



# **For the South and by the South: Assessing social innovation projects in Colombia with the community.**

**Natalia Torres Di Bello**

Aalborg University, Copenhagen  
Sustainable Design, MSc. Engineering.

**Title:** For the South and by the South: Assessing social innovation projects in Colombia with the community.

**Education:** Sustainable Design, MSc. in Engineering  
Aalborg University, Copenhagen

**Project period:** 7th of February – 3th of June 2022

**Supervisor:** Andres Felipe Valderrama Pineda  
PhD Construction, Production, Civil Engineering and Transport, Technical Associate Professor, Design for Sustainability / Department of Planning / The Faculty of Engineering for IT and Design / Sustainable Design and Transformation

**Collaborator:** Daniela Gómez  
Despacio | <https://www.despacio.org/>



---

**Date:** 03.06.2022

**Student:** Natalia Torres Di Bello

**Study number:** 20201802

**Contact:** natalia.torresdibe@gmail.com

**Pages:** 44 normal pages  
38 pdf pages

## About the author.

The author of this paper is a Colombian woman from an oil-rich region who, early in her life, identified the gap between rights and privileges in her territory. From her request, she studied industrial design, emphasising designing projects for contexts. After graduating from the University Jorge Tadeo Lozano in Bogotá, she had the opportunity to work in the same institution to develop projects with a social focus from the department of university wellbeing. She designed a couple of projects for the community of victims of the armed conflict and scholarship holders and disadvantaged groups under the institution's standards. She reported merely quantitative reports that never considered the direct feedback from the community for which they were designed. It is here that the question of the role of the community in this type of project first arises. After some time, she decided to come to study for this master's degree, always keeping in mind that *nuestro Norte es el Sur* (García, 1994).

## About the thesis

This thesis is the result of 4 months of work. The author was able to delve into the complexities of her country to explore alternatives to the structures where communities are passive actors. During the research development, there were several limitations inherent to remote-transoceanic research.

The most significant challenges were the geographical distance, time difference, public information access, and approaching communities participating in projects. However, it was possible to investigate the dynamics of these projects through a mapping of relevant actors and interviews with representatives of different groups that allowed the researcher to complement the information gaps throughout the project.

This project analyses the current state of projects financed by international organisations and the power dynamics established in these projects. It begins by contextualising the reader about the complexities of the territory and its riches.

It then sets the conceptual framework starting with definitions of sustainability and the design approaches. After that, the project unravels the concept's influence on projects developed under the triangular cooperation and establishes actors' networks and relationships.

Triangular cooperation helps achieve the SDGs collaboratively between facilitator partners, pivot partners, and beneficiary partners (OECD, 2019b). Following this, the information gaps are filled with interviews with different actors where the community provides relevant insights into the concept. Hence, the research findings are discussed to subvert power relations by evaluating the project Meaningful cycling actions with a gender focus in Bogotá with the community of women cyclists in Bogotá. Ultimately, conclusions and closing remarks finalise the research.



## Acknowledgements

This work would not have been possible without the participation of the different actors who are part of the universe of international funded social innovation projects in the Colombian territory.

I want to begin by thanking Professor Cesar Galán and Cristiam Sabogal, with whom I discussed this work several times. To Carlosfelipe Pardo (Despacio), Vladimir Hernández, Juliana Montenegro, Daniela Gómez (Despacio), Maria Catalina Ramirez, Nicolás Pacheco (PCIS) and Diana Quintero and Laura Pava who contributed greatly to this work from their experience.

I frequently exchanged ideas with my fellow master's students, Carolina, Siri, Anna, Camilla, Śliwa, Reyes and Tekla.

My parents, Sandra, and Rosendo, for their support, my sister Daniela for always believing in me, Alejandra and Tiffany for cheering me up, and my partner Mathias for his unconditional encouragement and admiration for my work. Finally, thanks to my supervisor Andres Valderrama Pineda, who patiently guided me through this process with his vast experience and knowledge.

## Abstract

This research aims to propose a complement to assessing social innovation projects financed by international entities in Colombia. Those projects aim to develop strategies focused on the sustainable development of communities that governmental actors have forgotten. Various academic articles, project reports and evaluations, publicly available documents, and interviews with academics and experts in the field have been analysed through the conceptual lens of Designs for the Pluriverse by Arturo Escobar (2018). The analysis focuses on the role of evaluation in implementing projects in communities and the role of communities in measuring the success of projects. The findings demonstrate a lack of frameworks that actively involve communities in the design of project evaluations. As well as the diversity of standards among the different organisations to evaluate the projects developed in the territory. The concept aims to facilitate community participation in the negotiation of indicators suitable to assess the project's success. This research contributes to existing knowledge on metrics of social development in the global south and criticises the default approach to development.



Table of content

0 Context ..... 0

1. Introduction..... 1

2. Conceptual frameworks..... 5

    Sustainability..... 6

    Social innovation..... 7

    Sustainable development..... 8

        The OECD and the triangular cooperation for sustainable development..... 8

    From colonialism to development..... 10

    Design for the pluriverse..... 12

3. Methodology..... 14

    Desk research..... 15

    Semi-structured interviews..... 16

    Notes on ANT for designers..... 19

    Staging negotiation spaces..... 21

4. Analysis and Discussion..... 22

5. Conceptualization..... 30

6. Conclusions and Final remarks..... 36

References..... 39



# 0. Context

# 0. Context

Located in the northern part of South America, Colombia is an urban country with 77.1% of the population living in municipal capitals, 15.8% in rural areas and 7.1% in populated centres (DANE, 2018a). Most of the population lives in the Andean region, followed by the Caribbean and the Pacific Coast (DANE, 2018c). Of the approximately 48,258,494 Colombians (DANE, 2018b), almost 5 million live under the control of armed groups, and 6.7 million are dependent on humanitarian aid. The economic recession caused by the pandemic has influenced food insecurity that has particularly affected indigenous communities, internally displaced persons and 1.8 million Venezuelan refugees, mainly in northern Colombia (Dehghan, 2022).

Colombia is a biodiverse and multicultural country, represented by its natural regions divided administratively into 32 departments. Each territory is particular to its characteristics, landscapes, customs, gastronomy, and music (PROCOLOMBIA, 2022b).

Colombia is a country of cultural and economic regions and in terms of the varied forms and intensity of armed conflict and crime (Rettberg et al., 2020). Since its consolidation in the decade of the '50 (Pizarro Leongómez, 1996), the armed conflict has caused a series of acts of war such as selective assassinations, attacks on the population, terrorist attacks, damage to civilian property, forced disappearances, massacres, landmines, improvised explosive devices and unexploded ordnance, recruitment and use of children and adolescents, kidnapping, and sexual violence. (Centro Nacional de Memoria Historica CNMH, 2022)

As well as complexity, Colombia's territory encloses a variety of resources. With a strategic location bordering the Caribbean and Pacific Seas, Colombia exports a variety of commodities. The country's most significant exports include crude oil (USD 7.46 billion), coal briquettes (USD 4.13 billion), coffee (USD 2.54 billion), gold (USD 2.34 billion) and refined oil (USD 1.55 billion), exporting mainly to the United States (USD 9.55 billion), China (USD 2.8 billion), Ecuador (USD 1.51 billion), Panama (USD 1.43 billion) and Brazil (USD 1.28 billion) (Alex Simoes and Hidalgo, 2022).

