IMPLEMENTATION of the ART METHODOLOGY IN LATIN AMERICA
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This publication is based on the presentations and discussions held during the International Seminar “Implementation of the ART Methodology in Latin America”, celebrated in Quito on 28 and 29 April 2010. The event was organized by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Ecuador in coordination with the Bureau of Development Policy (BDP), UNDP’s ART Global Initiative (Articulation of Territorial and Thematic Cooperation Networks for Human Development) and UNDP’s Regional Center in Latin America and the Caribbean (Panama), with the support of the Spanish Agency for International Development Cooperation (AECID, as per Spanish acronym).


ISBN: 978-9942-9887-6-8

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Brief thoughts on Implementation of the ART Methodology in Latin America

Foreword

The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) has been supporting local governance and decentralization processes for the past three decades, particularly in the last one.

This is why UNDP’s Global Strategic Plan (2008–2013) prioritizes local governance issues, highlighting the importance of promoting civic participation at the local level in order to improve the design and implementation of human development policies. Likewise, the Strategic Plan for Latin America and the Caribbean 2008–2013 emphasizes two results: inclusive participation of vulnerable groups, and transparency and accountability in public management. From a human development perspective, the promotion of local governance is vital because it improves peoples’ capacities to take part in decision-making processes. Likewise, strengthening local
governance is also important to human development from an instrumental point of view, as it can contribute to better public service delivery.

The systematization of the ART methodology in Latin America is to be situated in this context, as well as its potential to contribute to strengthening local governance. That is, it is not only important to value the methodology as a means to strengthen governance and local human development, but also as an approach that allows articulating various multidimensional elements necessary to strengthen governance and local development. UNDP’s ART Initiative (Articulation of Territorial Networks) is UNDP’s answer to the increasing demands to strengthen local governance across the globe, particularly in our region, since ART operates eight Framework Programmes in Latin America. The ART methodology is a unique mechanism not only because it focuses on the territory, articulating local, national and global elements, but also because it strategically seeks the support of both bilateral and decentralized development cooperation actors.

The conventional belief that field work is less complex because it is ‘micro’ and localized is being challenged by the experience and demands from the local sphere. Precisely because local governments are better placed to respond to their communities’ needs, work is rather complex and multidimensional. The ART methodology acknowledges this challenge and seeks to facilitate complementarity between actors and territorial processes, thereby promoting an integral, multi-level articulation. This methodology aims at improving the effectiveness of development aid and its positive impact on human development processes.

This document is the product of regional dialogue and concrete experiences and lessons learned. It shows that the implementation of the ART methodology in Latin America offers several important lessons that further the objectives of UNDP’s regional agenda on issues of local governance and decentralization. It also offers a valuable contribution to continue strengthening these processes. For instance, to mention but a few examples: the strategic role of National Coordination Committees (NCCs) at the national level, and of the Territorial Working Groups (TWGs) at the territorial level; the implementation of cross-cutting issues (such as human rights, sustainable development, gender and
inter-culturalism); the contribution to the harmonization, alignment and ownership promoted in the Paris Declaration; the articulation between actors, processes and initiatives; the promotion of the leading role of governments/partners at each level; the ongoing institutional and the continuous strengthening of institutions and capacities; and the potential for South-South Cooperation.

Latin America’s local governments are emerging as important actors in conflict resolution and in resolving issues and demands. This requires more emphasis on strengthening local governments, so they can have a more significant influence on national policies and agendas and on the implementation of local public policies. This systematization of the ART methodology reveals the opportunity as well as the need for a much more strategic and fruitful articulation between local, national and international actors, not only to strengthen the capacities of local governments but also to improve public policies and bring them closer to citizens. Although not a panacea, when combined with the transfer of more competencies and resources to local authorities and accompanied with institutional strengthening, bringing public decisions closer to citizens can create the necessary conditions for a more equitable and sustainable human development in our region.

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Introductory Note
The international seminar «Implementation of the ART Methodology in Latin America» took place on 27 and 28 April 2010 in Quito, Ecuador. The event promoted the exchange of experiences between eight UNDP ART Framework Programmes: Bolivia, Central America (MyDEL), Colombia, Cuba, Ecuador, El Salvador, Dominican Republic and Uruguay.

These Framework Programmes are «living processes», each at a different stage of implementation; as a result, they contribute to the ongoing construction of the ART methodology. Its elements and general principles are not the synthesis of a theoretical-academic construction but rather the result of field practice and experience. Based on this premise, the seminar promoted a fluid dialogue on the methodological experiences of the participating programmes, adopting the flexibility and adaptability of the ART methodology as a guiding principle.

One of the seminar’s main objectives was to create a space for debate and reflection on the implementation of the ART methodology in Latin America through the exchange of different experiences,
thereby enriching and enhancing the methodological proposals of UNDP’s ART Framework Programmes. The event also sought to analyze the Programmes’ contribution to the effectiveness of development assistance at the local level through ensuring compliance with the principles of the Paris Declaration and the Accra Agenda for Action.¹

Participants came from different geographical and institutional contexts, representing local and national Latin American governments, UNDP’s ART Framework Programmes, United Nations agencies, International Cooperation actors and universities.

The publication *ART/UNDP Ecuador Framework Programme. Methodological Reflections and Progress 2008-2009*, one of the first efforts to systematize the ART methodology in Latin America, constituted an essential input to the thematic discussions held by the seminar’s four groups —or commissions—, in line with the methodology set out by the seminar’s organizers.

The first two groups discussed the mechanisms for the articulation and complementarity between actors and levels as well as instruments for alignment with national and territorial priorities. Groups 3 and 4 dwelled on the development and strengthening of capacities, and the articulation and complementarity between actors in the field. General, cross-cutting themes in all four debates were related to aid effectiveness at the local level, the adoption of a gender approach in the ART methodology and knowledge management towards South-South Cooperation.

Due to their strategic value within the ART methodology, this systematization is based on the discussions of the first two groups; they are complemented and reinforced by the results achieved by the other groups’ debates.

The main objective of this exercise is to analyze ART’s methodological experiences in Latin America, based on the diversity and specificity that each Framework

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Programme has developed in response to development challenges. It does not intend to be a literal transcription of the participants’ interventions; rather, it seeks to critically analyze the exchange of ideas and discussions that took place.

Therefore, this publication’s methodology links and compares the discussions and experiences presented by each Framework Programme. In most cases, the information gathered throughout this process was classified into two categories: on the one hand, the Programmes’ common elements and criteria; on the other, the particularities and other elements that were developed in specific implementation contexts.

The ideas presented in this document contribute to build the methodology of UNDP’s ART Framework Programmes in Latin America; however, this product does not address all existing or shared methodological aspects of the Programmes, as some elements were not discussed during the seminar or not sufficiently analyzed.

The first chapter outlines the ART Initiative and the main characteristics of UNDP’s ART Framework Programmes in Latin America; it is followed by a brief introduction on the Framework Programme’s methodological principles and main approaches of intervention. The second chapter is devoted to the seminar as such: its structure, objectives, organization, work methodology, participants and achievements.

The third chapter describes how UNDP’s ART Framework Programmes apply mechanisms for the articulation of actors and levels: the National Coordination Committee (NCC) and the Territorial Working Groups (TWGs). Subsequently,

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3 In order to simplify the understanding of the systematization’s methodological aspects, it has been decided —unless indicated otherwise— to use a single designation for certain concepts, although they might have different names in other countries or contexts where ART operates. This is the case, for instance, with «Territorial Working Groups» or «Territorial Priorities Document».
their objectives, functions, members and creation process are discussed, always highlighting common elements that emerged from the shared experiences, as well as some specificities and particularities. In addition, articulation between these two mechanisms, their contribution to the principles of aid effectiveness at the local level and their connection to knowledge management in South-South cooperation are discussed. The third chapter concludes with the achievements and limitations that have emerged during the implementation of these mechanisms.

The fourth and last chapter analyzes how the Local Programming Cycle (LPC) is an efficient instrument of UNDP’s ART Framework Programmes to align international cooperation with national and territorial priorities; its objectives, functions, members and achievements are detailed. The reflection is further complemented with an analysis on how the LPC promotes multilevel articulation and contributes to aid effectiveness at the territorial level, particularly through its principles of alignment, harmonization and ownership. At the end of the chapter, positive results and difficulties encountered are presented.

To complement the information and analyses, footnotes refer to annexes to this document: some are directly related to the seminar (such as the agenda, participants, speakers’ presentations or systematizations by the working groups and committees), while others are more specific, elaborated by some of the ART Framework Programmes in Latin America. All of these were points of departure and supporting elements for the systematization.

The starting premises of the international seminar and this systematization exercise were the strengthening of ART's Framework Programmes in Latin America and the consolidation of the Initiative’s methodological proposal as a UNDP tool. It is expected that this publication will contribute to the effective dissemination, understanding and ownership of ART’s principles, approaches, mechanisms and implementation tools, all of which will be put at the service and consideration of local, national and international actors interested in processes of articulation and local management for human development.
The ART Global Initiative
Over the last 15 years, International Cooperation has seen the emergence of a large and varied number of new development actors such as regional and local governments, the private sector, universities and civil society organizations.

In their work at the local level, these cooperation actors have common objectives but different modalities, timetables, administrative procedures and technical and evaluation approaches.

In order to increase the effectiveness of cooperation, it is important that these actors operate in a harmonized way, aligned with local processes and national development strategies. The ART Global Initiative (Articulation of Territorial and Thematic Cooperation Networks for Human Development) was designed to contribute to this objective.
**ART Initiative**

**International Actors**

### Decentralized Cooperation

Around 600 decentralized cooperation actors currently operate within ART Framework Programmes; these involve local and regional governments, funds, Cooperation agencies and various local, national and international networks of sub-national governments of countries such as Belgium, Brazil, Canada, Spain, France, Italy and Monaco. Other actors include civil society organizations, national and international research centers and universities from these countries.

### Bilateral Cooperation

ART is an instrument that UNDP makes available to bilateral cooperation actors who wish to reinforce complementarity between various national and international actors operating at the local level with the aim of strengthening territorial development processes and their alignment with national strategies of decentralization, national strategies, in addition to strengthening the management capacities of regional and local administrations. ART offers an instrument for dialogue and cooperation to countries with different historical, cultural and socioeconomic contexts, enabling them to jointly face the challenges of reaching the MDGs. At the moment, the bilateral cooperation of Belgium, Canada, Spain, Italy, Monaco, Switzerland, Sweden and the European Union support and participate in the ART Initiative.

### Multilateral Cooperation: United Nations System Agencies

Various agencies of the UNS use the Local Programming Cycle promoted by ART in the countries to facilitate the operational dimension of coordinated actions within the UNDAF (United Nations Development Assistance Framework) among which: the International Labor Organization (ILO), UN Women, the United Nations Organization for Education, Science and Culture (UNESCO), United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the United Nations Development Program (UNDP). UN Women is an autonomous fund that is part of the UN system and the United Nations Human Rights Council.

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**UNDP’s ART Global Initiative**

At the request of the countries, the UNDP ART Initiative promotes complementarity between International Cooperation actors who wish to support national processes of local development. ART promotes the articulation between three action levels (local, national and international), making the territory and its potentialities a key element of its strategy in support of decentralization policies and processes.

The Initiative’s coordination office is based in UNDP Geneva; it is supervised by a steering committee, presided by UNDP’s Bureau of Development Policies (BDP) and the Partnership Bureau (PB) —both based in New York—, in coordination with UNDP’s Services Centers. At the country level, ART’s Framework Programmes are coordinated by the national and local governments, with the

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support of UNDP’s Country Offices (CO) for their management and implementation.

ART’s Framework Programmes are a programmatic, operational and administrative tool that facilitates complementarity between multiple actors and their articulation with existing territorial processes.

Through these functions, ART, as an instrument, aims at contributing to aid effectiveness and its positive impact on those development processes that are prioritized by the countries and their respective territories. Likewise, the Framework Programmes are a strategic platform to achieve the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) at the territorial level.

In the wake of 2011, the ART Initiative had 19 active Framework Programmes in Asia, Africa, Latin America, the Balkans and the Mediterranean. In these countries, the

Non-Governmental Organizations
An increasing number of international and national non-governmental organizations use ART’s programmatic framework to implement actions that are better articulated and coordinated, with the aim of improving the impact of international cooperation. The articulation modalities proposed by the ART Initiative are: the participation of NGOs in regional and local planning within ART Framework Programmes, identification and implementation of joint actions and projects as part of a coordinated territorial development strategy, technical assistance and support in accordance to the possibilities and expertise of each NGO, and articulation with decentralized cooperation networks.

South-South Cooperation
This is a modality applied by ART’s Framework Programmes, which has proven to be effective for the exchange of experiences, good practices and innovations. It involves an active dialogue between the territories in support of the sustainability of governance and local development processes, to achieve common territorial objectives based on the criteria of solidarity, equity, effectiveness, mutual interest, sustainability and co-responsibility. This cooperation modality seeks to capitalize on, and disseminate successful practices in relation to social programmes and policies developed in countries from the South.

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5 In Africa: Mauritania, Mozambique, Senegal and Gabon; in Central America: Colombia, Cuba, Ecuador, El Salvador, the Dominican Republic and Uruguay; in Asia: Indonesia and Sri Lanka; in the Balkans: Albania and Kosovo; in the Mediterranean: Lebanon, Morocco and Syria.
Programmes promote alignment based on the strategic requests of the territories. The Programmes rely on the support of bilateral donors such as Belgium, Canada, Spain, Italy, Sweden, Switzerland, Monaco, and the European Union, in addition to a network of more than 600 decentralized cooperation partners who support, among others, knowledge management in the field of local development.

Six years into the implementation of UNDP’s ART Framework Programmes, several areas have been identified that epitomize the Initiative’s added value in terms of contributions, effectiveness, and innovative character.

MULTILEVEL GOVERNANCE

UNDP’s ART Framework Programmes operate within a multilevel structure that seeks to articulate and complement territorial, national and international development processes.

This model facilitates the establishment of mechanism for dialogue and concertation of the various levels of government that operate in a given territory. These mechanisms allow cooperation actors to the existing demands of the territories while simultaneously articulating them with national development processes and strategies in order to avoid fragmentation.

EFFECTIVENESS OF DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE AT THE LOCAL LEVEL

The mechanisms, instruments and processes that facilitate and support UNDP’s ART Framework Programmes contribute to the application of the principles of aid effectiveness at the local level—in particular those of ownership, alignment and harmonization. In so doing, they reduce the fragmentation and improve the harmonization of actors and donors, thereby reducing the cost of aid. In all, they contribute to achieving a greater impact of cooperation.
**MULTILEVEL ARTICULATION**

**ART/UNDP ECUADOR FRAMEWORK PROGRAMME**

- Mechanism of concertation and articulation of actors (Territorial Working Group).
- Strengthening decentralization processes in line with national policies.
- Articulation of development plans with the National Development Plan.
- Framework of priorities for cooperation.
- Strengthening capacities and institutionality.

