary Social Action for rural development in the SICA region.




Municipalities of Arica and Romeral, strategic allies of the program 'Servicio País' for many years, were invited to be part of Project 'SIEMBRA' due to their managing experience and the results of the program 'Servicio País' and their initiatives on territorial development and management related to areas which could be relevant for the rural development of the territories, such as water management and the use of technology in contexts of scarcity. Additionally, due to the support and promotion provided by local governments to agricultural products with comparative advantages and representative of the territory by establishing strategic commercialization and promotion alliances. They also provided participative tools for local budget management such as local project grants, which were established in two municipalities of the Garífuna territory in Honduras, as a new tool for promoting rural youth development actions.

In Central America, Mancomunidad de Municipios Garífunas de Honduras (MAMUGAH) and Mancomunidad Copanch'orti' accepted the invitation to be part of Project 'SIEMBRA', becoming the institutions that integrate the professional pairs into their teams and, at the same time, are beneficiaries and receivers of the professionals' management and activities. These associations lead in technical terms the daily activities of the pairs, informing them on the reality of the territory, its organizations and, consequently, orienting them for complying with certain strategic lines from the Territorial Development Plans implemented in the territory. In sum, they were the main territorial stakeholder, represented the territories where the pilot interventions were implemented and its youth, municipalities and own institutional structures have been the main beneficiaries of the achieved results.



Meeting with DIDECO of the Municipality of Arica.
Technical Visit to Chile, August 2019



Below, we present testimonies from different actors who participated in and/or contributed to Project 'SIEMBRA' in the territories

Voices from the Territories

"Project 'SIEMBRA', which has been implemented during these months in Mancomunidad Copanch'orti', leaves us with a strategy for this important group, the youth. It leaves us with a path to follow, which will allow us to implement short-, medium- and long-term plans, programs and projects for our youth, which are so needed here in Mancomunidad Copanch'orti'". **Ramón Díaz Gutiérrez, Mayor of Jocotán, Mancomunidad Copanch'orti', Guatemala**



"Without doubt, Project 'SIEMBRA' is a unique opportunity, not only for Guatemala but also for us, Chile, for exchanging and learning about different realities. As Chileans, we can learn a lot about the worldview and potentialities of such a territory. On the other hand, in the case of Guatemala and, specially, of the young professionals of this particular territory, we had a unique opportunity for reinforcing much of their potential". **Gerardo Espíndola, Mayor of the Municipality of Arica, Chile**



"We need to bring all the stakeholders who are engaged and very interested in the progress of the youth".

Jorge Lemus Espinoza, Mayor of Olopa, Guatemala.



"The Ch'orti' region has valuable human resources —there are many young people with many ideas and potential for participating in productive processes and developing enterprises. However, they face many difficulties that force them to leave their goals. For Mancomunidad Copanch'orti', the youth is a priority. This has led us to articulate efforts with other institutions and seek a strategy allowing us to create a proper environment for the youth, especially from rural contexts, to develop themselves and help their communities grow". **Clara Martínez, Representative of Mancomunidad Copanch'orti'.**



"This association of municipalities seeks to consolidate the planned and implemented work, as well as to articulate and manage all the actors in the territory, with the objective of obtaining coordinated support from the different institutions related to development for executing actions focused on the youth of the territory". **Lorna Suazo, Coordinator of the Social Management Area of MAMUGAH.**



"For me, the most important aspect is fulfilling the commitments expressed to governments on supporting young entrepreneurs in the Ch'orti' region".

Gisela Zamora, Department Representative in the National Council for the Youth (CONJUVE), Guatemala.



"I think local institutions should provide technical and methodological support for the Ch'orti' youth and their productive initiatives".

Alba Hernandez Ixcoy, Director of INTERMACH.



"The grant project method benefited the management capacity of the Municipality of Balfate, since it started a process of engaging with civil organizations, which in turn engage with young people in the territories".

Vanessa Sierra, Manager of MAMUGAH.