In 2021, Colombia received USD 9.4 million in foreign direct investment. The countries with the highest investment were the United States at USD 1.7 million, Spain at USD 1.4 million, the Netherlands at USD 1.4 million and Switzerland at USD 1.1 million (Banco Nacional de la Republica, 2022). With its extractive dynamics, Colombia has enjoyed sustained economic growth since the early 2000s (Niño and Martínez, 2016).

Yet, corruption is closely associated with extractive institutions, as in resource-rich countries with such institutions, corrupt elites organise rent-seeking structures to enrich themselves. Corruption and its distortions in public spending limit aspects of human development such as education and health. (Urbina and Rodríguez, 2022)





# I. Introduction

# I. Introduction

According to the Colombian Presidential Agency for International Cooperation, APC-Colombia, in 2021, the country received USD 884 million for 254 projects under the Official Development Assistance (ODA) framework defined by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) (Cancillería de Colombia, 2022). However, there is no clarity or detail about how these resources are managed in the APC reports. The website makes public some reports of hearings in 2020, but there is no information about the projects and actors (Agencia Presidencial de Cooperación Internacional de Colombia, 2022). With this amount of resources dedicated to the country's development, one would think that the impact of these unspecified projects would boost the country to a developed state.

Nevertheless, the latest economic news, human rights reports and sustainable development reports show that the situation in Colombia is stagnated (Human Rights Watch, 2021; The World

Bank Group, 2021; The Sustainable Development Report, 2022). The main goal of the APC is to manage, guide and technically coordinate public, private, technical and non-reimbursable international cooperation received by the country (Cancillería de Colombia, 2022). An additional task is to execute, administer and support the channelling and execution of global cooperation resources, programmes and projects, following foreign policy objectives and the National Development Plan (Cancillería de Colombia, 2022). Under bilateral cooperation and Official Development Assistance (ODA), the country receives financial donations or loans and technical knowledge transfers (Cancillería de Colombia, 2022).

To determine a plan to execute these resources, the National Strategy for International Cooperation (ENCI) 2019-2022 was drawn up at the end of 2018 (Barberi, Nicholls and Rodríguez, 2018). The first axis of this strategy follows the 2030 agenda, followed by a second one focused on Legality, Entrepreneurship and Equity and, thirdly, an axis of the triangular cooperation (Barberi, Nicholls and Rodríguez, 2018). Among the 30 cooperation partners are the United States, Germany, the European Union, Switzerland

and Spain as the most prominent donors (Cancillería de Colombia, 2022). In addition, organisations such as Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ), United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and Agencia Española de Cooperación Internacional para el Desarrollo (AECID) have a presence in Colombia and working within the framework of triangular cooperation, evaluate the projects implemented in the country based on the six criteria proposed by the OECD which are “relevance, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability” (GIZ, 2018; Global Partnership on Effective Development Cooperation, 2019; OECD, 2019b).

Some research projects seek to include the participation of communities in projects using co-creation and co-design methodologies to develop frameworks more appropriate to the Global South context (Loboguerrero et al., 2018; Pardo Martínez and Alfonso P, 2018; BALL et al., 2019; Reina-Rozo, Thompson and Leal, 2019; Osorio-García et al., 2020; Reynolds-Cuellar and Delgado Ramos, 2020). While there have been criticisms about the rigid international frameworks such as those used by the EU in Colombia (Ioannides, 2019), these frameworks



prevail under the triangular cooperation. The variety of reports on these projects implemented under the triangular cooperation framework in Colombia indicates that although they are aligned with sustainable development objectives, they are not connected to the ways of measuring them (OECD, 2019a). These reports also show that although community participation is relevant at the implementation stage when evaluating the project, the beneficiaries are reduced to answering questions designed by external experts (Lucia, 2009; Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit, 2022; USAID, 2022). Similarly, ex-post evaluations lack to review the current status of projects implemented 5 or 10 years ago in Colombia (Appendix Interview GLZ Evaluation Unit).

Consequently, this master thesis seeks to address the research question:

***How can social innovation projects implemented in Colombia with international funding be actively assessed by the community?***

To answer the research question, documents, reports, web pages, and articles are reviewed to account for the different actors and their power relations. The missing information is complemented through semi-structured interviews and resources provided during the interviews. This information is visualised through Actor-Network Theory (ANT) and analysed under the conceptual framework of sustainability, sustainable development, and critique. Designs for the Pluriverse will support conceptualising a new order in project evaluations to subvert power relations. To be close to a social innovation project in Colombia, collaboration is established with Laura Daniela from Despacio and its project Significant cycling actions with a gender focus in Bogotá. This will allow observing closely the dynamics of the project and the possibility of collaborating with the community participating in it.

# Taking Despacio's project

I. Introduction

Despacio is an organisation in Colombia developing social innovation projects in Bogotá and Cali. It should be noted that Despacio's mission is a responsible exercise of collaborative projects with the community. In other words, the organisation's actions and the people in charge move away from the default of how development projects are typically executed. Similar to Parque Científico de Innovación Social (PCIS-Uniminuto), both organisations seek to develop projects for and with the community.

Despacio is a research centre established as a non-profit organisation in 2011. Its main objective is to promote the quality of life in cities through applied research that challenges intuition (Global Youth Coalition for Road Safety, 2022). Despacio focuses its work on three themes: city, energy and climate. Despacio's team includes senior and junior professionals with extensive experience in road safety, sustainable mobility, urban planning and gender and transport. Many are young people committed to promoting safer and more sustainable mobility.