**TERRITORIAL**

- Inter-agency and multi-donor framework.
- Decentralized cooperation.
- South-South cooperation.
- Exchange and transfer of knowledge, technology and innovations.

**INTERNATIONAL**

**NATIONAL**

- Mechanism of concertation and articulation of actors (NCC).
- National planning system, territorial strategy.
- Strengthening capacities and institutionality.
- Decentralization of international cooperation management.
ARTICULATION WITH DECENTRALIZED COOPERATION

Decentralized cooperation is an instrument for joint dialogue and actions on issues of common interest between communities from the North and the South. Through the support of decentralized cooperation to specific processes to countries’ governability, while appraising the potential of this modality of cooperation in terms of the exchange and transfer of knowledge.

LOCAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

UNDP’s ART Initiative promotes territorial economic development through a human development approach that efficiently combines endogenous potential with poverty reduction, social and gender equality, creating decent work and protecting the environment.

Introduction to ART’s methodology

As a result of the country-level implementation of the methodology of UNDP’s ART Framework Programmes, a series of methodological approaches and principles, and intervention strategies have emerged. When applied together, in a coherent, flexible and creative manner, these elements allow Framework Programmes to become a programmatic and management tool capable of reinforcing articulation between the territorial, national and international dimensions of development processes and of strengthening the complementary actions of international cooperation.

These methodological components and general principles are not only the result of theorization but also of implementation in the field: ART has been present
in more than 20 countries for more than 15 years. They also respond to some of the most important world commitments and international processes: achieving the MDGs, contributing to the United Nations reform process and new multilateralism, and supporting the Paris Declaration at the local level. Because this methodology is currently applied in very diverse territories and results from the systematization and combination of different experiences in varied contexts, it is no surprise to find differences in how it is implemented. However, it is this very same flexibility and creativity that constitute the methodology’s success factors.

As the objective of this systematization is to analyze the different mechanisms and experiences in the implementation of the ART methodology in Latin America, it begins with a synthesis of the ART Initiative’s methodological principles, approaches and intervention strategies. This informative section will introduce the ART methodology and facilitate its understanding. It does not, however, represent a valid implementation model for all Framework Programmes or an operational guide to be followed rigidly.

**METHODOLOGICAL PRINCIPLES**

- The shared international commitment of the Millennium Development Goals; all goals are closely interrelated, and thereby can only be achieved through an integral approach.
- The need to join the efforts of all actors—local, national and international—to overcome structural problems of development in an articulated and coherent manner, within these three development levels.
- The implementation of the Paris Declaration Principles in the field: harmonization, alignment and ownership, mutual accountability and results-oriented management.
- The paradigm of human development, which puts people at the centre of development processes.
**APPROACHES OF THE INTERVENTION**

Based on the above principles, the following approaches are key elements of an ART Programme's intervention, which guarantee the adequate implementation of the ART methodology.

**Process-based approach**

Each Programme designs its intervention as a process. Plans are made on a wide scale, with constant feedback, as to adapt the implementation to the difficulties and challenges encountered, as well as strengths and opportunities. Ongoing knowledge and learning are vital to ensure that the intervention is in line with existing initiatives and territorial and national contexts.

**Territorial approach**

The initiatives are articulated within a defined territory and take into consideration its political, social, cultural, economic, historical and environmental complexities. This approach puts the territory at the center of the process and considers its overall challenges and potentialities as part of a wider strategy of local development, articulated with national strategies and policies.

**Programme approach**

UNDP's ART Framework Programmes offer a programme approach instead of a project-based one. Consequently, they aim at articulating the existing territorial and national initiatives, thereby avoiding dispersion or duplication of activities and contributing to increasing the impact of cooperation initiatives.
Consideration for existing capacities and potentialities

The approach is grounded on the recognition and reinforcement of existing territorial processes that share the intervention’s objectives; the territory's potentialities and its actors’ capacities are reinforced, meaning that the initiative does not ‘start from scratch’.

Integral approach

The intervention needs to be integral, based on a territorial analysis of strengths, opportunities, threats and weaknesses. This understanding and initial analysis will contribute to prevent interventions and solutions that are merely sectorial and specialized, a trait that has characterized the practice of development and international cooperation for years. The ART methodology advocates that in order to achieve human development objectives, it is necessary to carry out a complex intervention that cannot be rigidly segmented following the usual division of ‘institutional-sectorial’ competencies. It is paramount to carry out a local development strategy that appraises all resources in a given territory (human, institutional, economic, cultural, social and environmental).

Flexible approach

The methodology and its implementation are characterized by flexibility and adaptability:

- **In its implementation.**
  Principles and basic approaches that ensure the coherence and added value of the methodology as well as common intervention phases and strategies, obviously need to be taken into consideration. However, it is in the territories
and countries as such, where these approaches, mechanisms and tools adapt to the national and territorial priorities and contexts.⁶

- **In its planning.**

  The approach allows the incorporation of opportunities that arise within the framework of defined objectives and available resources within the territorial, national and international action plans.

**Participatory approach**

The active role of local communities in territorial development processes is promoted because Framework Programmes consider them important political actors, key to development. By integrating participants (i.e. actors) to the Programmes as partners and owners of human development processes, with commitments and responsibilities, and including them in active dialogue with the central and local structures of the State and international organizations, the traditional pattern of ‘beneficiaries’ is overcome. It is crucial to promote and facilitate articulation and public-private concertation as part of territorial development strategies and actions. In a similar manner, the participation of public actors from different political-administrative level as well as the private sector, civil society and universities is encouraged within the articulation, concertation and decision-making spaces and mechanisms.

**Inter-agency approach**

ART Framework Programmes are an instrument of UNDP to enable complementary coordination in the field and supporting the United Nations agencies in the

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⁶ Adapting to each country’s context is an essential element of the formulation and subsequent territorial/national kick-off phase of Framework Programmes.
countries to achieve multilevel coordination, localize strategies and national policies, and mobilize new actors and alliances with the ultimate aim of achieving the MDGs.

**Human Rights approach**

As a United Nations approach, the intervention promotes Human Rights as established in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and other international instruments. It also advocates capacity development for the persons in charge, to assist them in fulfilling their obligations; and for the persons with entitlements, to help them claim their rights.

**Gender equality approach**

ART’s gender approach favors the full development of women and men and recommends mainstreaming the gender approach as a strategy to fight specific forms of social inequities. This approach yields a more comprehensive and integral analysis of social relations, offers theoretical and methodological elements to analyze the differences and characteristics of persons and social groups, and formulates proposals that aim at decreasing and eradicating these inequities. Mainstreaming means that the gender approach is to be incorporated in project formulation and implementation, i.e. from the beginning of local programming —where diagnosis and actions will be prepared with a gender focus— to evaluation.

**Promotion of sustainable development**

ART promotes sustainable development as an essential and pivotal issue, to guarantee the sustainable and rational use of natural resources, and to reduce vulnerability in case of natural disasters.
INTERVENTION STRATEGIES

Based on the above principles and methodological approaches, intervention strategies are established that incorporate the practical elements to be taken into consideration in the implementation of any ART Framework Programme methodology.

Creation of operational, multi-actor, multilevel structures

- **At the territorial level.**
  ART promotes the creation of multi-actor spaces as operational structures at the subnational and local levels: the Territorial Working Groups (TWGs).7 They make decisions on local interventions and prioritize them, effectively becoming spaces of concertation and articulation.

- **At the national level.**
  A National Coordination Committee (NCC) is created to determine the Framework Programme’s operational direction and to ensure the articulation and coherence of the territorial action with national policies and strategies.

Moreover, these operational structures facilitate local and national ownership of the Framework Programme.

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7 The levels where these operational structures will function depend on the political-administrative division of each country: regions, departments, provinces, districts, cantons or municipalities.
Permanent articulation among the three levels

In each and every intervention, ART promotes and facilitates articulation between the three levels: territorial, national and international. Articulating local and national development policies allows strengthening strategic national policy planning and hence favors local development. The connection and linkages with partners and thematic international networks complement national and territorial efforts, offering multiple resources to build capacities and generate synergies and exchanges.

Continuity between programming and implementation

To ensure the Framework Programmes’ sustainability, mechanisms and strategies that uphold continuity between actions, programmed projects and their implementation are put in place. The aim is to achieve implementation of planned activities and avoid theoretical planning exercises devoid of execution. This action then generates commitment and credibility in planning processes.

Mobilizing new international actors

UNDP’s ART Framework Programmes facilitate and promote the joint actions of decentralized cooperation partners, based on a strategy of complementarity between actors and processes. Likewise, in the framework of South-South cooperation the ART methodology promotes the exchange of innovation, good practices, lessons learned and strategies between actors interested in knowing the Framework Programmes’ practices.

Anchoring the intervention at the intermediate level

For local development processes to be sustainable, they must fit within national policies. To ensure that this is the case, the ART methodology suggests that the
intervention be focused on the mid tiers of the political-administrative divisions. The government's representation in the intermediate level can constitute an adequate space to articulate the dynamics of local and national development.

**Strengthening local capacities**

The actions of the Framework Programmes aim to reinforce local and territorial capacities. This also happens through participation in the concertation spaces, in the design and implementation of projects, in the Local Programming Cycles, or through training. Framework Programmes seek to enhance the capacities of actors in planning, programming and the management of a territorial, integrated, and participatory development open to international opportunities.

**Presence of an ART team in the territories**

This is a key element to the understanding of the territory, functioning of Programmes and to encourage trust among actors. Combined with a strategic vision, this deep knowledge allows the Programme to act as a facilitator and catalyzing agent within the territorial process. The team is integrated by the territorial governments and can even be part of them.

**Keeping a low profile**

This means that in the territories, the Framework Programme concedes leadership and leading roles to the actors or territorial spaces and to the hosting institution (i.e. territorial governments). To do this, the team's office is most often located in the space assigned by the territorial government and the territorial officer assumes the role of a facilitator and not that of a coordinator. He/she will transfer capacities to the civil servants and local institution so they can assume that role.
**ART methodology**

| **Methodological principles** | • Shared international commitment towards the MDGs.  
• Need for a common effort by all actors.  
• Implementation in the field of the Paris Declaration principles.  
• The paradigm of human development.  
| **Approaches of the intervention** | • Process approach.  
• Territorial approach.  
• Programme approach.  
• Consideration for existing capacities and potentialities.  
• Integral approach.  
• Flexible approach.  
• Inter-agency approach.  
• Participatory approach.  
• Human Rights approach.  
• Gender equality approach.  
• Promotion of sustainable development.  
| **Strategies of the intervention** | • Creation of multi-actor and multilevel operational structures.  
• Permanent articulation between the three levels.  
• Continuity between programming and implementation.  
• Mobilization of new international actors.  
• Anchoring the intervention at the intermediate level.  
• Strengthening local capacities.  
• Presence of an ART team in the territories.  
• ART keeps a low profile.  
• Sustainability strategy.  
• Strategy for mainstreaming the gender approach.  |
Sustainability strategy

As with any development programme, ART has a limited duration; that is why, from the start, a sustainability strategy is developed. In this sense, since their inception Framework Programmes aim to set out the conditions for the institutionalization/ownership of the Territorial Working Groups and the Local Programming Cycle within the territorial government. The Programme creates, transfers and reinforces capacities through its field officer; it also promotes the leading role of the territorial institution. Moreover, since the very first activities, UNDP’s ART Framework Programme will only co-finance impact or strategic projects, trying to progressively reduce its financial participation and involve more actors in the Initiative. Once the process is initiated, the Programme will accompany and support it by putting its networks and services at its disposal, whether at the national level through the country programme, or at the global level through the ART Initiative. This support will mainly focus on facilitating participation in international networks, the promotion of South-South exchanges and technical support in specific cases.

Strategy to mainstream the gender approach

ART promotes the design and implementation of gender mainstreaming strategies, to facilitate the incorporation and active participation of women’s associations in the Territorial Working Groups. In addition, the Initiative seeks to create a specific tool for the follow-up and evaluation of gender issues; include the gender approach in the design of the Local Programming Cycle and impact projects; create capacities and raise awareness through capacitating territorial actors on gender equality issues, so the design and implementation of action plans at the territorial, national and international levels include a gender approach; create gender focal points for ART; and ultimately, develop, systematize and disseminate good practices on gender mainstreaming within the Framework Programmes.
UNDP's ART Framework Programmes in Latin America

At the end of 2010, eight ART Framework Programmes were operational in Latin America: Bolivia, Central America (MyDEL), Colombia, Ecuador, El Salvador, Dominican Republic and Uruguay.

**ART GOLD BOLIVIA PROGRAMME**

The ART GOLD Programme (Governance and Local Development) in Bolivia started in 2008, at the initiative of the Vice-Ministry of Planning and Development. The Programme is part of the government’s strategies on poverty reduction and implementation of the autonomous process at the departmental, regional or municipal levels, and is incorporated in the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF).

The Programme constitutes a support system for the promotion of the country’s development, based on the respect for its cultural and ethnic diversity, as expressed
in its *National Plan for Development (NPD): a dignified, sovereign, productive and democratic Bolivia to live well 2006-2010*; it assists in the implementation of the NPD’s four strategic focus points:

1. Eradicating poverty and inequality.
2. Promoting democracy, based on a multicultural and multi-ethnic State.
3. Stimulating production.
4. Promoting Bolivia’s interaction with the world.

ART GOLD Bolivia is operational in the Departments of La Paz (in the Amazonian province of Abel Iturralde, the highlands provinces of Ingavi and Aroma, and the city of El Alto) and Oruro (in the departmental capital of Taypi and in the Soras subregion). The Programme follows a multi-donor, multi-sector and multilevel articulation (municipal, regional, departmental, national and international) approach. Moreover, it promotes an integral development that complements and coordinates international cooperation’s financial and
technical resources aimed at supporting the priorities identified by the actors of Bolivia's multinational State.

The Programme is supported by the Spanish Agency for International Development Cooperation (AECID, as per Spanish acronym), the Italian Cooperation and several European decentralized cooperation partners. Concertation between the public and private sectors, civil society and social movements, as well as the adoption of criteria that ensure equal opportunities for socially or ethnically disadvantaged groups —women, youth and vulnerable groups— are all strategic, fundamental and prioritized elements that the Programme takes into consideration in development planning and implementation of activities.

**MYDEL PROGRAMME (CENTRAL AMERICA)**

The MyDEL Programme (Women and Local Economic Development) started its operations in 2005 in the Central American countries of El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras and Nicaragua. At the national level, it is mainly led by these countries' Ministries/Secretariats for Women’s Affairs. It receives support from the Italian Cooperation, under the management of the UN Regional Office for Women, and in collaboration with the UN Office for Programme Services (UNOPS) and UNDP.

The Programme grounds its work on the observation that economic growth does not necessarily lead to overcoming social exclusion and inequalities affecting

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8 UN Women is the UN body that works to promote gender equality and women’s empowerment. Many of the initiatives that appear in this document were promoted and supported by the United Nations Fund for Women (UNIFEM), the predecessor of UN Women.
women in the Central American region; hence the real challenge is to promote the implementation of strategies and interventions geared towards the promotion of women’s participation as economic actors, through the local economic development agencies in the four concerned countries.