"Thanks to Project 'SIEMBRA', the Social Management Area of the Association of Municipalities got strengthened through the implemented strategies for working with the youth. This provides sustainability for the activities conducted by the youth in our territory". **Lorna Suazo, Coordinator of the Social Management Area of MAMUGAH.**



"We are grateful to Project 'SIEMBRA', because they came to support the Mancomunidad de Municipios Garífunas de Honduras. They have also helped the Municipal Office of the Youth, which is the main institution for all the youth here in Trujillo". **Pahola Mejía, Professional from the Department of Youth, Municipality of Trujillo, Honduras.**



"At a Central American level, Project 'SIEMBRA' will be able to deliver a Program for Social Interventions by the Youth. However, in Guatemala, we managed to build trust with the communities and their youth. Also, I think we have great prospects with institutions engaged with territorial and rural youth development". **Sebastián Vega, Field Coordinator of Project 'SIEMBRA'.**



Testimonies of young people from the territories where the interventions were implemented:

"What I learned from this is how to create a cooperative, how are they structured, its objectives, how to create a cooperative's mission and vision, and the importance of teamwork, which is key for an enterprise —teamwork". **INTERMACH student, Guatemala.**



"I am very proud of being a young woman Mayan Ch'orti', and my greatest desire is to continue my studies and become a leader entrepreneur, so I can motivate the youth in the Ch'orti region".

Carolina Hernandez, INTERMACH student, Guatemala.



"I have shared the lessons I learned on entrepreneurship and local development with my family; thus, I can address the needs of our family enterprise, coordinate activities and innovate every day". **Luis Solis, INTERMACH student, Guatemala.**



"I am grateful to Project 'SIEMBRA' for engaging with the youth in this process, reinforcing the participating groups and maintaining the support. Because this Project 'SIEMBRA' is something involving the whole community (...) and they have helped us with the EcoPark".

Jacinto Ruiz, EcoPark leader, young Garífuna from Honduras



"We have learned a lot thanks to the Project 'SIEMBRA' workshops, so it has been a nice experience and we have organized better for tourism and agricultural activities. All that has been helpful for us as a work team, to become a better team in order to do things better. (...) I would like to invite a lot more young people to get involved, because we all pursue the same objective. My favorite workshop was one about accounting and saving, in which I had such a beautiful experience, because I didn't know how to manage my money or save it".

Isis Gotay, young Garífuna from Honduras.



"I am a Bachelor in Agriculture, and I am grateful with Project 'SIEMBRA', because it is teaching us a lot. We know that, sometimes, we work in inappropriate ways (...), we treat the soils inappropriately and this training is very important for taking care of our soils, since they are depleted. We need to renew them, since we know that soil renovation could take 23 years. Therefore, the workshop on organic fertilization is very important. It can boost our harvest. We work with lemon balm, rice, palm trees and watermelons. Personally, I would like to say thank you to this project".

Jaime Hilar Mendoza, young man from MAMUGAH territory



"...I am part of the cooperative '25 de Abril', and I live in Trujillo. The experience of this workshop we just attended, on how to create or make organic fertilizer for soil and microorganism recovery was very important for us young people. We are beginning our lives and we have started to learn what crops are, based on our experiences (...) So, what Verónica and Edgar came here to explain is something very important for us. We feel that his will be in great benefit for our community". **Hervin Danilo Manueles, young man from Tujillo, Honduras**



"As young people, we haven't seen much support from certain institutions. Despite being a consolidated group, we were a divided group. Now, we are a team working with the same mind, with the same ideas and the same objective". **Tatiana Solis, young Garífuna from Honduras**



"First I would like to thank Project 'SIEMBRA' and MAMUGAH for bringing us an expert in tourism for boosting our skills for the EcoPark 'Kike'".

Jeltsin Cacho, Representative of the Wagueira youth from Honduras





A photograph of a person crouching by a river in a forest. Laundry is hanging on a line in the background. The image is overlaid with a dark purple tint.

5

CHALLENGES AND LESSONS

If we think about the challenges and lessons presented by the project, we undoubtedly need to mention the territorial inclusion of the professional pairs and the comprehension of the role of professional volunteers by the association of municipalities and the rest of the institutions in the territory.

Hence, before the arrival of the professionals, the work with the associations should have been more emphatic with some dimensions of managing the professional volunteers, especially with respect to the incorporation of the pairs into work teams and elements of organizational culture and planning.

Executing the pilot interventions allowed us to test work models in order to identify better alternatives in relation with the territories and the people for to work. Thus, the relatively autonomous work of the professional pairs in relation to the association of municipalities for participative identification, diagnose and planning activities with members of the community demanded more attention from the Field Coordinator. Nevertheless, it also confirmed one of the essential elements in this kind of model, that is, the relationship established with the beneficiaries from the beginning to develop a joint and participative work of analysis, assessment and planning.