# Significant cycling actions with a gender focus in Bogotá

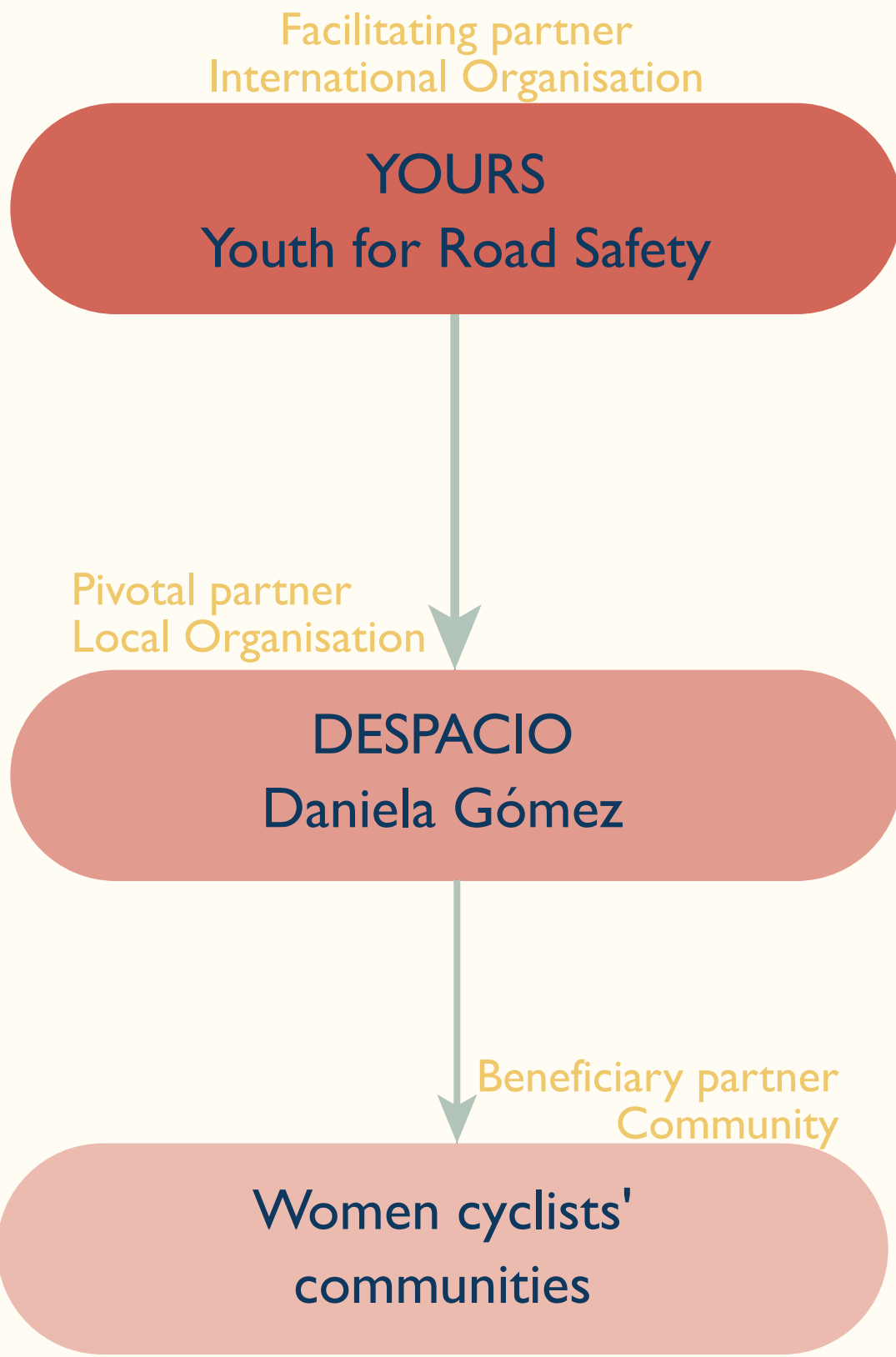
**Goal:** To train and raise awareness among citizens on safe cycling from a gender perspective.  
5.000 euro Grant by YOURS - Youth for Road Safety

Objectives

- 1. Conduct a training and interaction session for at least 30 participants (women and men) on safe cycling, gender equality and the importance of road safety and active mobility from a gender perspective.
- 2. Develop two symbolic actions in the street to make visible the need for safe cycling with a gender perspective in the city.
- 3. Develop actions to monitor and discuss cycling needs in Bogotá (Number of responses obtained to construct the index + number of participants/number of decision-makers participating).

Indicators

- number of citizens participating
- number of women participating
- number of places in the city that are perceived as risky for cyclist in terms of road safety and street sexual harassment. Number of demands identified
- number of participants
- number of prizes awarded
- number of responses obtained to construct the index
- number of participants
- number of decision-makers participating





### 3. Methodology

A first approach to how social innovation projects financed by international organisations in Colombia are implemented and evaluated is presented to propose a way of starting from evaluating these projects to subvert the relationships of relevance in this dynamic. To outline the panorama, the research began with documentary research that allowed us to identify the roles and significance of the project and the information gaps between them. This missing information was complemented with semi-structured interviews. Finally, through the lens of Notes on ANT (Storni, 2015), the power relations between the different actors are analysed. This analysis allows conceptualising the starting point to give the community more relevance and power in the project.