The Programme seeks to fight against poverty by creating the bases for a territorial strategy and a concerted model of economic empowerment, both of which have an impact on economic governance and development in the Central American region. This model is based on the recognition, promotion and potentiation of women’s entrepreneurship, reinforcing its institutional context and implementing innovative initiatives aimed at gender equality.

The MyDEL Programme has a multilevel strategy: it starts at the local-territorial level, in order to make a difference at the regional, national and international level. It also seeks to ensure the sustainability of its actions by reinforcing its technical teams, promoting cooperation and solidarity, and consolidating strategic national and international alliances. The MyDEL Programme is part of new territorial
dynamics, such as municipal associations, border dynamics such as bi-national and tri-national integration spaces, and cross-border corridors.

MyDEL, which initiated its activities in five departments of four Central American countries, is now operational in 13 departments: in Guatemala, in the departments of Chiquimula, Huehuetenango, Sololá, San Marcos, Totonicapán, Quiché and Alta Verapaz; in El Salvador: in Sonsonate, Morazán and la Unión; in Honduras: in El Valle and Ocotepeque; and in Nicaragua, in the department of León and in the Autonomous Region of Atlántico Norte.

The Programme carries out thematic exchanges with several Women’s organizations of Costa Rica and Panama, and also with the UNDP ART Framework Programmes of Bolivia, Colombia and Ecuador.

Figure 3. Territories of the MyDEL Programme (Central America)
ART-REDES PROGRAMME COLOMBIA

The ART-REDES Programme in Colombia started in 2007, with the support of its national counterpart, the Presidential Agency for Social Action. The participatory planning methodology promoted by UNDP’s ART Framework Programmes merged with the strategy of the Reconciliation and Development Programme (REDES), resulting in the ART-REDES territorial strategy.

It is active in the border department of Nariño and seeks to contribute to development, peace and reconciliation, through an integral approach that promotes a new type of multilateralism, where the United Nations system strengthens local capacities and favors the active participation of communities and actors from the North and the South.

The Programme also aims at contributing to the social construction of peace, sustainable human development, democratic governance, the achievement of the MDGs, and reconciliation. It does so through supporting and strengthening civil
society and governmental initiatives at the territorial and national levels, and promoting inclusive processes.

ART-REDES Colombia focuses its strategy on reinforcing initiatives and processes through the institutionalized dialogue between local public administrations and social actors from the territories. To do so, local development strategies and public policies are promoted, input and participation of international cooperation actors are articulated, and South-South cooperation is promoted.

The main partners that support the Programme are the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA), AECID, the Italian Cooperation, and the Canadian Agency for International Development; some United Nations Agencies, actors of decentralized cooperation and nongovernmental organizations (NGOs).
**PDHL/CUBA**

The Local Human Development Programme in Cuba (PDHL, as per Spanish acronym) is a joint initiative between the Government and UNDP-Cuba; it started in 1998 under the responsibility and leadership of the Ministry of External Commerce and Foreign Investment (MINCEX, as per Spanish acronym). It originated as a United Nations strategy to accompany the efforts of national authorities in promoting a coordinated action of international cooperation to support decentralized processes and local development, both prioritized by the country itself, as well as to achieve the MDGs.

The PDHL/Cuba is an instrument for the coordination and implementation of local human development, and is identified in both the UNDAF 2008-2012 and UNDP's Country Programme Strategy 2008-2012. The thematic priorities of PDHL/Cuba, jointly identified by the Government and UNDP, are: strengthening management capacities of local governments and entities, including the participation of the communities; the gender perspective; using
new Information and Communication Technologies; increasing local economic management capacities and promoting national strategies that contribute to local human development.

The Programme’s main action lines are: supporting food security programmes at the local level; developing and diversifying local economy; environmental protection; the use of renewable energies; strengthening territorial social services, particularly in the field of health and education; reinforcing attention to vulnerable groups; rational use of hydrological resources and strengthening integral territorial planning and community participation.

The Programme started in the Provinces of Granma and Pinar del Río and in the pilot municipality of La Habana Vieja (Old Havana). After carrying out an evaluation, the government recognized the results and usefulness of the methodology and promoted its expansion to other provinces. Currently, the Programme is active in eight of the fifteen Cuban provinces: Pinar del Río and the municipality of La Habana Vieja in the western region; Cienfuegos and Sancti Spíritus in the central region and Las Tunas, Holguín, Granma, Santiago de Cuba and Guantánamo, in the eastern region, as well as in 69 of its 168 municipalities.

*Figure 5. Territories of the PDHL/Cuba*
PDHL/Cuba maintains close cooperation and complementarity relationships with bilateral donors such as Italy, Canada, Switzerland, Sweden, Spain, Belgium, England and Brazil, decentralized cooperation actors from these and other countries, such as Mexico, France and Germany.

**ART/UNDP ECUADOR FRAMEWORK PROGRAMME**

The ART/UNDP Framework Programme in Ecuador seeks to put at the disposition of the country and other cooperation actors a programmatic and management framework that strengthens articulation and coordination between the various determinant levels in development processes (i.e. local, national and international). At the national level it is led by the National Secretariat of Planning and Development (SENPLADES, as per Spanish acronym), in close collaboration with the International Cooperation Technical Secretariat (SETECI, as per Spanish acronym).

The Programme is a working tool for UNDP with the Decentralized Autonomous Governments; it follows an approach of capacity development that prioritizes the creation and strengthening of articulation mechanisms at the territorial-national
levels as well as the concentration between actors in a single territory. It also provides common tools for the efficient management and complementarity of international cooperation through planning.

ART/UNDP Ecuador works in line with the objectives of the National Development Plan (NDP) and promotes the implementation of the National Plan for Good Living 2009-2013, fostering a territorial/national strategy that contemplates territorial organization, the implementation of territorial strategic projects and the strengthening of articulation between national and territorial planning, in full respect of the particularities and diversity of each region. Within the country’s new legal framework, territorial governments are responsible for the management of international cooperation: this means that ART/UNDP Ecuador supports them in complying with this new mandate.

The Programme, which started its activities in 2008 in the Provinces of Azuay, Bolívar, Carchi and Los Ríos, expanded its activities in 2009 to the Provinces of El Oro and de Loja, and in 2010 to Esmeraldas and the canton of Playas, in Guayas.

**Figure 6. Territories of the ART/UNDP Ecuador Framework Programme**
It counts with the support of AECID, the Canadian Fund for Peace and Security as well as various decentralized cooperation partners, among which the Basque government and the governments of Valencia and the Balearic Islands.

**ART EL SALVADOR FRAMEWORK PROGRAMME**

The ART Programme in El Salvador was established in 2010 with the support of the Secretariat for Strategic Affairs through the under-Secretariat of Territorial and Decentralization Development, the Technical Secretariat of the Presidency, the Fund for Social Investment for Local Development and the Vice-Ministry for Cooperation.

ART El Salvador works within the Government’s proposals for territorial development and decentralization, which consider that it is essential to generate and favor conditions that allow improving the quality of life in the territories and modernizing, transforming, de-concentrating and decentralizing the State. To achieve this, the government has planned to reorganize the territories, engage in
political, administrative, fiscal and economic de-concentration and decentralization processes and strengthen local governments.

One of the Programme's challenges is territorial management, since the country is reorganizing its territories in function of their development. The government is examining the possibility of building intermediate state entities between the national government and the 262 municipal governments as an instrument of the decentralization process.

ART El Salvador Programme's objectives are:

- To support the government in the definition and consolidation of inclusive strategies that promote territorial development and decentralization (National Strategy for Local Development).
- To strengthen local capacities for the management of territorial development and decentralization, and stimulate participative and association processes with a gender equality approach, contemplating the inclusion of vulnerable groups.
To articulate strategic, coordinated actions towards and from the territories, supporting the planning and implementation of the national strategy for territorial development (Municipalities Free of Risks).

The ART Programme in El Salvador started its territorial action in the departments of La Unión, Chalatenango, La Paz, San Vicente, Morazán and San Miguel, and has the support of AECID and various decentralized cooperation partners.

**ART GOLD DOMINICAN REPUBLIC PROGRAMME**

The ART GOLD Programme in the Dominican Republic saw the light in 2007, with the signature of the Programme Document. It started its operations in 2008, under the coordination of the General Directorate of Multilateral Cooperation and UNDP. It is aligned with the Government’s strategies for local development, poverty reduction and the achievement of the MDGs, in addition to the implementation of the National Law for Territorial Organization and Decentralization. The Programme is part of the UNDAF 2007-2011 and UNDP’s Country Programme Action Plan (CPAP).
For the Government and UNDP, ART GOLD-Dominican Republic is a tool that articulates and steers the initiatives carried out by international cooperation actors in the field of territorial development strategies and of strengthening local communities. Likewise, the Programme stimulates initiatives in the border area with the Republic of Haiti, involving the population on both sides of the borders.

The geographical areas of the Programme's intervention encompass the border zone with the Republic of Haiti: Valverde, Montecristi, Dajabón, Elías Piña, Pedernales, Independencia and Bahoruco; the Provinces of Milenio: Monte Plata and El Seibo and the Province Hermanas Mirabal. It extends across 40 municipalities and 770,000 inhabitants.

In these territories, the Programme accompanies local development processes agreed upon by the Working Groups; these groups are open to the participation of different donors and actors of decentralized cooperation from the North and
the South. ART GOLD in the Dominican Republic is promoted by AECID, the Italian Cooperation and various decentralized cooperation partners.

**LDP ART URUGUAY**

The Local Development Programme ART Uruguay (LDP ART Uruguay) is operational since 2006 and works with the Directorate of the Planning and Budgeting Office of the Republic’s Presidency. The Programme is implemented in a context characterized by imbalances, polarization and territorial inequities, these being intrinsic elements of Uruguay’s historical development, compounded by a strong centralist tradition.

Uruguay’s context is the reason why the Programme was conceived as a framework to articulate strategies and actions that contribute to solve these structural problems. Like all UNDP’s ART Framework Programmes, one of its main action lines is the articulation of national and territorial strategies in the framework of local development and decentralization, aimed at territorializing the MDGs in every territory.
In its endeavor to mitigate the internal territorial disparities at the economic, social and demographic levels, the LDP ART Uruguay coordinated its actions with the priorities established by the national government: first in the pilot departments of Rivera and Artigas and then, at the request of the departmental governments, to 16 of the 19 departments in the country.

Currently the Uruguay Programme is supported by AECID and a wide network of decentralized cooperation partners. Moreover, it seeks to associate United Nations bodies, international cooperation actors, national, departmental and local authorities, civil society organizations and the private and academic sectors, to promote local development projects led by local communities.

Figure 9. Territories of the Local Development Programme ART Uruguay
International seminar «Implementation of the ART Methodology in Latin America»
The international seminar «Implementation of the ART Methodology in Latin America» was held on 28 and 29 April 2010, in Quito, with the support of the United Nations Development Programme in Ecuador, in close coordination with the ART Initiative, UNDP's Regional Center in Latin America and the Caribbean and the Bureau of Development Policy (BDP), and the collaboration of the Spanish Agency for International Development Cooperation (AECID). The encounter had the following objectives:

1. To generate a space for analysis and reflection on the implementation of the ART methodology in Latin America, through the exchange of experiences on the methodological implementation in the countries and territories of the region.

2. To generate support and exchanges on the achievements, weaknesses and lessons learned between the various countries.

3. To show how the ART Framework Programmes contribute to the effectiveness of development aid at the local level, in particular in relation to the implementation of the Paris Declaration principles and the Accra Agenda for Action.
4. To enrich the methodological proposal of UNDP’s ART Framework Programmes both in Latin America and at the global level, in order to obtain additional inputs that can be exchanged and evaluated.

The seminar became a forum where experiences on the decade-long work of UNDP’s ART Framework Programmes in Latin America were exchanged; it allowed participants to familiarize themselves with the methodological practices developed by individual Framework Programmes, enriched with active participation of ART’s experts and direct actors.

The working methodology enabled the members of UNDP’s ART Framework Programmes to present their experience in implementing ART’s approach, based on its methodological backbone: flexibility and adaptability.

The seminar was attended by more than 80 participants, representing local and national governments of Latin America, UNDP and other agencies of the United Nations, international cooperation actors and universities. This ample presence fulfilled one of the objectives of the organizing committee: to achieve a diverse and balanced representation, both geographically and institutionally.

UNDP participated with 44 delegates: 22 representatives from its Framework Programmes in Bolivia, Colombia, Cuba, Ecuador, Dominican Republic, Uruguay and the MyDEL Programme (Central America), in addition to the ART Framework Programmes of Lebanon and Sri-Lanka; 22 representatives came from the Bureau of Development Policy (BDP), UNDP’s Regional Center in Latin America and the Caribbean, ART’s International Coordination and UNDP Country Offices. As for territorial government representatives, 17 civil servants participated in the event, representing the territorial governments of Ecuador (Carchi, Cuenca and Mira) and Colombia (Nariño and Pasto) as well as territorial government associations. At the national level, participants came from the national governments of Argentina, Cuba, Ecuador and the Dominican Republic (a total of 12). From the United Nations System, there were representatives of the United Nations High
Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO), the United Nations Organization for Education, Science and Culture (UNESCO), the United Nations Children Fund (Unicef), UN Women and the United Nations Fund for Population (UNFPA). From the international cooperation, AECID, the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) and the Catalan Agency for Cooperation to Development (ACCD) participated; there were also representatives of civil society and universities.

The publication *ART/UNDP Ecuador Framework Programme. Methodological Reflections and Advances 2008-2009* was presented, promoting discussions and debates in the seminar. This publication systematizes the 18 first months of the ART/UNDP Ecuador Framework Programme, with a special emphasis on methodological reflections and strategic aspects of the intervention. The document further captures considerations on the complementarity of actors and processes in the field; their articulation with national and international strategies and policies; mechanisms for mobilizing new actors, and the promotion of new alliances for development. The book shows the methodology that the Ecuador Programme adopted when it set in motion the instruments to manage and align international cooperation: it was grounded on priorities reached in a participatory manner in the framework of the national and territorial planning process.

In early 2010, the implementation of the ART/UNDP Ecuador Programme was still ongoing and its territorial intervention still increasing. Thereby, this publication should be considered as the analysis of an evolving process, aiming at recording the components and characteristics of the ART methodology as it really is: a live and practical approach. The information in this document allowed participants to reflect and learn on the methodology, strategy, contributions, difficulties and

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good practices encountered in the Ecuador experience. Combined with the working methodology foreseen by the seminar’s organizers, this was the starting point for participants to contextualize the experiences of their respective countries or sector of activity and will ultimately contribute to the construction of the ART methodology in Latin America.