Although, we cannot say the same regarding the support provided to the associations of municipalities for understanding the actual potential of counting with two professionals whose main objective is to provide opportunities for the youth in a territory to develop their capacities, based on the institutional reinforcement of the association of municipalities and other institutions interested in supporting the youth. For this reason, in our second technical assistance session, in July 2019 at the offices of Mancomunidad Copanch'orti' in Jocotán, Guatemala, one of the main goals was working with each of the associations of municipalities to integrate the professional pairs in a more articulated manner. Since that moment of adjustment, the implementation of Project 'SIEMBRA' in the territories and the work of the pairs was sufficiently aligned with the respective organizational cultures, objectives and plans.

These described situations (and other) have enabled decision-making for the design of the Program of Young Professionals in Voluntary Social Action. While the professionals do not need to write a complete plan of their work previously, the local social institution requesting SE-CAC to receive a professional couple should identify, upon their own Territorial Development Plan, what strategic line(s) they will support. This process should be based on previous works and available resources and should list the expected results and goals in relation to the participation of young pairs. Consequently, there will be a previous work by the local social institution, which will support territorial inclusion, organizational integration, the participative assessment by the pairs and their activity so their work is consistent with the development and institutional objectives.

Another important element of the designed program is that, in the Central American region, the term 'volunteerism' is definitely more associated to its traditional meaning as the implementation of punctual actions for a specific cause that mobilizes people. In contrast, this type of long-term professional volunteerism, which also involves an allowance, is far from such notion and it is closer to what would be a Professional Internship or first-job program than to volunteerism in the strict sense. Therefore, we decided that the name of program includes the expression 'Young Professionals' and not 'Professional Volunteers'. This sole element makes an important contribution to valuing professionals as such.



A group of five diverse young adults (three women and two men) are smiling and posing in front of a building. The building has a sign that says "ENGAGE". The image is overlaid with a semi-transparent orange filter. The text "FUTURE PROSPECTS" is written in large, bold, white capital letters across the bottom left of the image.

FUTURE PROSPECTS

6

The sustainability and results of Project 'SIEMBRA' can be observed in two levels —one related to the activities by the professional pairs in the territories and the second related to the implementation of the new modeled Young Professionals Program.

As for the pilot interventions, the resulting strategies and activities were discussed and developed with the pairs. Consequently, it was established that strengthening the local institutions, from the association of municipalities to municipalities, is a key element for sustainability. This means providing training and work skills development opportunities to encourage the youth in their territories. Consistently, in both territories a Strategy or Work Plan for the youth visibility and support was developed. In addition, different trainings and workshops were jointly organized with the respective national institution for the youth.

In the MAMUGAH territory, it is worth noting the aforementioned instrument for municipal grant projects, focused on initiatives for the youth in the territory. On the other hand, in the Copanch'orti' territory, we should mention the arrangements and works for signing understanding agreements with the National Council of the Youth (CONJUVE) and the municipalities of the association for the creation of municipal departments for the youth, which none of these municipalities had before.

With regard to the model of the Program of Young Professionals in Voluntary Social Action, its prospects and sustainability, we can say that, during all the implementation of Project 'SIEMBRA', we worked with the strategies at a Central American level, especially with SE-CAC, in order to obtain allies and funding for future prospects. Unfortunately, the COVID-19 pandemic has slowed down some fairly advanced initiatives in that regard.

Nevertheless, we hope that in the second term of 2021 the Program can be started with the first professional pairs, according to the plan of SE-CAC and its donors for 2021. Considering that this new **Program of Young Professionals in Voluntary Social Action for rural development in the SICA region** is a regional public good contributing to professional capacity redistribution, social, territorial and generational integration, the development of skills and access to new opportunities for urban and rural youth, based on the work of pairs committed to boost and collect resources for the territories where they are working.



This international cooperation project was executed as part of the fund 'Fondo Chile', an initiative of the Chilean government – through its Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Chilean International Cooperation Agency for Development (AGCID)- in alliance with the United Nations Development Program (UNDP). Its activities concluded in November 2020





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Our activity is possible thanks to strategic sector alliances with the Chilean state, the collaborative work with municipalities of the 16 regions and the development of complementary projects with public and private funding. Since our origins, we have worked in alliance with the Chilean state, which currently means the existence of funding agreements with the ministries of Social Development and Family, Housing and Urban Planning, and Culture, Arts and Heritage.

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