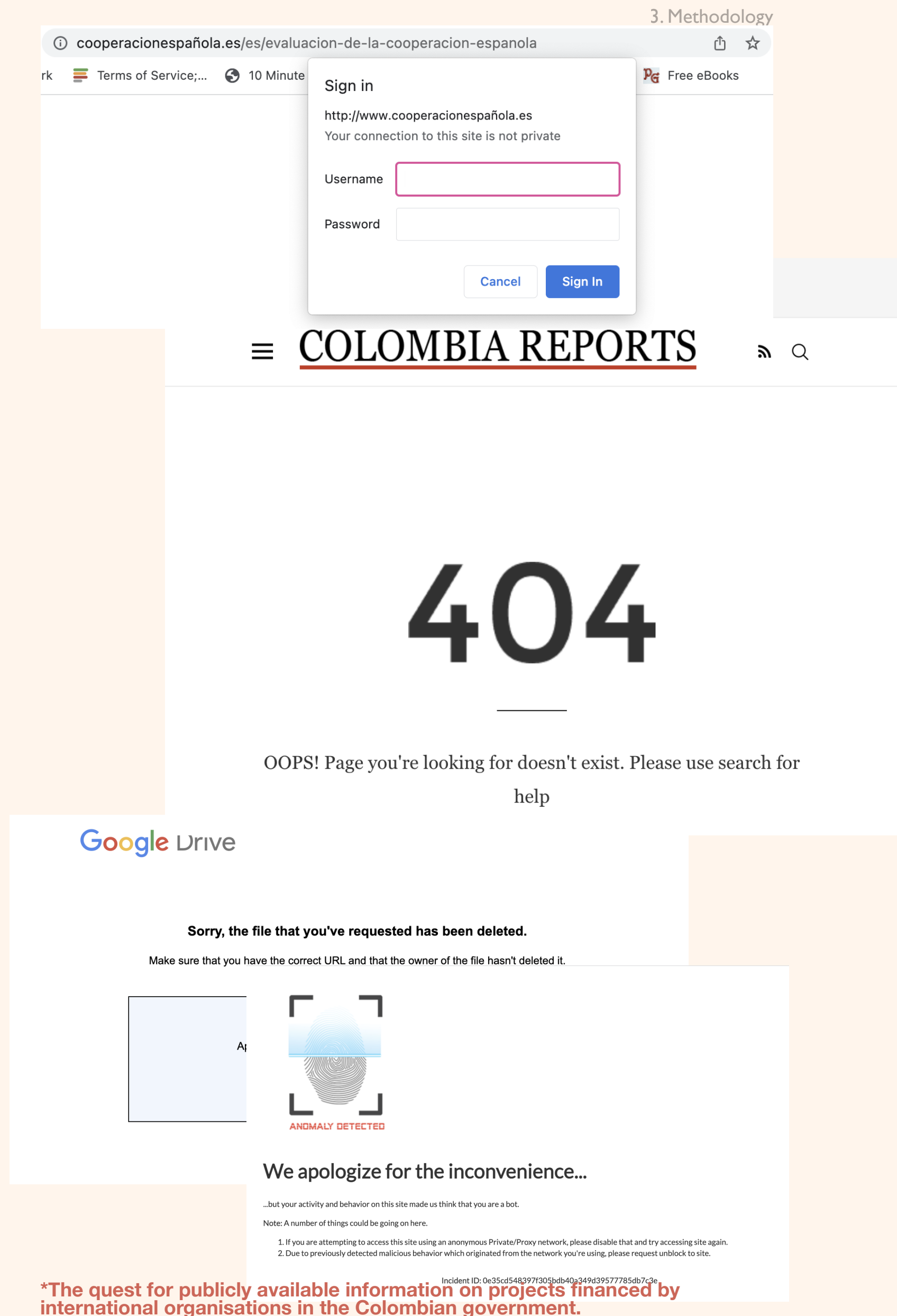
## 3.1 Desk research

During the desk research, reports, websites, and different articles on social innovation projects financed by international organisations in Colombia were reviewed. At this stage, public access reports were vital in identifying the type of projects being implemented in the country and the organisations with the most significant presence in the territory. While official government websites provided official information on government initiatives, information with reports on the money entering the country and how it was spent was not available. To complement the lack of information related to resources from government entities, organisations such as GIZ, USAID, ADA and others provided these figures in reports available on their websites. However, little information was available on the methodologies used to build with communities and their role in the evaluation stage.

This stage formed the basis for mapping the relevant actors in the dynamics and identifying information gaps. Within these information gaps,

there was a lack of data on the phases, timing, methodologies, and roles of the actors in the project. As well as missing definitions between the indicators of success in project implementation and evaluation frameworks to measure the impact/change brought about by the project. However, it did allow the location of relevant roles mentioned in the reports: academia, local organisations, project coordinators and communities. This identification made it possible to track down the actors who could provide the missing information through interviews.

During this process, special attention was placed on research projects in Colombia carried out by local and foreign academics. Similarly, the methodologies used and the percentage of community participation generated in the "solution" were reviewed. The backbone of the analysis is given by the concepts of sustainability, social innovation, sustainable development, notions of development and colonialism to propose Design for the pluriverse (Escobar, 2018) as the most appropriate approach to validate communities.

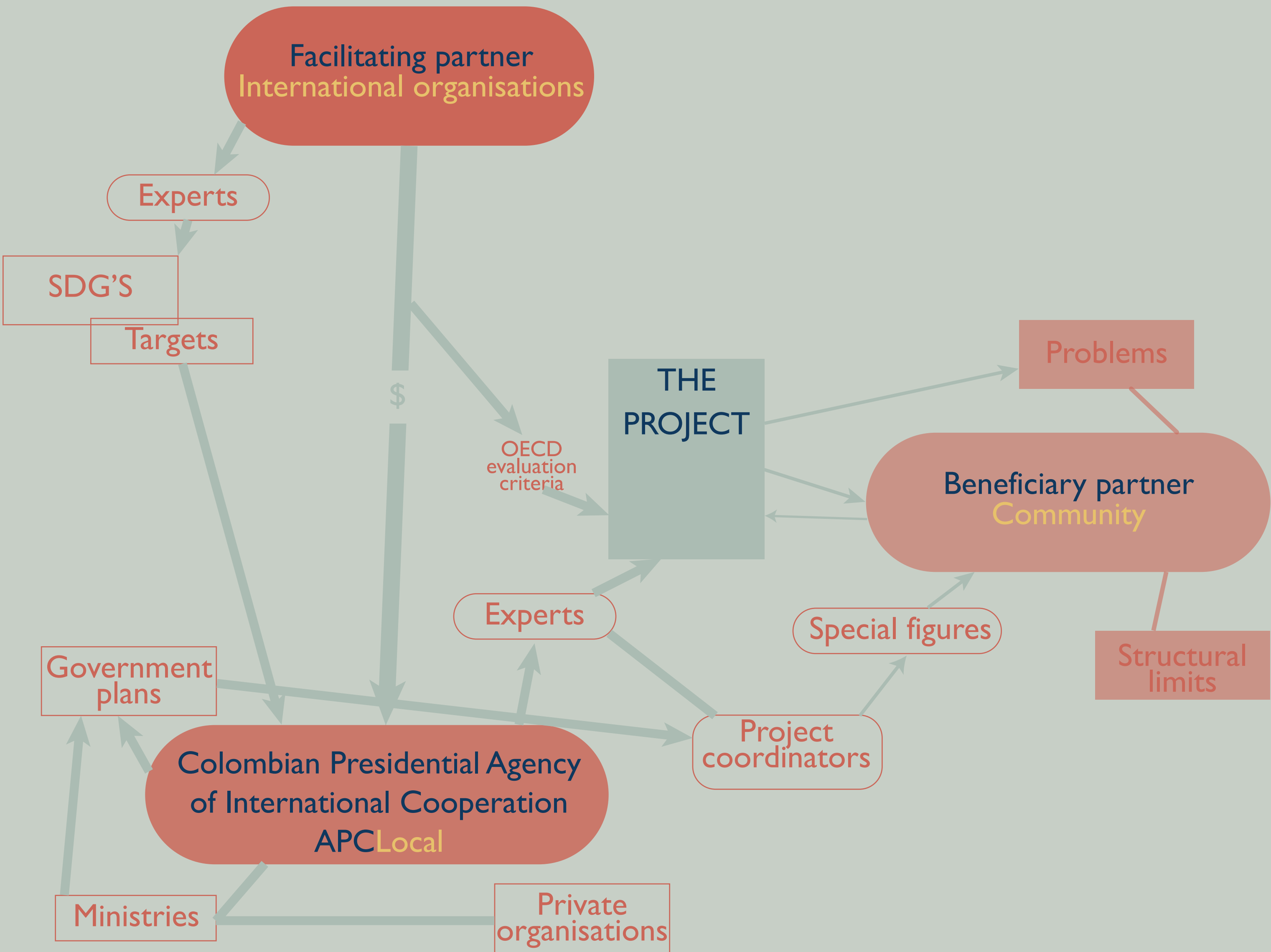


**\*The quest for publicly available information on projects financed by international organisations in the Colombian government.**