**Working methodology of the Seminar**

The working methodology designed by the organizing committee, concentrated its efforts on ensuring an effective exchange of experiences among participants in order to obtain substantial inputs in relation to the implementation of the ART methodology in Latin America. To do this, four thematic working groups were created, based on criteria of geographical and institutional diversification.

The four thematic groups were composed of representatives of national and sub-national governments, UNDP’s ART Framework Programmes, United Nations agencies and international cooperation actors. The discussion touched on the main methodological aspects of the Framework Programmes.

In a first phase, the working commissions dwelled on the experiences of these UNDP Programmes within the identified sectors. The general guidelines of the

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10 Integrated by the ART/UNDP Ecuador Programme, UNDP’s Bureau for Development Policy and the ART International Coordination.
working theme assigned to each group were presented first, followed by three presentations on the Framework Programmes’ experiences in the relevant sector. To facilitate the groups’ work, the organizing committee prepared a content guide—or format—for the presentations, which allowed for clear and objective exposés.

In a second phase, the working groups reflected on how the ART Programmes’ methodology contributes to the effectiveness of development aid at the local level, South-South exchanges, and the promotion of gender equality and the development and strengthening of capacities. Dialogue was focused on the contributions, limitations and methodological strategies that enable alignment, harmonization and ownership by actors and development processes. Moreover, the incorporation of the gender approach in the ART methodology and how it can promote capacity development was discussed. Lastly, tools and issues that allow for efficient knowledge management and how they can contribute to more effective South-South cooperation mechanisms were debated.

Each thematic group presented its conclusions during the seminar’s plenary session. This space allowed for sharing and discussing the commissions’ results. This in turn validated and socialized the groups’ work with all participants and ensured that all experiences and generated knowledge were accessible to all participants. Here below is a detailed description of the working groups’ themes and interventions.

**Achievements**

Important exchanges between the representatives of UNDP’s ART Framework Programmes took place during the seminar: national and local governments,
various United Nations agencies and international cooperation —bilateral and decentralized. Taking in consideration the diversity of actors and the wealth of issues that were tackled during the seminar, some of the main achievements are detailed below.

- **Participants shared their experience in applying the methodology of UNDP’s ART Framework Programmes in Latin America.**
  Discussions were held on the experiences of the ART Framework Programmes in Bolivia, Colombia, Cuba, MyDEL (Central America), Ecuador, Dominican Republic and Uruguay, as well as on the Framework Programmes in Lebanon and Sri-Lanka. This exchange focused on the implementation of mechanisms for the articulation and concertation of actors and levels, i.e. the National Coordination Committee and Territorial Working Groups; and on the mechanisms used to align international cooperation to the national and territorial priorities, i.e. the Local Programming Cycle. The ensuing debate allowed sharing knowledge on achievements, weaknesses, best practices and innovations of each programme. This in turn favored the creation of a South-South cooperation space, thanks to the direct exchanges between participants and the creation of connections between them. It also allowed for the dissemination of the information presented by participants.

- **Participation was multi-actor and multilevel.**
  One of the seminar’s major achievements was the geographical and institutional diversity of its participants, which led to balanced interventions. The diversity of actors is considered an achievement because the seminar enjoyed a wide representation of experts from UNDP’s ART Framework Programmes in Latin America and two other continents, national and territorial governments, several United Nations agencies, international cooperation and civil society. The thematic balance in the actors’ interventions was also made possible by the exchange of experiences within the working groups, whose varied composition was planned by the organizers to ensure geographical and institutional balance.
GROUP 1
Articulation mechanisms and local-national concertation: the Territorial Working Groups and the National Coordination Committee

**General Guidelines.** ART International Coordination.

**Local Human Development Programme in Cuba (PDHL/Cuba).** National Coordination Office for Local Development, Cuban National Government.

**ART GOLD Bolivia Programme.** UNDP Bolivia.

**ART/UNDP Ecuador Programme.** ART/UNDP Ecuador Team.

GROUP 2
Instruments of alignment with national and territorial priorities: the Local Programming Cycle.

**General Guidelines.** ART/UNDP Ecuador.

**Nariño Department.** Government of Nariño and the ART-REDES Colombia Programme.

**Dajabón.** ART GOLD Dominican Republic Programme.

**Carchi Province.** Provincial Government of Carchi, Ecuador.

GROUP 3
Developing and strengthening capacities

**General Guidelines.** Bureau of Development Policy and UNDP’s Regional Center in Latin America and the Caribbean.

**Local Human Development Programme in Cuba (PDHL/Cuba).** Technical Team of the Programme.

**ART GOLD Programme-Dominican Republic.** Technical Team of the Programme.

**Women and Local Economic Development (MyDEL).** Technical Team of MyDEL.

GROUP 4
Articulation and complementarity between actors in the field: decentralized cooperation in the multilateral framework and inter-agency work

**General Guidelines.** ART International Coordination.

**ART-REDES Colombia Programme.** Technical Team of the Programme.

**LDP ART Uruguay.** Technical Team of the Programme.

**Local Human Development Programme in Cuba (PDHL/Cuba).** Technical Team of the Programme.
The contribution of UNDP’s ART Framework Programmes to aid effectiveness at the local level was identified.

The seminar devoted a specific space to dwell on the UNDP ART Framework Programmes’ contribution to the effectiveness of development aid at the local level, particularly in relation to the Paris Declaration Principles and the implementation of the Accra Agenda for Action. The experiences discussed showed that these programmes mainly contribute to ownership, alignment and harmonization, as contemplated in the Paris Declaration. The National Coordination Committee, the Territorial Working Groups and the Local Programming Cycle directly promote ownership of planning processes and territorial development priorities; at the same time, these structures complement these priorities with the alignment and support of international cooperation, since the programming framework facilitates the articulation of cooperation actors with the territories, thereby generating more harmonization.

UNDP’s ART Framework Programmes were enriched with the methodological proposals.

The presentation and ensuing debates on the Framework Programmes’ experiences allowed strengthening the methodological proposals for a variety of reasons. In the first place, important information was shared on interventions’ strategies, approaches and methodological principles implemented by the Framework Programmes. Second, presentations showed how programmes have adapted to their respective contexts of intervention by developing flexible mechanisms.11

11 All innovations carried out during implementation referred to a strengthened methodological proposal, given its own adaptation capacity.
Lastly, common principles to UNDP’s ART Framework Programmes were identified. The initial objective was therefore achieved: the experiences of Latin America represent an important contribution to the construction of the ART methodology, nurtured by the practical daily know-how of the programmes in their respective countries and enriched as it constantly grows and surpasses itself.

- **Exchanges and debates on knowledge management towards South-South cooperation were promoted.**
  During the seminar, participants from different thematic groups brought ideas on the instruments and methodologies (developed or to-be developed) for a knowledge management that contributes to promote South-South cooperation. Likewise, an inventory of possible topics for South-South cooperation exchanges was elaborated.

**Instruments and methodologies:**

**Information and Communication Technologies (ICT)**
To promote the use of ICT (web pages, social networks, fairs and virtual forums), it was suggested to generate more exchanges on methodologies, technologies and good practices.

**Communication and Socialization Strategy**
To be more effective, it was suggested to strengthen the communication and socialization strategy, promoting better communication between the ART Framework Programmes in Latin America and other continents.

**Increasing exchanges**
To achieve a higher level of knowledge-socialization, it was suggested to increase the number of events, seminars and courses among the territories. Likewise, facilitating a regular exchange of experiences through visits or bilateral and regional meetings was advised. Moreover, it was acknowledged
that decentralized cooperation has a central role to play as it can support these South-North-South exchanges.

**Institutionalization**

It is pertinent to generate ongoing actions and initiatives of South-South cooperation in Latin America and the Caribbean in the framework of UNDP’s ART Initiative.

**Database**

Creating a database with knowledge products generated by the different Programmes at the regional level was also advised. To do this, it was suggested to start with a mapping of «supplies and demands» at the technical and political level.

**South-South exchange sectors:**

Among the most recurring and transcending themes, the following were identified as priorities in the agenda of various UNDP ART Framework Programmes:

- Democratic Governance.
- Planning and territorial organization.
- Borders, conflict management and bi-national articulation.
- Training of human resources for the integral management of territories.
- Youth and citizen participation, women’s empowerment, gender and ethnicity.
- Participative budgeting.
- Diaspora and migration.
- Cross-border strategies.
Mechanisms for the articulation and concertation of actors and levels
UNDP’s ART International Initiative and the Framework Programmes in Latin America have developed a working methodology based on mechanisms aimed at ensuring that development processes are effectively articulated between the territorial, national and international level. The main working mechanisms used to reach this objective are: at the national level, the National Coordination Committee (NCC) and that the territorial level, the Territorial Working Groups (TWGs).

The ART methodology is a living process in constant evolution; it adapts itself to the realities of each territory. There is no single formula that is applicable, compulsory, common or standardized. This is why the international seminar’s premise was «methodological construction based on field practice experiences».

The objective of systematizing the reflections and contributions of the international seminar is to present the methodological experiences in Latin America and the Caribbean. The particular diversity and richness that each Programme has developed to face development challenges was taken as the starting point to critically analyze and examine the Programmes’ generalities,
specificities and common ground. The participants’ exchanges and interventions have been systematized, as well as the common elements and criteria shared by Programmes and the particularities they have developed in their respective contexts.

The National Mechanism: The National Coordination Committee

The National Coordination Committee is the decision-making space that leads and coordinates UNDP’s ART Framework Programmes; it also facilitates articulation between the different levels of government and international cooperation. The practical experiences shared in the seminar on the functioning of NCCs have been organized in three sections. The first one refers to the objective of the NCC and the functions it fulfils; it analyzes the reasons for creating the NCC as well as its various functions. The second section presents the structure and composition of the NCC, as well as the representation and participation of the various actors and levels. The last section discusses the achievements and weaknesses of the NCCs in the region.

Objective of the National Coordination Committee

The objective of the NCC is to generate a national coordination body, responsible for ensuring that UNDP’s ART Framework Programmes methodology and instruments are adequately implemented and in line with national policies. The NCC also seeks to promote the articulation of territorial planning with national programmes and strategies, complementing it with the support of international cooperation.
**FUNCTIONS OF THE NATIONAL COORDINATION COMMITTEE**

The NCCs of UNDP’s ART Framework Programmes in Latin America and the Caribbean carry out functions with repercussions at the territorial, national and international level. These functions are flexible and adapt to each country’s context and needs. Moreover, they are always implemented taking in consideration existing structures.

**Facilitating and promoting the articulation with planning at the national level**

UNDP’s ART Framework Programmes coincide that one of the common functions of all NCCs is to facilitate and promote articulation with the national planning system by prioritizing development strategies, programmes and policies. This way, leadership and ownership of the Programme’s national actors is promoted and integration of territorial actors in the national planning processes is facilitated.

**Favoring a sustained territorial, national and international articulation**

It is the NCC’s mandate to generate multilevel articulation of development processes and ac-

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**STRENGTHENING NATIONAL PLANNING IN THE DOMINICAN REPUBLIC**

**ART GOLD DOMINICAN REPUBLIC PROGRAMME**

The systems of national planning are in a constant process of change and evolution. This is why the NCC facilitates the articulation of central planning with other management levels.

For the ART GOLD Programme in the Dominican Republic, the country’s national planning is in a phase of construction and strengthening. The national system foresees the creation of Development Councils throughout the country. The functions and roles of these councils are similar to those of the NCC. Hence, national actors consider the creation and functions of the NCC as a “seed” for the future development and implementation of the Development Councils.

**Source**: «Systematization of the Thematic Working Group 1: Mechanisms for the articulation and concertation of actors at the local, national and international levels, in particular the Territorial Working Groups and the National Coordination Committee», page 6.
tors. To do so it generates an exchange space, open to strategic representatives of the local, national and international level. This function is carried out from a Programme’s perspective, since the NCC does not promote isolated projects but action programmes, hence averting the risk of dispersion and duplication of activities at the different levels of action.

Alignment and articulation with national policies and guidelines

One of the NCC’s fundamental roles is to guarantee the insertion of the Framework Programme in the country’s national policies and development guidelines. This is essential to ensure national ownership, sustainable development policies and programmatic coherence with the national and, consequently, the other levels.

Orientation of International Cooperation

One of the main functions of the NCC is to promote new cooperation alliances, therefore contributing to align the development agendas of international cooperation donors and partners with territorial and national development priorities.

The NCC is the body where international cooperation actions are steered in order to improve their effectiveness and impact. This ensures national owner-
ship of the development initiatives carried out by international actors and thereby achieves a better impact of international cooperation in the territories.

**Decision-making on the Framework Programme's implementation**

The NCC fulfils several functions concerning the implementation of the Framework Programmes in Latin America. In the first place, it is in charge of identifying the territories where the Programmes will be implemented, both in the initial and subsequent extension phases. Second, it approves and coordinates the implementation of the Programme’s general guidelines the Annual Operational Plan. Third, it is the body that manages the incorporation of new members. Finally, it is in charge of promoting the transfer and application of successful experiences to other territories of intervention.

**Strengthening the gender perspective**

In most cases, the NCC promotes gender parity by mainstreaming the gender approach, whether during the formulation of the Framework Programme’s guidelines, the implementation of national projects, the Annual Operational Plan or throughout all management processes (from participatory programming to evaluation). Moreover, UNDP’s ART Framework Programmes work jointly with UN Women; this alliance facilitates the work of the NCC in the creation of strategies and indicators, through capacity-building and technical assessments.

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12 The NCC makes the decision based on social, economic, political and environmental criteria.
The NCC is a multi-actor and multilevel space integrated by territorial, national and international actors. In a first phase, it is led by the National Government and UNDP; later, it is expanded with the incorporation of other strategic actors at the national level. Its participatory nature allows overcoming the concept of «passive beneficiaries»: it incorporates the Programme’s participants as partners, for they take part in the human development process and share commitments and responsibilities in the framework of the Government’s central and local structures and of international organizations.

Planning and Development Ministries in charge of international cooperation

In most Latin American countries where UNDP’s ART Framework Programmes are operational, the Programme’s national counterpart is the ministry in charge of planning or international cooperation. Therefore, these are the institutions that lead the NCC in their respective countries and allow ownership of the Framework Programme.

Other ministries

In addition to the ministry in charge of planning and/or international cooperation, the NCC is an open

MEMBERS OF THE NCC

NATIONAL COUNTERPARTS OF SOME OF UNDP’S ART FRAMEWORK PROGRAMMES

**PDHL/Cuba**
Ministry of External Commerce and Foreign Investment.

**ART/UNDP Ecuador**
Planning and Development National Secretariat, in alliance with the Technical Secretariat of International Cooperation.

**ART GOLD Bolivia**
Ministry of Development Planning.
space for other ministries involved in UNDP’s ART Framework Programmes. Different ministries are invited to participate in the NCC according to national priorities. This national-level ministerial participation is positive, as it allows maintaining fluid conversations between the territorial and national levels, which are both present in the NCC. Likewise, it can encourage the National Government to become more involved in territorial initiatives and decentralization processes.