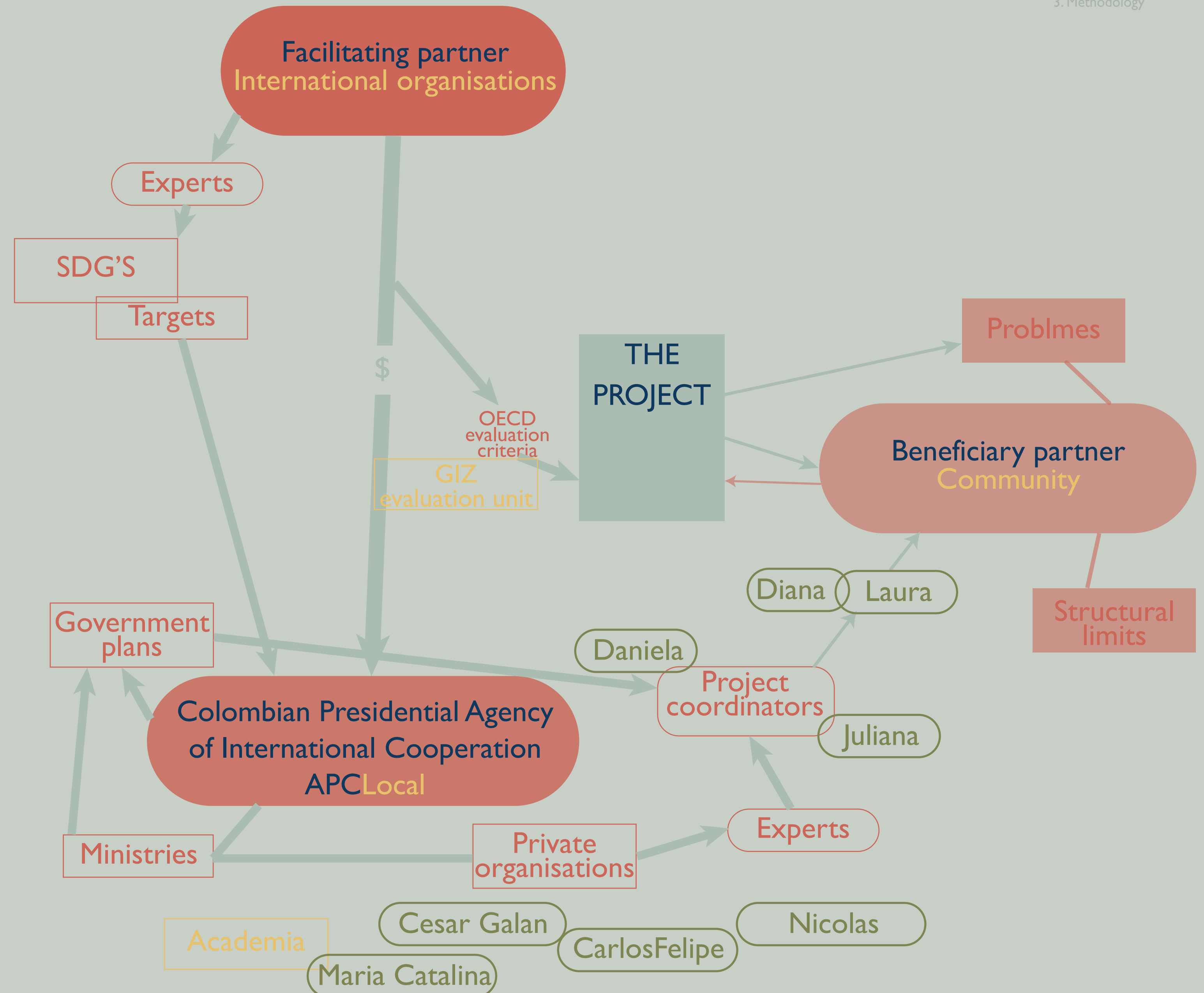
## 3.2. Semi-structured interviews

The main objective of the interviews was to fill the information gaps found during the desk research. Different actors were interviewed to get a complete picture: academia, project managers, the evaluation unit of a foreign organisation, experts, and the community. The ten interviews were conducted between 11 April and 10 May. The questions asked by 8 of them were similar. This table summarises the most appropriate inputs from the interviews discussed in section 4 of this document and the most relevant findings of these interviews. These interviews are organised in the table below. Here you can see the most pertinent information complemented in the annexes.



As well as complementing the documentary research, the interviews provided different perspectives on the dynamics of these projects. Among the most significant contributions were the annotations made by Nicolas Pacheco and Vladimir, as they have been involved in different projects with different organisations, which allows for a more diverse perspective on the nature of these projects.

Correspondingly, the conversations with Daniela (Despacio) allowed for more information on the Meaningful cycling actions with a gender focus in Bogotá project, which is currently being implemented, and relevant information such as the documents submitted to the international organisation YOUTH and its monitoring document. Likewise, Daniela facilitated the conversation with two people from the community who could be interviewed. The interviews with the community participants had a different focus than the interviews with the other actors. They sought to collect the imaginaries and map their knowledge about the project, the relevant actors, and the project results. With both participants, it was possible to carry out an exercise of imaginaries about the project's definitions, limits, and future.



¿?	Cesar Galan	Carlosfelipe	Vladimir	Juliana	Daniela	Nicolas	Maria Catalina	GIZ evaluation unit
General Info	Professor at the National University. Centre for social innovation. Expert in contextual projects and with specific communities in the Colombian territory. Critic of foreign intervention processes and projects executed under populist government campaigns.	Founder of Despacio, non-profit organisation focused on city, mobility and climate. Mainly in research, studies and proposals for the government...improving mobility conditions - Bicycles.	Director of social innovation projects in NARIÑO. Experience working with indigenous communities and rural territories. Has worked with SWISSAID, USAID ASIR-SABA. He has an anarchist position. Prefers flexible organisations.	GIZ Advisor sustainable development projects in the Colombian countryside.The projects try to include Colombian biodiversity and its protection. Working hand in hand with the environmental secretariat.	Coordinator of mobility and youth projects at DESPACIO. She has worked on second versions of projects led by the organisation with foreign funding. She is a political scientist with a focus on public policy for mobility.Inclusion of disadvantaged communities: women, youth and children	works at the Scientific Park of social innovation Uniminuto.He develops different social innovation projects.He is in charge of research.The entity has more than 15 years of experience working with the community.Theory of change.	Professor at ANDES Engineers without borders. Engineering projects and social innovation in the Colombian territory.	This is the unit that evaluates projects implemented by GIZ.The criteria are the same as those of the OECD. They try to report on most of the projects, but they only apply to projects with more than 3 million euros.
How are projects developed?	Most of the projects he advises are projects of university students that aim to solve problems in a specific context through design.There is little collaboration with foreign organisations, however he knows of several projects done with SPAIN. The usual problem, budget	Generally the call for proposals is issued, the problems they propose are reviewed and the project is written in order to obtain the resources.Time is almost always short and there is no guarantee that the project will get the resources.	Foreign organisations have the money and put it at the disposal of whoever can write a project to use it according to the organisation.The project is executed with the community and then a report is given to the organisation on how the money was spent.Justifying.	Generally from a secretariat.She doesn't know it very well as she arrived recently.There is a work plan that requires certain actions with the community and demands participation and figures.	Most of the time there is a project proposal or competition from an organisation.The project is written to achieve the objectives of the competition, implemented and reported on. That there are things that cannot be controlled. Sometimes people's expectations of the project are high.	There are several lines of work.Some projects are focused on developing the capacities of the community so that they are the ones who write the projects. Other projects are done with larger entities such as GIZ and Colombian ministries. There are resources, there are projects.	In collaboration with different communities and students of the universities. Students write a project and develop it in the communities.	They usually work with government departments and ministries because the budgets are so large.And they also work with private entities.Projects are aligned with government plans and under the framework of sustainable development.
What are the challenges of such projects?	From the academy, deliverables, models, objects or artefacts produced with and for the community are reviewed. The reading of the context and the ethical implication of the project. Projects are finished after the grade.	There are some very interesting projects that are difficult to plan because they require the participation of governmental entities.When it is mentioned that the project is to see results in 5 years, people say "by then I will not be here, in this position" and therefore they do not participate in the planning.	That they are done under the ideals of the funder of the territory and not from the perspective of the needs of the communities affected by the project. It is better to do the necessary things than to do them well. Some organisations put many limitations, they do not know the complexities of the territory.	There are many limitations that are not contemplated by those who propose and finance the project and that are big barriers.There are obsolete bureaucratic processes.They are often done in the short term and are not revisited.	There are many limitations that are not contemplated by those who propose and finance the project and that are big barriers.There are obsolete bureaucratic processes.	Some processes take too long or have too many requirements that some people in the community cannot meet.	Negotiate the terms of the projects.That is the most difficult part because those who have the money think they can impose what they think. It generally works well at the national level but it is an arduous process with the institutions.	Generally it is the involvement of communities and the typical challenges of the context.There is also a turnover of people in the entities because those who arrive do not prioritise the projects they have been working on.
How are the projects evaluated? What is the role of the community	From the academy, deliverables, models, objects or artefacts produced with and for the community are reviewed. The reading of the context and the ethical implication of the project. Projects are finished after the grade. The designer is always encouraged to test his proposal with the community, but in the end it is he who defines the evaluation criteria of his product.	International organisations call the shots, they are the ones who determine the indicators of the project. It is a number, they generally measure participation and attendance. There are some organisations that have endless lists of indicators and that makes the process exhausting.	Under the logic of the funder.There are some organisations that are more flexible than others, that seek to ensure that projects are implemented ethically. There are other organisations that demand too many indicators that have nothing to do with the real scope of the projectIt depends on the project, the project leader and the funder.They are the ones who frame the feedback from the community. Often it is non-existent and rather superficial.	Monitoring the activities carried out with the communities. Recording attendance. Periodic reviews In reality very little.Sometimes they are asked for their opinion but it is the executor who defines how the activity is involved and it is generally passive.	That there are things that cannot be controlled. Sometimes people's expectations of the project are high.	The communities are very important to us.When it comes to evaluation, there are some requirements that the donor asks for, where participation is the most important. It is very quantitative so there are things that get lost in the process.	According to the indicators proposed by royalties. It depends on the project. But they always try to involve community feedback.	There is a clear OECD framework.When the project has more than 3 million euros, a third party is contracted to evaluate the project that was done.they are in charge of interviewing people.We give them guidelines that are aligned with the OECD and the Ministry of Economy. There is accountability.
What is the problem with the way they are evaluated?	That does not go beyond what it should go.That is to say, it is a numerical figure that excludes many factors that could be inferred in a project with communities. It is done when the project is finished and never seen again.THERE IS NO ONE OF ITS OWN.	This often does not say much about the project. There is data that is not taken into account.There is not much time.That it is often a strenuous and bureaucratic process.	They do not represent the community, they just say how the money was spent and the results are centred on figures.There is nothing good in a country that only looks at figures.That has standards that do not serve as a baseline	They often do not represent the community. That most of the time they demand things that are not relevant to the communities.That it all boils down to a number that in reality only justifies an expense.	That it does not allow the projects to evolve.That only if you are aware you can incorporate feedback from previous versions into the parameters of some projects.	The evaluation doesn't say anything, it doesn't measure real change and it doesn't have the information needed to know if something worked or not.At least not in a clear way.	That doesn't say much about the project.They are just figures that are then abandoned.	Costs.
Insights	Context of competition over collaboration. Difficult to access information related to impact. Difficult to quantify change.There is a fear of failure.	Changes of government determine the pace and focus of projects.No one has agency over projects beyond the position they hold at the time. It would be good to have an internal evaluation that allows the organisation to evolve its projects.	There are projects that are classified as successful because of the way in which the resources were spent but not on the real function that this project brings to the community.EXAMPLE LIBRARIES FOR PEACE. Some communities know the funders and often reject it CASE USAAID. The issue of sustainability is a VWestern invention that seeks to respond to the problem that they caused.	There are bureaucratic processes imposed by the institutions that limit the development of the project. That there are normal limitations of the Colombian territory that require the flexibility of those implementing the project to adapt.	interested in evaluating the project she is coordinating.	Communities are very changeable. Government entities almost always change the figures and this makes it difficult to follow processes. PCIS uniminuto is currently trying to find a tool that will allow it to measure the change that its projects cause.	Whoever puts up the money sets the evaluation parameters.CRITICA	The money that the GIZ handles is tax money and therefore the accountability part is crucial. There is no unit specialised in evaluating projects in the context. Everything is reviewed in Germany.



¿?	Diana Quintero	Laura Pava
General Info	She is an advisor to the Bici in Bogotá, bringing awareness of infrastructure complications. She has worked with DEPAC. She has a classic bicycle club/collective. Before this she worked in graphic arts. DANIELA CONTACTED HER, as she is a bike councillor from another locality. For the first mapping of the project: Something about sustainable mobility. There was a congress about women on bikes. Dissatisfied, nothing happened with that project. There is a project with classic bicycles, there is no concrete long term.	Freelance journalist, content generator for social networks. She found out about the Despacio project because she is part of an initiative called metedele pedal (it emerged in pandemia) to promote the use of bicycles in Bogotá.
What is sustainability?	Sustainability is something that is maintained in the long term. Sustainable mobility, that they let us ride and that they can sustain this means of transport. That they are recognised as road actors.  A project is something that we want to carry out. A project is thought out, organised and implemented. The success of the project is seen when it has an impact on the population/community at which it is aimed. That it achieves the objectives, marking the main idea addressed to the community.	Sustainability is a process that seeks to reduce the carbon footprint as much as possible. It has different aspects, using the maximum sustainable resources without polluting.
What is a project? What are its phases?	A project is something that we want to carry out. A project is thought out, organised and implemented. The success of the project is seen when it has an impact on the population/community at which it is aimed. That it achieves the objectives, marking the main idea addressed to the community.	A project is an idea, which takes shape when the different aspects are organised. Ideation and ends with action
What is the objective of the project?	Visualise unsafe spots for women cyclists (objective of the day) Do something that will help women to improve safety and infrastructure issues.	The idea is to map the areas of interest for women. We want to analyse the different corridors in order to find opportunities for improvement, what are the problems of these sectors. TO COMPLEMENT STUDIES AND LITERATURE ON CYCLING MOBILITY. BASE STUDY FOR DECISION MAKING.
What are the relevant actors? What are the percentages of relevance?	Relevant actors of the project: Organisations, companies, public entities to generate guarantees for cyclists. Cycling community, councillors, SECRETARIAT OF MOBILITY, road stakeholders. In a project there should be no power but geniuses. People are key because without them there is no action.	Cyclists (broad description) Initiatives and collectives Despacio Decision-makers (Secretariats) Private actors, who can contribute to the improvement of mobility.
What is the sustainability of the project?	That it can be sustained over time. That everyone can get around by bike, that my granddaughters can ride bicycles in peace and quiet.	Cycling is a sustainable alternative. How many trips by bike are made by women (increase or decrease) Cleaner way of getting around. If travel times are improved.
What would be the success of the project, how would you measure it?	That they have the support of more entities. Because together we can take more actions. Alliance between DESPACIO and secretariats to transmit the things identified by cyclists. Engage allies. Taking into account the limits: Other key actors, resources.	Organise interventions by interest (Categories). Which is more feasible. A mixed study, quantitative and quantitative. Women's experiences, decision makers do not ride bicycles, they are not women. Take this to policy makers. STRUCTURAL CHANGE. SOCIAL CHANGE. DISSEMINATION OF THE PROJECT
Future versions of the project why?	This type of project should be eternal, it is important to have pedagogy. It only ends when society reaches the point of development. Example of the Netherlands or Medellin.	This depends on budgets. Future versions of the project. Replication of the project in different places not only in Bogotá but also in the country.
What are your expectations?	The project will be successful only when the changes are reflected in the project. In the future, she hopes that the culture and infrastructure will allow her granddaughter to ride a bicycle in peace. With all the limits of the project, the changes can be seen in 2 years. One way to evaluate this type of project is to do a mock activity (scenario).	The best time to do the evaluation? When it is filmed. It depends on the budget. The best moment is to do this evaluation with the changes of administration. That in one year after the project is launched, the mobility conditions improve. It is people's lives that are at risk if these changes are not made.