**United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)**

The UNDP is part of the National Coordination Committee, as the entity in charge of the implementation of its ART Framework Programmes and as the facilitator of the NCC’s Technical Secretariat.

**United Nations System (UNS)**

The NCC is a space where the United Nations agencies who are present in the countries establish synergies with other actors and tally up their development efforts. As a coordination body, the NCC promotes inter-agency collaboration within the UN, supported by its multi-actor and multilevel structure, which allows combining the agencies’ efforts in an institutionalized development framework. In addition, it contributes to the UN Reform (Delivering as One)\(^\text{13}\) and to the achievement of the MDGs.

UNDP’s ART Framework Programmes in Latin America are a part of this reform and contribute to it: through the National Coordination Committee, the Programmes promote a framework that facilitates alliances and articulation between the participating United Nations agencies.14

**Territorial Actors**

Representatives of local actors at the national level are also NCC participants. In some cases these are the coordinators or representatives of the Territorial Working Groups and in others, associations of territorial actors

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with a national reach. The presence of these associations facilitates work within the NCC and communication between the local and national levels.

**Bilateral cooperation**

UNDP’s ART Framework Programmes have overcome the traditional «donor-beneficiary» relationship —or cooperation paradigm—; instead, they have established relations based on partnership and common interests. The structure of the National Coordination Committee facilitates aligning donors with development priorities in the countries; it also promotes harmonization, since these actors participate in the NCC with the ultimate aim of achieving common objectives in the countries they support.

**Decentralized cooperation partners**

UNDP’s ART Initiative has more than 700 decentralized cooperation allies, mainly from Europe. These partners are truly committed to development processes in Latin America and in some cases are part of the NCC, at least temporarily (although their presence is more generalized in the Territorial Working Groups).

Although one of the main functioning principles of the NCC is to enjoy ample representativeness of national and territorial governments when decisions are made or results evaluated, there are cases where it is not possible to achieve their active participation. One successful experience in this field is that of the ART/UNDP Ecuador Programme, which has ensured a permanent representation of the three sub-national government levels in the NCC: parochial, cantonal and provincial. These three levels participate through their national-level associations.

**Parochial Level:** Through the National Council of Parochial Juntas of Ecuador (CONAJUPARE, as per Spanish acronym).

**Cantonal Level:** Represented by the Ecuadorian Municipality Association (AME, as per Spanish acronym).

**Provincial Level:** Represented by the Consortium of Provincial Councils of Ecuador (CONCOPE, as per Spanish acronym).

This participation makes the NCC a truly representative body, which enables effective articulation between levels.

OTHER ELEMENTS TO BE TAKEN INTO CONSIDERATION FOR THE FUNCTIONING OF THE NATIONAL COORDINATION COMMITTEE

Structural diversity at the national level

Bearing in mind that one of the NCC’s objectives is to contribute to national planning, the work premise for its correct functioning is respect for and articulation with existing structures in the countries. This is why each country has developed structures adapted to the particular context and needs.

LDP-ART Uruguay: two governability committees

In the case of Uruguay, the Local Development Programme ART Uruguay (LPD-ART Uruguay) has a national management structure harmonized with national guidelines. It operates through two governability committees that ensure articulation and coordination of local and national development activities in the country.

Executive Committee

This committee provides the Programme with strategic guidance and is in charge of orientation and decision-making in relation to different projects and contributions. It is presided by the Office for Planning and Budgeting of the Republic’s Presidency (OPP, as per Spanish acronym) and integrated by the Intendants’ Congress, UNDP, United Nations agencies, the Spanish Agency for International Development Cooperation (AECID), other donors involved, and the core team of LDP-ART Uruguay.

National Coordination Committee

It has consultative and thematic advisory functions. It is integrated by a substantial number of actors from the various sectors involved in the Programme: Office for Planning and Budgeting of the Republic’s Presidency (OPP, as per Spanish acronym); Ministry of Housing; Territorial Planning and Environment, Work and Social
Security, Social Development and Finance and Economy; the National Corporation for Development; academic institutions; the private sector; international organizations such as the International Labor Organization (ILO), UN Women, United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), the United Nations Office for Projects and Services (UNOPS), the United Nations Environmental Programme (UNEP), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP); as well as AECID, the European Union and the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB).

Strategies for the creation and functioning of the NCC

The phases or processes for the constitution and operation of the National Coordination Committee depend on the specific circumstances of each country, although some generalizations and practical experiences can be inferred and used as guides for the formulation, integration and functioning of the NCC in new contexts.

ART/UNDP Ecuador: process of creating the NCC

Phase 1: Formulation of the “Programme Document”

The NCC became operational in 2007 with the signature of the «Programme Document»
between UNDP and the National Government, through the National Secretariat for Planning and Development (SENPLADES, as per Spanish acronym) as the Programme’s national counterpart. In this document, the NCC’s general regulations and composition were defined, in addition to its functions within UNDP’s ART Framework Programme-Ecuador.

**Phase 2: Integration of the National Coordination Committee**

The NCC’s integration started in 2008 with commitments made by the participating institutions. In this regard, presentation meetings with national strategic actors were organized, such as the Ecuadorian Agency for International Cooperation (AGECI, as per Spanish acronym), several ministries, associations of subnational governments, in addition to United Nations agencies and international cooperation partners. These meetings were aimed at ensuring a clear understanding of the role and reach of the mechanism: the objectives, structure, operational mechanisms and strategies of UNDP’s ART Programmes were clearly presented.

**Phase 3: Mechanism for the functioning of the National Coordination Committee**

Once the representatives of the involved institutions reach a political commitment, they agree upon the NCC’s functions, operational mechanisms, orientation, follow-up, socialization, main roles, the frequency of meetings, mechanisms for the incorporation of new partners, criteria for the identification of new pilot areas, articulation mechanisms between the territorial and international levels, as well as projects and programs at the national level.

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15 Currently known as the Technical Secretariat of International Cooperation (SETECI, as per Spanish acronym).
ACHIEVEMENTS AND LIMITATIONS OF THE NATIONAL COORDINATION COMMITTEE

The exchanges between participants during the international seminar «Implementation of the ART Methodology in Latin America», allowed identifying the NCCs’ main achievements in the region:

- They achieve a high multilevel coordination, since their structure stimulates the participation of national, territorial and international actors.
- They are an operational structure that facilitates integration between the levels of political and technical management of the national institutions. These two management levels allow for a more fluid dialogue and better coordination between its members.
- In general, the national and territorial actors who participate in the NCC show a considerable interest in the structure.
- The NCCs have been working on the basis of the principles of transparency and consensus (because their decisions are public and decisions are made by consensus instead of voting).
- In some countries, NCCs have achieved a high level of leadership at the national level.

As to the limitations identified by the seminar’s working groups that discussed the NCC’s performance and functioning:

- Some operational weaknesses were identified, since the participation of representatives with important responsibilities implies greater difficulty in coordinating their agendas. In some cases, this can lead to less frequent NCC meetings (although, generally speaking, the NCC still meets at least twice a year).
- In some cases there is little continuity of institutional representatives (some institutions have had a high staff turnover), which hinders consistency in the NCC’s management processes.
Territorial Mechanism: Territorial Working Groups

Territorial Working Groups (TWGs) are structured according to the local dynamics, in response to each territory's needs and priorities. They are multilevel, inter-sectorial and inter-disciplinary structures, which facilitate the management and planning of a territory and the implementation of the development projects and programmes supported by international cooperation. TWGs are the core of UNDP's ART Framework Programmes, whose success or failure depends to a large extent on the functioning of these groups.

TWGs are an essential element of UNDP's ART Framework Programmes' methodological proposal; it is important to stress that they belong to the territory, and in no case do they exist only for or through the Framework Programmes. TWGs lead the Framework Programme's processes; it is in charge of facilitating the concertation and articulation of actors and processes: it is not the Framework Programme's function to do so. By establishing the TWGs, ART Framework Programmes do not seek to duplicate structures or create parallel instruments to those already in place. TWGs acknowledge local structures and aim at strengthening available management, planning and development instruments.

Generally speaking, two sub-national management levels coexist in a given territory: the intermediate and the local levels. The intermediate level is characterized by intermediate governmental structures, i.e. in-between national and local levels. These governments have different designations according to the country’s political-administrative divisions. They can be provincial, departmental, district-level or regional. On the other side, the local level is the structure closest to the citizens and is usually represented by municipalities. Hereinafter, the working groups of the intermediate level will be referred to as Regional Working Groups (RWGs), whereas those at the local level will be referred to as Local Working Groups (LWGs).
The following section will dwell on the objectives and functions of the Territorial Working Groups as well as their members. Subsequently, the TWGs’ creation procedures and functioning processes will be presented, in addition to their achievements and limitations.

**OBJECTIVES OF THE TERRITORIAL WORKING GROUPS**

The main objective of these groups is to strengthen the management and programming capacities of the regional and local levels through an articulated effort between territorial, national and international actors. TWGs are led by those in charge of regional and local administrations; with the support of international cooperation, they seek to generate mechanisms that will facilitate complementarity between actors and articulation between the initiatives implemented in the local and national development framework.

**FUNCTIONS OF THE TERRITORIAL WORKING GROUPS**

Bearing in mind that the Territorial Working Groups strive to articulate actors and processes at the territorial and national levels, their functions should always take into consideration the political, social, cultural, economic, historical and environmental complexities of each and every territory.

**Coordination of the Local Programming Cycle (LPC)**

The LPC is a planning exercise for the Territorial Working Groups to facilitate, steer and guide their territories’ development priorities. First, led by the territorial government, the TWGs take over the responsibility of guiding the participation of local actors, and of designing the LPC: they define the operational mechanisms (objectives, participants, phases and timetable) to kick off the planning process.
Subsequently, the TWGs validate the territories’ development priorities that were identified during the programming phase. Later, TWG members ensure the follow-up and implementation of the activities and projects contemplated in the «Territorial Priorities Document». Finally, they facilitate the monitoring and evaluation of the LPC’s results.

**Facilitating dialogue and decision-making**

The diversity of actors represented in the TWGs allows promoting dialogue and consensus between the territorial, national and international actors of various institutions. This approach is based on participation: it promotes and facilitates articulation and public-private concertation on strategies and actions for territorial development. It also encourages public actors at all levels —political and administrative—, the private sector, civil society and the academic sector, to participate in the spaces for articulation and mechanisms for concertation and decision-making.

**Articulation of international cooperation**

International cooperation contributes to human development in the territories. In this context, the reforms of the international cooperation mechanisms and the additional commitments made to achieve aid effectiveness at the local

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16 This document is considered the result of the Local Programming Cycle and can have different names according to the country where it is implemented, such as «Territorial Priorities Document»; «International Cooperation Strategy»; «Guidelines»; or «Priority Guidelines for Integral Development». To facilitate this document’s reading, only one designation will be used: «Territorial Priorities Document».
level have led cooperation actors —through the TWGs— to accompany development processes. The TWGs have ownership of local development strategies, integrating them in their management mechanisms and facilitating articulation with cooperation actors, from a «partners-allies» perspective instead of the traditional «donor-beneficiary» paradigm. Moreover, as they embody a structure that coordinates the territories’ priorities, TWGs also complement these priorities with the financial and technical support of cooperation actors. Likewise, the working groups foster closer ties with international cooperation partners, by organizing missions from and to the territory (i.e. in both directions).

**Territorial capacity strengthening and development**

Territorial Working Groups contribute to build and strengthen capacities from more than one perspective. In the first place, TWGs develop management and leadership capacities, allowing their members to exchange knowledge within their territories and between regions.

TWGs acquire ownership of ongoing development processes and hence are in a good position to identify and establish their own development priorities based on integral planning processes. This leads to better territorial planning and to an optimal coordination with national structures and international cooperation.

Competencies are strengthened through capacity building on specialized issues that respond to the actors’ demands and needs. Technical training is imparted on project formulation, local economic development, gender equality, participative processes and Information and Communication Technologies, to name but a few. Capacity development does not only take place in the local sphere; it is also achieved by facilitating exchange platforms with decentralized cooperation actors and through South-South cooperation.
Decision-making on the Framework Programme's territorial implementation

TWGs fulfill several functions in relation to the Framework Programme's implementation. Among the most important of these is the TWGs' role in the implementation of projects and programmes identified in the planning phase. They also approve the incorporation of new actors to these dialogue spaces and identify the criteria for selecting the territories where the Framework Programme will be implemented (municipalities, cantons or departments).

Accountability and oversight

Departing from the principle of transparency, TWGs disseminate the Framework Programme's progress in the territory its citizens in general, and with territorial, national and international actors.

The information they share refers to the results, achievements, difficulties encountered, good practices, innovations and management mechanisms. In fact, this communication process becomes a mechanism that allows citizens to oversee the Programme and to make its operations more transparent.

Influencing public policies

An important function of the Working Groups is to influence the design and strengthen public policies that seek to improve citizens' quality of life. As dialogue and planning instruments, TWGs can stimulate the construction of public policies in the thematic areas they work on: human development, gender, decentralization, governance and environment, among others.
Alignment of cooperation to local priorities

As a structure focused on fostering concertation and participation processes through the prioritization of development strategies and projects, TWG also become an instrument that furthers the alignment of international cooperation with territorial priorities. Subsequently, the initiatives prioritized by the territorial actors are complemented with the economic and technical support of international cooperation.

Mainstreaming the gender approach and women’s empowerment

UNDP’s ART Framework Programmes are grounded on an integral rather than a sectorial viewpoint, which strives to include traditionally marginalized groups. Therefore, the Programmes promote gender equality and women’s leadership, and the Territorial Working Groups seek to guarantee the institutional representation of women. In general, women participate as representatives of institutions, organizations and women’s committees, gender-equality Ministries (where they exist) or governmental entities in charge of gender issues. In collaboration with these organizations, the Local Programming Cycle promotes the joint creation of public policies and equality programmes, both at the territorial and national levels.

Institutionalizing the TWGs

UNDP’s ART Framework Programmes do not seek to operate in the territories for an indefinite period of time. Their aim is to generate sustainable structures and processes, created or strengthened through the institutionalization and ownership of these mechanisms by local authorities. To do this, territorial governments must achieve ownership and leadership of the TWGs; local actors need to consider them a useful tool for development planning. This way, once the Framework Programmes accomplish their mission in the territories, local governments and actors will take over the TWG’s functioning, with the support of the Framework Programme and the ART Initiative’s global services, whenever required by the TWG.

Composition of the Territorial Working Groups

Territorial Working Groups —regional and local—are led by the territorial authorities and integrated by representatives of the territory’s strategic actors. The aim is to achieve a balanced representation based on the territory’s political, social, cultural, economic, historical and environmental dynamics. It is crucial to achieve this integral equilibrium, since the TWGs make decisions affecting the territory’s management. TWGs are structures where the academic, public and private sectors, civil society and international cooperation converge. In a general sense, the Territorial
Working Groups in Latin America are represented by various strategic members.

**Territorial Authorities**

TWGs are led by the territory’s government (province, department, region or municipality). Territorial authorities are in charge of guiding and acquiring ownership of development processes; their active intervention is essential to the TWGs' success.

**Central level representatives in the territories**

The de-concentrated structures of the government at the local level also offer their support: ministerial sub-secretariats, directorates and more generally, national level representations in the territories.

**Academic sector**

Universities and training centers fulfill a crucial role, as they contribute to strengthen the capacities of TWGs and facilitate training on those sectors identified by the groups. Likewise, they enable knowledge exchange on issues linked to local development with other

Source: «Presentation of the Local Human Development Programme in Cuba: National Coordination Committee and Territorial Working Groups» (by William Díaz ), pp. 6-7 (Speakers' Presentations, Thematic Working Group 1). «Systematization of the thematic working group 1: Mechanisms for the articulation and concertation of actors at the local, national and international levels, in particular the Territorial Working Groups and the National Coordination Committee», pp. 3-4.
countries and training centers at the international level.

**Civil Society Organizations**

Framework Programmes pursue the integration of groups traditionally excluded from development processes; hence civil society organizations that are representative of the territory are members of the TWGs. Their contribution is very important to ensure the participation of the different sectors of society. This is why women’s groups, youth, environmentalists, workers and ethnic groups, among others, are encouraged to participate.

**Public, private and mixed economic sectors**

Owing to their participative character, TWGs are a space where both the public and private sectors come together. In most cases, this structure allows to promote integral local economic development strategies for the territory. Among others, Chambers of Industry and Commerce, and Local Economic Development Agencies (LEDA) grant their support to the TWGs.
International Cooperation

United Nations agencies, bilateral donors and decentralized cooperation partners support the work of the TWGs; in some cases, they are part of the groups. International cooperation is aligned with development priorities identified by territorial partners, who in turn harmonize their objectives with other international cooperation actors, as they all operate in the same articulation framework.

The diversity of actors in the Working Groups enables:

1. **Articulation between the territorial, national and international levels.**
   TWGs facilitate permanent articulation between the territorial, national and international levels in all interventions. Articulation between local and national development policies enables strengthening national strategic planning and stimulating local development, as they both fall within the competencies of national policies. The connection and linkage with international cooperation networks complement national and territorial efforts, offer multiple resources and create capacities, synergies and exchanges.

2. **Complementary work between the intermediate and the local levels.**
   Territorial Working Groups facilitate articulation between the government’s local and intermediate levels. The complementary work between these two levels of action allows promoting a sustainable local development process, as development relates to both territorial and national policies. The intermediate level can also enable and favor articulation between local and national development dynamics.

**SOME PARTICULARITIES OF THE TERRITORIAL WORKING GROUPS’ FUNCTIONING**

TWGs have different structures, depending on each territory’s dynamics and political drives. The process of their establishment reflects the territorial potentialities and weaknesses, as it takes into consideration socioeconomic, political, environmental
and technical factors. Based on the experience of UNDP’s ART Framework Programmes in Latin America, as well as on the reflections and debates during the international seminar, some of the TWGs’ specificities can be systematized, and should be taken into consideration when engaging in new processes for the creation and functioning of TWGs.

Concerted efforts during the startup phase

In the startup phase, it is essential to make all possible efforts to ensure an accurate communication concerning the group’s objectives: it is of utmost importance to have a clear understanding of their functioning. Therefore, all doubts have to be clarified during the informative meetings, in order to achieve the technical and political support of the territorial institutions. Moreover, transparent negotiations that include all the territories’ representative actors have to be undertaken during this phase, taking into account previous or ongoing articulation processes.

Leadership of the territorial government

For both the Territorial and Local Working Groups, the main starting premise is the leadership of the territory’s government; both structures belong to the territory: they do not exist for
the Framework Programmes, but for the territory. Without the commitment of the territorial authorities at the political and technical levels, it is not possible to initiate the TWGs' work. Absolute clarity in the Programme's objective coupled with the territorial government's commitment, are the only way to achieve national ownership and in the long run, ensure the institutionalization and ownership of TWGs.

Respect for local development policies and strategies

During the startup phase and the planning process, the territories' capacities, potentialities and existing public policies have to be taken into account. TWGs have to reinforce the ongoing local processes and articulate themselves with national strategies and policies. The objective of the Framework Programmes is not to duplicate the territory's structures, but to strengthen the planning and development processes already in motion; in case there were no previous planning structures, then Programmes facilitate the joint creation of territorial planning instruments, hand in hand with local actors.

Criteria for the selection of territories

One of the coordination exercises of the Regional Working Group is to agree on objective criteria to identify the municipalities (local-level territories) where the Framework Programme will operate. These criteria consider factors that appraise local resources (human, institutional, economic, cultural, environmental and social).

Designation of technical counterparts in each institution

Bearing in mind that Territorial Working Groups have both political and technical roles, once the political level of the TWG is constituted, a technical counterpart should be designated for the Group to be operational.
ENTRY OF THE PROGRAMME IN THE TERRITORY

Establish contacts with political and technical actors

To do this, an awareness-raising and mapping process is started, while engaging in a rapprochement with local actors.

- Obtain their political and technical support.
- Start the quick diagnosis of the territory.

During this process, the Programme is presented to all actors, institutions and local organizations to participate in the Initiative.

CONSTITUTION OF THE PROVINCIAL WORKING GROUP (PWG)

The Provincial Working Group is formally introduced

All the political actors belonging to the institutions and organizations identified in the previous step are called to the presentation.

The PWG becomes the Programme's operational structure

- It guides the intervention.
- It supports the management of the local development planning process.
- The PWG has a political and a technical configuration.

Political PWG
It becomes a strategic-political decision making space

Technical PWG
It manages the day-to-day tasks of local development.
Where the Programme will be implemented in a first phase

In order to establish an articulation culture since the very beginning, tools of concertation and decision making are used. These will allow local actors to decide on the priority cantons where the intervention will take place.

- The debate is facilitated by pre-defined criteria and their corresponding punctuation
- Use of matrixes

Will avoid possible tensions, as their use allows for an objective and technical analysis.

During the previous bilateral meetings, a first draft document is written and discussed

Using technical tools will ensure objectivity, hopefully «de-politicizing» the debate, in addition to generating the conditions for an optimal first PWG meeting. Using these criteria, the incipient group carries out its first concertation exercise by deciding which cantons will be prioritized.

Realizing a first concertation exercise with the new PWG

The selected municipalities will be invited to participate. To do this, the PWG’s coordination, normally the Provincial Government and SENPLADES, with the support of the ART/UNDP Framework Programme:

- Visits the mayors of the selected cantons to invite them to participate in the PWG.
- Presents the methodology and next steps.
- Requests the Municipality to nominate a focal person in the Working Group.
- The Cantonal Working Groups (CWG) are created.

Operational structure at the municipal level.

Together with other technical officers from the Municipality, and depending on the issue to be discussed in the meeting, civil society sectors, associations, Mayors and other territorial representatives will participate in the encounter.

In both the cantonal and provincial levels, special consideration will be given to whether there are existing spaces that can be strengthened to assume this particular role.

To be implemented in the cantons

The PWG is extended (with the participation of the municipalities) and will analyze and agree upon the impact projects to be implemented in the cantons. The criteria for the impact projects are defined collectively, to facilitate the debate and decision-making on cantonal priorities.

The PWG carries out a quick brain storm

Putting forward project ideas and then prioritizing one of them. These impact or startup projects are brought to the PWG to be discussed, complemented and validated. This generates a dialogue process within the PWG on the territory’s priorities and urgencies, and in certain cases stimulates articulation for the project’s implementation. Once these projects are agreed upon, they are implemented. These impact projects have a functional and instrumental value as they promote the articulation between actors in a very practical way, generate trust and commitment towards the process and strengthen the Working Groups in their initial phases.
Two operational levels: political and technical

Territorial Working Groups have to be operational in their decision making process and in project implementation. In many cases, when representation within the TWG is mainly political, becoming an operational structure proves difficult: on the one hand, these members have less time and coordinating agendas becomes complicated; on the other, some decisions might be hard to reach given the different political affiliations.

In an opposite scenario, the TWG might have an overwhelming technical representation, which is also an unsustainable option, as the ‘operational-technical’ aspects might move forward, but the TWG would be unable to make final decisions on specific issues such as operational aspects, implementation, resource mobilization, execution, etc. Some of UNDP’s ART Framework Programmes in Latin America have been able to optimize both scenarios in the TWGs’ structures by creating two complementary work spaces within the Working Group: technical and political.

Border work

Although some common intervention principles are observed, the diversity of contexts in which UNDP’s ART Framework Programmes operate shape the methodology’s implementation—flexible and adaptable—to the various territorial specificities. This is
why, in certain contexts where two countries share common challenges in relation to local development, the creation of bi-national structures has been encouraged. Such is the case with the Inter-Border Working Groups of the ART GOLD Programme in the Dominican Republic and the cross-border work on issues of common interest at the territorial level of the ART-REDES Colombia and ART/UNDP Ecuador Programmes.

ACHIEVEMENTS AND LIMITATIONS

Among the main achievements of the implementation and operating capacity of the Territorial Working Groups in Latin America, the following should be mentioned:

- TWGs are led by local authorities, both in the coordination and implementation of their functions.
- Institutionalization and local ownership of TWGs has been achieved. This ensures sustainability, as these groups will lead development processes.
- Strengthening of management capacities and territorial articulation has been facilitated.
- Thanks to their participative nature, TWGs have integrated civil society and the academic sector to planning processes.

The 2010 earthquake that hit Haiti changed the working methodology of the ART GOLD-Dominican Republic Programme, shifting its approach to emergency response. After the quake, a migratory exodus of Haitians increased the population of the border provinces in the Dominican Republic, changing the territory’s reality.

In this context, the Cross-border Inter-Municipal Committees were created. The first committee counts with the participation of representatives from Haiti’s Northeast department and the Dajabón province in the Dominican Republic. The second one is integrated by Haiti’s Central Department and the province of Elías Piña, of the Dominican Republic. All these actors work in planning processes and joint articulation.

It has been observed that after programmes and projects are implemented by TWGs, the number of its members increases.

Participative identification of development projects through Local Programming Cycles has been facilitated through TWGs.

As to the limitations that have hindered TWGs, the following can be highlighted:

- In some cases, there is little stability and/or continuity of the institutional representatives and their technical teams, which complicates the TWGs' functioning.
- In some cases there is little civil society and private sector participation, one of the reasons being that there is not always an organized civil society.
- Depending on local dynamics, there are cases where there is insufficient integration of international cooperation actors present in the territory.

Articulation between the National Coordination Committee and the Territorial Working Groups

UNDP’s ART Framework Programmes stimulate articulation between the mechanisms for the concertation of actors and processes at the national and territorial level in the following way:

- They are spaces where good practices, achievements and obstacles encountered at the local level are shared with other regions and with the national level.
- The interaction of these two levels promotes the effectiveness of development aid at the territorial level, by contributing to the achievement of the MDGs
and to the implementation of the Paris Declaration Principles and the Accra Agenda for Action.

- They are mechanisms that allow exchanges between national and territorial governments, international cooperation actors (bilateral and decentralized), non-governmental organizations and civil society in general, universities and United Nations agencies.
- Through these structures, it is possible to promote decentralization processes efficiently and achieve coordination between the different administrative levels.
- South-South, South-North and North-South cooperation alliances are promoted.
- Articulated processes of local economic development are promoted.
- Coordination between the two levels enables an effective and transparent mobilization of resources.

**Contribution of the articulation and concertation mechanisms to aid effectiveness at the local level**

UNDP’s ART Framework Programmes promote the effectiveness of development aid at the local level through their operational mechanisms: the National Coordination Committee and the Territorial Working Groups. As regards the implementation of the Paris Declaration Principles and Accra Agenda for Action on the effectiveness of development aid at the territorial level, the National Coordination Committee and the Territorial Working Groups have a substantial influence on the principles of alignment, ownership and harmonization.

The NCC and the TWGs contribute to the effectiveness of development aid because they generate national and territorial ownership: they are mechanisms that enable partner countries to exercise effective authority and coordinate development
policies, strategies and actions. The NCC and TWGs contribute to territorial ownership because it is the governments—at their respective levels—, who head these spaces. In addition, these mechanisms permanently promote the strengthening and development of planning capacities and decision making; they also generate more ownership by the territorial authorities.

Both the NCC and TWGs facilitate the alignment of international cooperation —donors and allies of decentralized cooperation— with the national and territorial development strategies, institutions and procedures, while also harnessing their support. They facilitate the alignment of international cooperation because they are the structures where the territory’s needs and development priorities are identified and because implementation is carried out with the complementary support of cooperation partners. The operational structures of the ART Initiative at both the territorial and national levels contribute to more harmonized, transparent and collectively efficient actions of international cooperation, since these spaces facilitate coordination between international actors that operate in a given territory.
Local Programming Cycle: an instrument of alignment to national and territorial priorities
UNDP’s ART Framework Programmes in Latin America are equipped with instruments that facilitate alignment to national and territorial priorities.

During the international seminar “Implementation of the ART Methodology in Latin America”, the Local Programming Cycle (LPC) was discussed as a key instrument to align national and territorial priorities; this chapter will present the LPC. In the first part, the objectives and implementation process of the LPC in the territories will be detailed. The second and third sections will respectively refer to its functions and members. Lastly, LPC results will be presented, in addition to its achievements and limitations.

The Local Programming Cycle is the territorial process that allows planning, prioritizing, implementing and monitoring the action plans for territorial development in a concerted way. Therefore, local priorities are decided upon in a participatory manner while aligning them with national and local policies. Under the leadership of the Territorial Working
Groups, this process facilitates the inclusion of different local, national and international actors in this concerted planning exercise.

The LPC is an essential element of UNDP’s ART Framework Programmes because it facilitates managing international cooperation through the identification of territorial development priorities.

The seminar’s thematic working group that focused on ‘instruments of alignment with national and territorial priorities’ was composed of UNDP specialists —representatives of the Framework Programmes ART-REDES Colombia, ART/UNDP Ecuador and ART GOLD Dominican Republic and of its Regional Center in Panama.

At the governmental level, national government representatives from Argentina and Ecuador participated in the group, in addition to Colombia’s local governments —the Governorate of Nariño and Municipality of Pasto— and Ecuador’s Carchi Province. The team was complemented with a representative of the Canadian Cooperation.

**Objective of the Local Programming Cycle in the territories**

The Local Programming Cycle aims at identifying the territory's development priorities through joint work and concertation among actors, allowing for local and national articulation in planning processes. Moreover, the LPC facilitates the alignment of international cooperation with development priorities identified by the territory’s actors.
Functions of the Local Programming Cycle in the territories

The LPC adopts an integral approach to the territory’s development by focusing on its potentialities in terms of human, institutional, economic, cultural, environmental and social resources. Its implementation process and inner functioning are specific to each Framework Programme: it is all about a flexible methodology that adapts to the territorial dynamics. Although it is not possible to coin a standard methodology applicable to all of UNDP’s ART Framework Programmes in Latin America, there are still principles and general phases that were adopted by all Programmes at the startup phase of the LPC in the territories.