# 3.3 Notes on ANT for designers

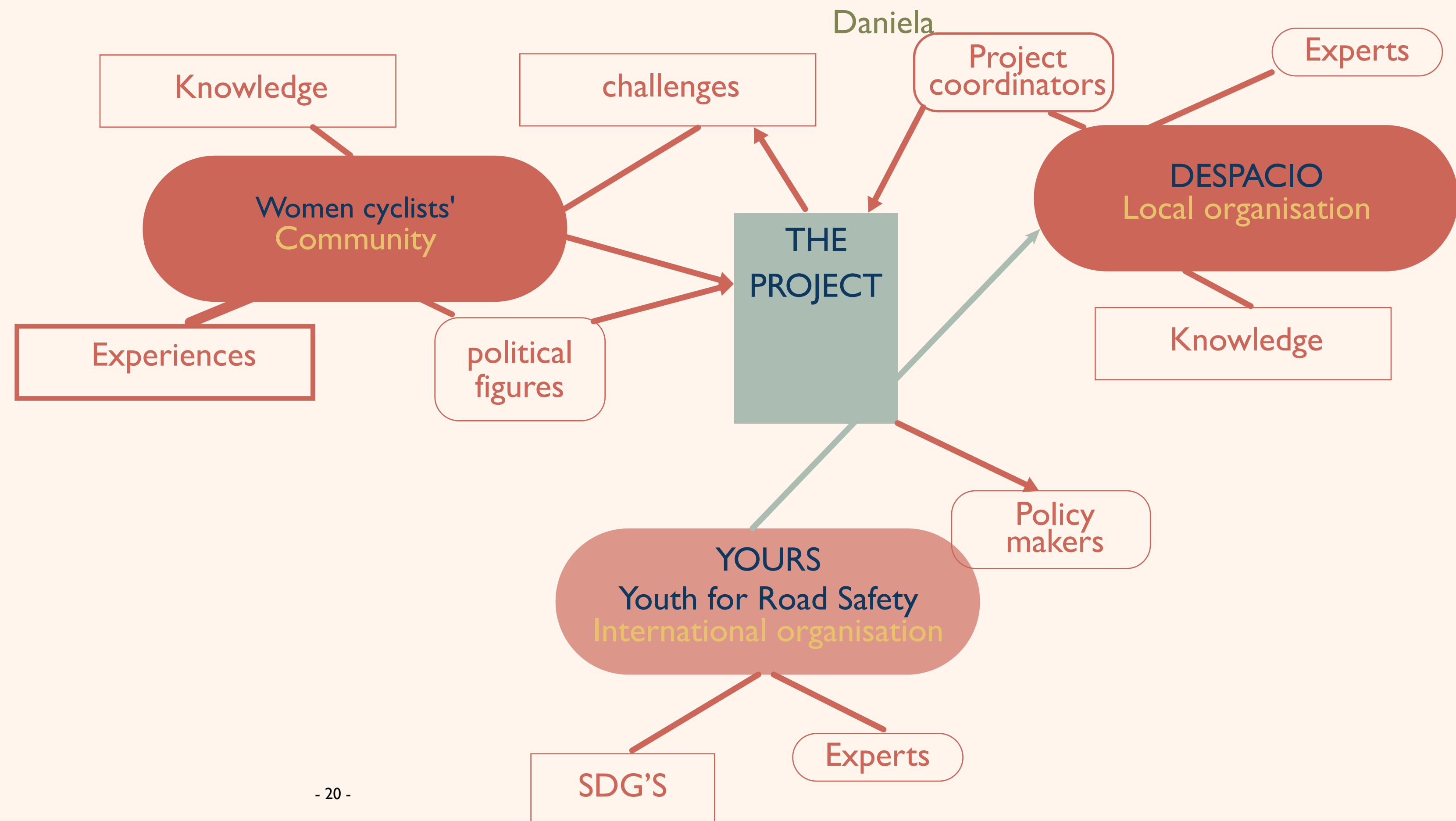
A network of actors, institutions/organisations, and bibliographic resources was built during information collection. In the research phase, the network of actors becomes more complex. For example, reports, articles, and web pages draw the actors involved in social innovation projects financed by international organisations in the project's first phase. The information gaps are then complemented with data and insights that the actors in their roles can contribute to the network. Finally, the web allows us to see the power relationships woven in triangular cooperation and the degree of relevance certain groups have when generating a tangible impact on the actors.

Understanding that these are not isolated elements, the actors were connected according to their ways of influencing one another. Under the Notes on ANT approach, the aim is to observe what these actors become when they define, associate and reinforce each other. (Storni, 2015)

This new approach suggested to the co-designers proposes a visualisation exercise that allows them to make visible and public what they want to redesign in the case of this project, the dynamics established within the triangular cooperation for the development of projects in the Colombian territory. This visualisation of different types of information supports the articulation of different themes and opens up spaces for discussion. This mapping must be ready to complement the multiplicity of actors that are part of the redesign process. Giving the most affected actors a voice to facilitate the articulation of problems, identities, and disagreements through collective annotations should be given priority.

The stakeholder map is left open to experimentation by the community to explore new additions or replacements in a lively way, seeking a different approach to the predominant one. It aims to empower stakeholders to collectively determine what situations, conditions or relationships need to be modified to ensure the project's improvement. However, this process must guard against the influence of normative knowledge, which can make superior judgements about which forms of knowledge should be recognised or eliminated. To avoid this, the

This mapping should facilitate a space for discussion where community actors contribute and adjust the elements according to what they consider relevant. After this, the "experts" can explore what strategies can be used to start using the resources managed under international standards but responding to the community's needs for which they were "intended".