PROMOTING PROCESSES INSTEAD OF PROJECTS

UNDP’s ART Framework Programmes in this region share the view that one of the LPC’s main functions is to promote development processes instead of isolated projects. From a process perspective, the Programmes’ intervention is planned comprehensively, promoting an articulation process that is based on the political, social, cultural, economic, historical and environmental complexities of each territory.

STRENGTHENING PLANNING PROCESSES

The Local Programming Cycle facilitates territorial planning processes based on the capacities and potentialities of each territory. Existing planning processes need to be taken as a reference, whether through active development plans or by referring to previous experiences from which lessons learned can be drawn. Likewise, in case planning structures in the territory do exist —at the local or intermediate level— work should be carried out within these structures, to avoid duplicating actions.
The Local Programming Cycle contributes to the territory's integral planning and promotes decentralization through its local communities and public, social and private actors. It is a tool to articulate territorial planning because it aims at formulating the «Territorial Priorities Document» in a participatory way, as part of the territorial planning system. To do this, the TWGs' technical teams and the territories' sectorial representatives elaborate the document taking into account existing planning processes and prioritizing the thematic sectors or general guidelines of territorial planning. This process is also done in a participatory manner, whether through meetings with the TWGs, extended working groups, assemblies or inter-disciplinary committees.

17 In this document, a series of project-ideas are jotted down to be promoted with the support of the Programme’s international partners. This ensures the alignment of international cooperation with territorial development priorities, since the document takes into consideration existing planning and prioritizes the thematic sectors or general guidelines of local development.
COMPLEMENTARITY AND ALIGNMENT OF INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION

The Local Programming Cycle contributes to the complementarity and alignment of international cooperation at the territorial level, for it facilitates a concertation and participation process aimed at prioritizing the territory’s development demands and needs. These priorities complement each other and are aligned with the economic and technical support of international cooperation.

The actors and networks of decentralized cooperation mobilize economic and human resources, good practices and technical, technological and organizational innovations in favor of these development priorities. It is worth noting that these actions take place in the framework of the territorial planning instruments.

CAPACITY STRENGTHENING AND DEVELOPMENT

The Local Programming Cycle has the mandate to create and strengthen capacities through joint and inclusive planning. It strengthens the identity of the actors involved in local development as well as their capacities, hence articulating successful practices and the acquisition of new knowledge. Moreover, the LPC’s capability of adapting to the various territories and to local and national timings contributes to generate capacities that are tailored to the specific needs of the actors. TWGs strengthen their technical skills with the elaboration of the «Territorial Priorities Document» and the creation of shared concepts of local development.

PROMOTION OF THE GENDER EQUALITY APPROACH

Gender mainstreaming is promoted by the LPC not only during the planning phases but also throughout the whole management and evaluation processes. In the first place, the LPC facilitates the incorporation of the gender approach as a cross-cutting issue of planning; this ensures that territorial representa-
tives will include the issue within their development priorities, i.e. in the projects to be implemented. Second, the participative processes of the LPC include women’s groups in the programming and prioritization phases, ensuring their participation and reaching results associated to gender equality.

In addition, the LPC creates measurement and monitoring mechanisms for those projects prioritized by territorial actors where a gender approach is applied; it also facilitates formulating and identifying gender indicators. This strategy is combined with a specific monitoring of achievements in this area.

**FACILITATING A HUMAN DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY**

The Local Programming Cycle facilitates planning based on an integral human development approach. The LPC conducts a territorial analysis: strengths, opportunities, threats and weaknesses. The deep understanding and analysis of the territory prevent interventions or solutions that are merely sectorial and specialized, for they take into account the development planning of each and every territory.

**STEPS FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE LPC IN THE DAJABÓN PROVINCE ART GOLD DOMINICAN REPUBLIC PROGRAMME**

1. Organization of the territorial management mechanism (municipal and provincial working groups)
2. Organization of the headquarters and basic logistics for the implementation of activities.
3. Organization of thematic, inter-institutional working groups.
4. Agreement on the Territorial Working Plan (i.e. the Territorial Priorities Document).
7. Monitoring and evaluation.

Source: «Presentation of the Province of Dajabon case in the Dominican Republic: Local Programming Cycle» (by Martina Benedetti), page 6.
Participation of actors in the Local Programming Cycle

The Local Programming Cycle promotes the active role of local governments and strategic territorial actors.

TERRITORIAL WORKING GROUPS

The Territorial Working Groups are the mechanism through which the LPC is implemented. Without an effective functioning of these groups, it would be impossible to achieve an integral planning of territorial development. This is why TWGs are strategic to the LPC: they promote the integral management of territorial development and further the analysis, programming and systematic management of the different components of development.

In addition, TWGs are the ideal concertation space for decision-making processes, for they are in charge of discussing and approving the territory’s development priorities, jointly with an extended group of local actors.

TERRITORIAL GOVERNMENTS

The leadership of the territorial governments is the main starting premise of the LPC, just as for the Territorial Working Groups. Without the governments’ active commitment it would not be possible to initiate planning and management tasks. The governments' leadership and their clear understanding of the Programmes' objectives will have an impact on the level of territorial ownership and on achieving a more effective and integral planning of their territories.
REPRESENTATIVES OF THE NATIONAL GOVERNMENT IN THE TERRITORY

Directorates and/or ministerial representations at the local level.

ACADEMIC SECTOR

Universities or research/training centers present in the territory.

LOCAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AGENCIES

These will facilitate local economic development strategies in the processes and initiatives identified during the LPC.

EXISTING DIALOGUE AND/OR PARTICIPATION PLATFORMS

Provincial forums, territorial planning councils, provincial management groups or development committees.

THEMATIC EXPERTS

Specialists in the various thematic issues addressed by the Framework Programme in the territories, e.g. conflict, human rights, economic development and the environment, among others.

CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANIZATIONS

Organizations representing ethnic communities, women, youth, migrants or workers, among others.
The Local Programming Cycle strives to ensure women’s institutional representation and leadership; therefore, it includes women as institutional representatives and/or women’s committees and organizations, ministries for gender equality (where they exist) and governmental entities in charge of gender. Together with these associations, the LPC promotes the joint construction of public policies and programmes for gender equality, at the territorial and national levels.

COMMUNITIES

The direct participation of communities is facilitated, i.e. that of citizens interested in taking part in their territory’s planning.

LABOR UNIONS AND THE LOCAL ENTREPRENEURIAL SECTOR

Chambers of Industry and Commerce and investment agencies, among others.

INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION ENTITIES PRESENT IN THE TERRITORY

Donors, United Nations agencies and decentralized cooperation partners.

The LPC was carried out in the Pasto municipality as part of the process for the elaboration of the “Municipal Development Plan and the International Cooperation Strategy”. 87 institutions participated in the Working Groups, among which:

DEPENDENCIES OF THE PASTO MAYOR’S OFFICE:
Office for International Affairs, Agriculture Secretariat, Local Development Secretariat, Health Secretariat, Education Secretariat, Culture Secretariat, Social Welfare Secretariat, Community Development Secretariat, Town Council Office, Youth Office, Gender Office, Pasto Sports, Corpocarnaval and Empopasto.

UNIVERSITIES: Mariana University, San Martin University and Nariño University.

INTERNATIONAL ACTORS: UN Women, UNFPA, UNDP, UNHCHR, UNICEF, WFP, OCHA, IOM, Oxfam, RET Foundation (Refugee for the Education Trust), Save the Children and the Norwegian Council for Refugees (NCR). Representatives of civil society, NGOs, foundations and guilds.

Source: «Presentation of the ART-REDES Colombia case: Local Programming Cycle» (by Eugenio Estupiñán), page 8.
Some particularities of the Local Programming Cycle’s Functioning

Although UNDP’s ART Framework Programmes share common functions in the startup phase of Local Programming Cycles, in some contexts of Latin America the Framework Programmes have developed specific strategies adapted to each territory’s reality in order to achieve an effective programming cycle.

**LPC WITH A FOCUS ON ETHNIC DEVELOPMENT AND PEACE: ART-REDES COLOMBIA**

Nariño is one of the most vulnerable departments because of the presence of armed groups, the increase in illicit farming and intensification of inequalities. Moreover, this department is characterized by a highly ethnically diverse population, which has led the Framework Programme to promote ethnic development for black communities and the indigenous reservations. In this department, the Local Programming Cycle encourages the inclusion of the different ethnic communities in ethnically oriented development plans. The LPC facilitates direct work with political authorities and representatives of existing ethnic groups. This ensures the inclusion of vulnerable groups through the integral planning of the territory.

Results of the Local Programming Cycle

The Local Programming Cycle is a process that facilitates planning in the territories, generating concrete results such as the «Territorial Priorities Document», one
of its main outcomes. This document crystallizes a commonly shared definition of human local development as well as the territories’ strategies and priorities. Likewise, this instrument gathers a series of project-ideas to be promoted with various cooperation actors.

The identification and prioritization of development priorities to be presented to international cooperation partners are a result that strengthens the TWGs, for it articulates the three planning levels: local, national and international. In addition, it achieves ownership and localization of planning processes.

**IMPLEMENTATION OF THE «TERRITORIAL PRIORITIES DOCUMENT»**

**Joint actions with international cooperation**

The «Territorial Priorities Document» should be a tool that is shared and acknowledged by all administrative levels; an instrument that aligns international cooperation contributions, hence increasing the cooperation flow in support of social investments and economic development. It also allows managing the resources of international cooperation in view of implementing project-ideas and contributes to mobilize additional support from cooperation agencies to co-manage resources.

Through the National Coordination Committees and the Territorial Working Groups, UNDP’s ART Framework Programmes also contribute to the dissemination of this document among international cooperation organizations; they are invited to participate, through meetings, fairs and other specific initiatives. As for ART’s International Services, they also disseminate the document, presenting and sharing it with potential donors and partners of decentralized and bilateral cooperation.
Monitoring and evaluation

The Local Programming Cycle facilitates the creation of monitoring and self-evaluation tools for the actions foreseen in the LPC in a specific period. The LPC evaluation does not signal its closure; it is rather a permanent reflection that allows correcting implementation errors that might have occurred along the way. There is no established frequency for the LPC renewal, although it is the TWG’s responsibility to define the lifespan of the LPC’s products and results and to update it in accordance with the Territorial Planning System.

IMPLEMENTATION EXAMPLES OF THE «TERRITORIAL PRIORITIES DOCUMENT»

The documents of territorial priorities present a series of project-ideas to be promoted by the territory’s local and national actors, with the support of international partners. The thematic issues and/or general development guidelines prioritized by the territories are part of the existing planning system. Here below are three implementation cases that exemplify these documents’ dynamics in different contexts.

Priority guidelines for the integral development of the Carchi Province (Ecuador)

The planning exercise leading to the elaboration of the Priority guidelines for the integral development of the Carchi Province (the equivalent of the «Territorial Priorities Document») was carried out in a concerted and participatory manner with territorial, national and international actors. It expresses the territorial actors’ will; it takes into account the opportunities, challenges and intricacies of human development in the Carchi Province. The established priority guidelines are incorporated and aligned with the planning system and contribute to the objectives of the local, cantonal, provincial, regional and national development plans; they are also in line with the MDGs.
The Carchi Document of Priorities is multilayered. The first level integrates the priority action lines to achieve territorial development. The second level identifies the provincial level project-ideas falling within each of the priority action lines. Last, the cantons involved in the ART/UNDP Ecuador Framework Programme—Mira, Montúfar and Tulcán—prioritize the cantonal project-ideas, aligning them to the priority action lines.

Cooperation priorities for the Historical Center of Havana (Cuba)

The document «Priorities for International Cooperation»\textsuperscript{18} shows the guidelines that resulted from the planning process in this territory and aims at facilitating the interaction of local and national actors with international cooperation. The guidelines are based on the Community Strategic Planning and are inserted in the Municipal Strategic Planning. This process has been elaborated with a high level of participation and concertation, of both the community and public institutions.

These priorities, to be used by international cooperation, are articulated at various levels. On a first level the thematic guidelines are established; on the second, the strategic focus action points are defined and integrated in the thematic guidelines; finally, the projects to be implemented are prioritized.

The Pasto Municipality Strategy of International Cooperation (Colombia)

The \textit{Strategy of International Cooperation of the Pasto Municipality} aims at being its «presentation card». It seeks to achieve world recognition for its strengths at the

PRIORITY GUIDELINES FOR THE INTEGRAL DEVELOPMENT

Carchi Province

**Strategic Focus 1**

**DEMOCRATIC GOVERNANCE AND SOCIO-INSTITUTIONAL STRENGTHENING**

**Project Idea**
Planning and territorial organization at all levels
Support the construction of development plans and implementation of a territorial planning system which is articulated with all levels of government (provincial, cantonal and parochial), focused on citizens’ participation and gender equality.

**Strategic Focus 2**

**TErrITORIAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND DECENT WORK**

**Project Idea**
LEDAs with an intercultural and gender focus
Create a local economic development agency that contributes to strengthening small and medium enterprises and supports «entrepreneurial youth» in sectors such as production, marketing, technology and industrialization.

**Strategic Focus 3**

**HUMAN RIGHTS AND CITIZENS’ SECURITY**

**Project Idea**
Strengthening the Provincial Observatory of Citizen’s Security and Peaceful Coexistence
Strengthen the recently created Observatory of Citizens’ Security, through capacity-building for civil servants, improving equipment and promoting the definition and application of appropriate public policies.

**Project Idea**
Parochial cultural centers (Montufar Canton)
Implement a pilot plan in a cantonal parish endowed with adequate infrastructure to operate a capacity-building center to attract and motivate the cultural and human development of its inhabitants. In addition, organization and strengthening processes will be developed to promote citizens’ participation, culture and education.

**Project Idea**
Fund for heritage preservation (Montufar Canton)
Take advantage of the status of National Cultural Heritage of the historic center of San Gabriel so it recovers the existing architecture in the traditional constructions, and turn these sites in commercial and touristic locations through a financial fund.

**Project Idea**
Citizens’ Security (Tulcan Canton)
Support a dissemination strategy on human rights, peace culture and peaceful coexistence and security of the Canton through coordinated institutional actions, with the objective of promoting citizens’ security.

**Project: STRENGTHENING LOCAL CAPACITIES TO IMPROVE THE QUALITY OF LIFE IN THE HISTORICAL CITIES OF ECUADOR**

**Participating entities:** Coordinating Ministry of the Natural and Cultural Heritage (MCPNC), National Institute of Cultural Heritage (INPC), Municipality of Montufar, ART/UNDP Framework Programme Ecuador, Tecnalia Foundation and Basque Government.

Photo: Church in the heritage city of San Gabriel, in Montufar.
### Strategic Focus 4
**Human Mobility and Local Integration of the ‘Refuge’**

**Project Idea**
**Strengthening the volunteering system**
Strengthen volunteering to support the ‘refuge’ through promoters in the Youth House of Crachi and development of inter-culturalism.

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### Strategic Focus 5
**Environment and Natural Resources**

**Project Idea**
**Management of basins and micro-basins**
Improve the management of basins and micro-basins with a sustainability and local economic development approach through a geological study of the usage of soil and the promotion, support, implementation, and improvement of irrigation systems from a capacity-building and infrastructure perspective.

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### Strategic Focus 6
**Basic Social Services**

**Project Idea**
**Education Sector**
Capacitate special education teachers and specialized education professionals

**Health Sector**
Support municipalities to raise environmental awareness related to differentiated waste collection, namely at the rural level

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**Project: Strengthening Inter-Cantonal Public Management in the Municipalities of the Rio Mira Basin**

**Participating entities**: Mira municipal governments, Espejo, Bolivar, Pimampiro and Urcuqui, Rural Development Programme of the Economic and Social Inclusion Ministry (PRODER-MIES), ART/UNDP Ecuador, Diputacion of Cadiz, Andalusia’s Fund of Municipalities for International Solidarity (FAMSI).

**Project: Improve the Quality of Life and Health of the Elderly in the Mira Municipality**

**Participating entities**: municipal government of Mira, ART/UNDP Framework Programme Ecuador, Municipality of Tavernes de la Valldigna, Valencia Funds, Municipality of Lasarte-Oria (Basque Country) and Basque Government.
RESULTS OF THE LOCAL PROGRAMMING CYCLE
HISTORICAL CENTER OF HAVANA – PDHL / CUBA

PRIORITY GUIDELINES FOR THE INTEGRAL DEVELOPMENT OF HAVANA'S HISTORICAL CENTER

STRATEGIC FOCUS

Endangered Heritage

PRIORITIZED PROJECTS

Support the Marti Theater restoration
Support the Segundo Cabo Palace restoration
Support the old Las Teresas convent
Support the restoration of the Science History Museum

Heritage: traditional craftsmanship

PRIORITIZED PROJECTS

Support the creation of the Sciences and Technology Cultural Center.
Support the creation of a gallery to exhibit the works of territorial artists
Support the extension of the La Habana Radio station Programmes
Support the bio-archeology laboratory of the Archeology cabinet

Appraisal and dissemination of cultural heritage

PRIORITIZED PROJECTS

Support the creation of the Sciences and Technology Cultural Center.
Support the creation of a gallery to exhibit the works of territorial artists
Support the extension of the La Habana Radio station Programmes
Support the bio-archeology laboratory of the Archeology cabinet

IMPLEMENTED OR ONGOING PROJECTS

Project: CREATION OF A TRAINING SCHOOL IN HAVANA, WITH TOLEDO.
Participating entities: Toledo Municipality, Havana city's Historian Office.

Project: II GRADUATE COURSE ON HISTORICAL CENTERS, HUMAN DEVELOPMENT, LOCAL ECONOMY AND GENDER APPROACH.
Participating entities: Andalusia Fund of Municipalities for International Solidarity (FAMSI, as per Spanish acronym), Florence Committee, PDHL/UNDP Cuba.
political, economic, social, environmental and cultural levels, thereby increasing its opportunities to be part of the international arena in a strategic and organized way. Through its strategy, the Municipality intends to present itself to international cooperation agencies and governments as a partner that is able to support international efforts and committed to reinforce its development capacity, with the support of donors.

The document has been developed by the Pasto Municipality in collaboration with public and private actors, civil society and the academic sector; it is also linked to the Municipal Development Plan 2008-2011, which is formulated and is carried out in line with national and international priorities and takes into account the objectives of the National Development Plan: «Community State-Development for All (2006-2010)», the National Strategy for International Cooperation (2007-2010), the Millennium Development Goals (2000), the Development Objectives established in the Paris Declaration (2005), the Nariño Departmental Development Plan Adelante Nariño (2008-2011) and the Accra Agenda for Action (2008).

Its cooperation strategy is articulated as follows: municipal thematic focus issues are established, to which action guidelines are incorporated; within these guidelines, the prioritized programmes to be implemented are identified.

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RESULTS OF THE LOCAL PROGRAMMING CYCLE
ART-REDES COLOMBIA PROGRAMME

INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION STRATEGY OF THE PASTO MUNICIPALITY

GUIDELINE

Strengthening the creation of a gender-oriented public policy

Prioritized Programmes

- Generate training processes in leadership, public management and territorial planning from a gender perspective.
- Capacitate and train the population to enable participation in the State’s political and administrative life, with enough autonomy for decision-making.

GUIDELINE

Supporting the mechanisms of attention to the displaced population

Prioritized Programmes

- Design and implement the Unique Integral Plan for the attention to the forcibly displaced population.
- Institutional strengthening of the 7 and 8, Attention and Orientation Unit to displaced population.

GUIDELINE

Strengthening actions geared towards peace, security and citizens’ coexistence

Prioritized Programmes

- Strengthening security strategies and implementation of actions aimed at citizens’ coexistence.

GUIDELINE

Strengthening child and youth participation processes and mechanisms

Prioritized Programmes

- Design and implement Child, Adolescence and Youth public policies.
- Participatory budgeting, municipal council of youth and mass media.
The Local Programming Cycle and its Contribution to aid effectiveness at the local level

One of the ways in which the LPC contributes to the effectiveness of development aid is the promotion of multilevel articulation. The Local Programming Cycle enables articulation between the territorial and national levels because:

- It promotes the articulation of the territories’ development priorities with national development plans and international cooperation strategies.
- It enables the articulation of municipal and regional planning with the national development guidelines.
- It stimulates national learning from the local level; national planning becomes more effectively articulated with local planning because it takes into account the local planning initiatives and processes.
- It facilitates the active participation of civil society, the academic and private sectors, vulnerable groups (e.g. women, indigenous population and peasants), thereby improving citizens’ inclusion.
- It stimulates territorial alignment with national strategies for the achievement of the MDGs.
- It favors ‘national-territorial’ articulation through the participation of national actors in the Territorial Working Groups, in addition to the ‘territorial-national’ articulation through the presence of territorial representatives in the National Coordination Committee. This enables the territorial work plans to be articulated with national policies and budget programming.

Likewise, the Local Programming Cycle is articulated with the international level, because:
- It promotes the participation of international actors in the territory; these accompany the planning and implementation processes of local development priorities.
- The municipalities’ and regions’ international affairs offices (where they exist) are involved in the LPC, which generates higher institutionalization and international projection.
- It facilitates the dissemination of the «Territorial Priorities Document» with international cooperation partners, thereby promoting a horizontal working relationship.
- With the support of UNDP’s ART International Services, the LPC promotes the mobilization of cooperation actors interested in supporting the products of the planning process.

The Local Programming Cycle contributes to aid effectiveness at the local level because it manages cooperation based on the territories’ demands, as a complementary response by multiple actors. The alignment principle is crystallized with the integration of the LPC in national and local programming cycles: it actually becomes an instrument that interlinks territorial priorities with international actions.

The Local Programming Cycle is a methodology rooted in the territories, thereby promoting aid effectiveness at the local level. This process directly contributes to the principles of ownership, alignment and harmonization captured in the Paris Declaration.

Concerning alignment, the LPC contributes to aid effectiveness at the local level because it offers an operational framework to link priorities with planning; this enables a real and verifiable alignment of international cooperation. The «Territorial Priorities Document» presents a series of project-ideas that facilitate the complementary support of donors and partners to the Framework Programme.

The Local Programming Cycle also furthers harmonization, as it facilitates common agreements in relation to the use of the diagnosis and joint programming by
cooperation actors present in the same territory. This can contribute to simplify cooperation procedures and thereby to reduce workload, thanks to a joint and transparent evaluation system. The institutional legitimacy of the United Nations facilitates harmonization of international actors at the local level.

The LPC’s contribution to territorial and national ownership is furthered by the participative role of the territorial and national planning systems. The planning and management promoted by the LPC generate territorial ownership, as the departure point for this cycle are the National Development Plan and the territorial development plans, thereby creating ownership mechanisms for local management. Moreover, the LPC bases its work on the territory’s existing structures: it recognizes, respects and takes part in ongoing processes. Because territorial actors become the owners and partners of their own development, UNDP’s ART Framework Programmes appraise and favor the diversity of actors, whether local, national or international, increasing the actions’ impact thanks to the complementarity of financial resources.

Achievements and limitations of the Local Programming Cycle

ACHIEVEMENTS

- The LPC has generated satisfactory local and national articulation, promoting concerted processes corresponding to the demands of territorial and sectorial agendas.
- The planning process has facilitated local ownership by actors from different levels and institutions.
The LPC has generated a shared work culture of concerted decision making, by promoting the creation of a mentality of joint planning and programming.

It has facilitated territorial interaction with international cooperation, enabling the latter to align itself with processes planned at the territorial level.

Thanks to a better understanding of the territory, the programming process achieves high rates of mobilization and rational use of local and national resources.

It promotes a common vision of territorial development.

It strengthens the planning and programming systems foreseen by existing legal frameworks in the countries.

The «Territorial Priorities Document» allows to bring the planning system closer to the management and implementation of concrete operational projects.

LIMITATIONS

In some cases, the LPC needs more technical efforts and time to achieve articulation between territorial and national planning.

In some contexts, there is no political will to initiate and/or strengthen planning processes.

It is necessary to increase harmonization between international cooperation actors —multilateral, bilateral and decentralized— to improve alignment with priorities identified at the territorial level.

The LPC allows the development priorities of countries in the South to have a structured presentation and to be validated in a participatory way; however, it would be useful to have a similar instrument to reflect the quality and potentialities of decentralized cooperation.
The conclusions of the present systematization are the result of a critical analysis of the discussions held during the international seminar «Implementation of the ART Methodology in Latin America»; the methodological reflection focused on identifying common elements and criteria shared by UNDP’s ART Framework Programmes in the region and on the particular elements that these have developed in their respective implementation contexts. Nonetheless, it was not possible to obtain sufficient elements to establish a solid methodological base for all the issues analyzed; in some cases, a number of issues were not thoroughly considered and/or addressed in the course of the participants’ discussions.

The conclusions take into account all these factors and seek to underscore the main results obtained from the Framework Programmes’ methodological implementation and to draw attention to other elements that need to be strengthened if a more consistent and solid methodology is to be reached.

The systematization’s main results are synthesized below:
A methodological base for UNDP’s ART Framework Programmes in Latin America was established.

The information analyzed in this systematization constitutes an important input for the construction of an integral methodological proposal by the ART Framework Programmes in Latin America. This is the first effort to structure a methodological proposal that is able to articulate implementation experiences in the region. Indeed, this systematization has managed to identify the Framework Programmes’ common elements and particularities that enable the complementarity and articulation of actors in development processes as well as their alignment to the priorities established by the host countries’ territorial and national authorities and whose respective contexts influence implementation.

More precisely, the methodological mechanisms analyzed refer to the implementation, structure and functioning of: the National Coordination Committee (NCC), the Territorial Working Groups (TWGs) and of the Local Programming Cycle (LPC). These operational structures, a feature of UNDP’s ART Framework Programmes, strengthen the functioning of established mechanisms, thereby achieving a better impact of cooperation, effectiveness of development aid at the local level, the promotion of South-South cooperation and strengthening gender equality and women’s empowerment.

The working methodology proposed by the seminar allowed reaching focused results.

The working methodology proposed by the seminar's organizing team facilitated dialogue between participants: it managed to combine the experiences of participants coming from very diverse realities—geographical and institutional—and to appraise the diversity and particular wealth that each and every Framework Programme has developed in its own implementation context.
Clear elements on the work of the National Coordination Committee were established.

The exchange between participants allowed establishing clear parameters and identifying the similarities and differences between the various Latin American NCCs in terms of objectives, main functions, composition and contribution to aid effectiveness, as well as their achievements and limitations.

However, in this regard, it is suggested that more information be gathered to achieve a clear identification of the phases followed by each Framework Programme to constitute their respective NCCs, as this particular issue was only addressed in very broad terms.

The main mechanisms used by the Territorial Working Groups and their contributions were outlined.

The debate that took place within the various committees allowed to identify the main mechanisms used by the region’s Territorial Working Groups. This systematization has defined and clearly reflected the objective, common functions and particular elements of the TWGs; their main members, achievements and limitations. Moreover, some elements to be taken into consideration during the establishment of the TWGs have also been presented.

It is recommended that this issue be further analyzed and that additional information be requested from UNDP’s ART Framework Programmes in the countries, to allow for a clear identification of the phases and criteria in the process of establishing TWGs.

Lastly, this exercise has showcased how UNDP’s ART Framework Programmes Programs, through the TWGs, put the principles of aid effectiveness into practice at the local level.
Important reflections on the implementation of the Local Programming Cycle in the territories were carried out.

The Local Programming Cycle was identified as an essential mechanism of the ART methodology in Latin America. Although its implementation varies in relation to each particular context, it was possible to identify its common functions and particular elements, the actors that participate in its implementation process, expected results, achievements and limitations, in addition to its contribution to the principles of aid effectiveness: harmonization, ownership and alignment. However, due to the scarcity of available information, there is insufficient conclusive data on the implementation phases or other elements to be considered in each phase.

Taking the above into account, it can be said that although important generalizations on the methodological implementation of UNDP’s ART Framework Programmes in Latin America were achieved, some issues need to be strengthened and included in future debates on the ART methodology.

The following has been suggested:

1. **Strengthen the incorporation of the gender equality approach and women’s empowerment.**

   In the course of this systematization, several experiences were presented on how local and national actors promote a gender equality approach and women’s empowerment in the territories. However, although this issue was discussed, a deeper analysis is needed of the specific mechanisms that will allow strengthening the gender approach within the ART methodology. Likewise, it has been strongly suggested to create spaces where the experiences and methodologies followed by each Programme in this sector can be shared.
2. **Promote spaces for the exchange of knowledge in the framework of South-South Cooperation.**

This is a priority issue within the ART methodology and its Framework Programmes in Latin America because it contributes to reach its objectives and to exchange innovative solutions aimed at tackling the challenges of development processes. This issue was addressed in all of the seminar’s spaces and allowed to identify potential tools, methodologies and thematic sectors to be shared with other territories. However, although there are ongoing exchanges in some countries, these experiences are not sufficiently disseminated. Therefore it is recommended to increase the efforts aimed at disseminating these experiences and to create effective and structured exchange spaces for actors from the South.

3. **Systematize the experience of ART’s Framework Programmes in promoting local economic development.**

The actors who have participated in ART Framework Programmes are convinced that local economic development is a necessary and valuable path that contributes to the territories' human development. In Latin America, this approach is mainly promoted through the creation and strengthening of Local Economic Development Agencies (LEDA) in the territories. Since this was not the main topic of the event, it was not thoroughly discussed.

Several encounters and exchanges on this particular issue are held in the region; therefore, it is suggested to systematize the various and numerous experiences and methodologies developed by the Framework Programmes in the region to facilitate further exchanges with the countries.