## 3.4 Staging negotiation spaces

To guide the redesign actions that can complement how the projects are evaluated and in line with the prioritisation of the community's voice in this process, an exercise is established to explore the notions and expectations that women have about the Meaningful cycling actions with a gender focus in Bogotá project. The exercise aims to explore and construct a negotiation space (Pedersen, 2020) where both parties can codesign assessment indicators. This first exploration exercise seeks to discuss the images, imaginaries and expectations that the participants have about the project. The initial training has two parts; the first is framed to align the different definitions and perspectives on the project's scope. The second, which is carried out after the first meeting where information about the project is provided, seeks to review how close the notions generated at the beginning by the participants were to those established by the "experts". This aims to build a shared background to discuss and negotiate the terms that should be contemplated in evaluating the project.

The exercise of imagining the evaluation of the project takes place virtually through AHASlides. This platform has a series of questions and visualisation spaces that seek to find notions and imaginaries and brainstorm possible project results. For the second part, the answers obtained in the initial session are circulated to discuss the critical points and spaces that open up due to the solutions. Then, the possibilities of framing new indicators within the project's limits are negotiated with the experts. Finally, the results of this exploration can be reopened at the end of the project to review which configurations are still in place and which need to be updated. This exercise can be carried out in different projects.



## **4. Analysis and Discussion**



There is a disconnect between the concept of sustainability, goals and measurements when implementing projects in Colombia. This disconnection has been implemented by international organisations such as the OECD and those that adopt its evaluation framework, which generates more problems than it intends to solve.

Although the Colombian territory presents many challenges at a geographical and political level (Urbina and Rodríguez, 2022), its location and wealth of natural resources represent an attraction for foreign investment and partnerships for sustainable development (PROCOLOMBIA, 2022). This research does not reject this type of dynamics but criticises the purposes of the action in the Colombian context and how projects are designed, executed, and evaluated. Here the frameworks and guidelines come from entities that do not know the local realities. Although they try to understand the context, they lack the active participation of the affected communities (Ioannides, 2019). The most important findings of this work are transparency and access to information and resources, The disconnection between definitions of sustainability, community urgencies in the projects, and the opportunity to set negotiation spaces to find the appropriate

success indicators with the community.

I. Transparency for access to information and resources.

Access to information related to these projects is provided mainly by international institutions and academic institutions. Government entities and bodies in Colombia do not readily have reports, government programmes with indicators or words on the expenditure of humanitarian aid and other programmes carried out by international organisations (Uribe et al., 2019). This information is not publicly available if government entities have submitted management reports on "large" projects (over 3 million euros) implemented by ministries. (Appendix Interview GIZ Evaluation Unit)

Although international organisations such as GIZ and SWISSAID publish their project reports, there is no clarity about the role of the community in determining the real impact of the project. Since the indicators are constructed, the determinants are vague and are not aligned with any measurement instrument. Additionally, these projects are built to be executed in short time windows (7 months to 4 years on average), and this may be linked to the fact that in Colombia, the change of government brings with it new people in

positions of power and different priorities from the previous government, which slows down ongoing programmes. This limit is contemplated in several GIZ reports where the project's sustainability is linked to the capacity of the project to be maintained over time. Ability sometimes lies with the governmental bodies of the territory and under the budget of the municipality/department. If this is not aligned with budget plans, projects cease

An example that can expose the problem of this dynamic is that of "Libraries for Peace", a project implemented in cooperation between the Ministry of Culture through the National Library of Colombia (BNC) with the Spanish Agency for International Development Cooperation (AECID), the Territories of Opportunity Programme of the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), and the municipal administrations. There are still no reports evaluating the project. Still, according to the Colombian national library's website, the project received 1.3 billion COL pesos (provided by AECID and USAID, both aligned with OECD evaluation standards) to build two rural libraries in the municipalities of El Tambo (Cauca), and Chuguldí, in Samaniego Nariño



(Biblioteca Nacional de Colombia, 2021).

According to Vladimir (Appendix Interview Vladimir), there is a likelihood that the project will not have an evaluation report as the number of resources is not significant. But if this project is evaluated according to the six evaluation criteria of the OECD DAC: relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact, and sustainability. It would have to consider the context in which both territories find themselves. They suffer constant waves of violence and massacres (Daniels, 2020) due to failures in implementing the peace agreement (which has not been a priority for the current government). It is also important to clarify that the payment of library utilities and payroll payments will become the responsibility of the municipalities' administration. Although the media reports give a glimpse of the community's feedback on the project, they do not specify the relevance of the community in the design, implementation, and evaluation of the project.

It remains to be seen whether the libraries will still be in operation in two years and whether their presence will create spaces for peace. It is noteworthy that many of the projects with peace objectives have been neglected by the

government of President Duque (2018-2022) (Sandoval, 2021) because, within his government plan, the priorities have shifted towards economic development issues (infrastructure and energy). This is why "A few months before the end of this government, the National Land Agency (Agencia Nacional de Tierras - ANT) modified an indicator of the Framework Plan for the Implementation of the Peace Agreement to inflate the fulfilment of the goals set in terms of access to land and thus show better results of its deficient management" (Bautista, 2022)

This shows two things; 1. projects financed by international organisations are aligned to the current government plans and are executed within the government's timeframe of 4 years (Appendix Interview Carlosfelipe). This means that projects in Colombia are challenging to design for the long term. 2. Documentation and reporting of evaluations are only done for projects with a high budget (Appendix Interview GIZ Evaluation Unit). The evaluation of projects requires resources, and these are not available.

4. Analysis and Discussion  
2. The disconnect between definitions of sustainability, community urgencies and measurement criteria.

*"Sustainable development policies from the Brundtland report onwards (e.g., United Nations, 2002; 2015) provide a prevalent and influential example of weak sustainability by denying nature's absolute limits and focusing on the positive interaction between social, economic, and environmental dimensions..... Subsequently, initiatives for sustainable development based on weak sustainability would be reformist and iterative and can harmonise with other policies and present markets, as in the search for eco-efficient prices, "green" technologies, or responsible trade" (Haskell, Bonnedahl and Stål, 2021)*

In the Colombian picture outlined by Nicolas Pacheco, Carlosfelipe, Daniela, Juliana Guerrero and Vladimir experiences, each organisation has a different way of evaluating projects. In the case of Engineers Without Borders Colombia (Maria Catalina) negotiations regarding the project indicators are done within Regalias Colombia's framework (Appendix Interview Maria Catalina). Organisations such as GIZ,

AECID, USAID and ADA are governed by the OECD's project evaluation parameters, which define sustainability as "The extent to which the net benefits of the intervention continue or are likely to continue." (OECD, 2019a) This affects how sustainability is perceived in the Colombian context and the lack of weight this concept has when assuring and measuring long-term results. The quantitative response in these reports is predominant. However, it does not establish a basis for knowing the project's shortcomings or clues as to how to overcome the challenges.

Organisations such as the GIZ have an accountability approach as the projects are financed by taxpayers and are therefore aligned to the German Ministry of Economic Affairs frameworks. These frameworks apply to projects with more than 3 million euros. 3 million. This amount is distributed through the ministries in Colombia, and then the details are coordinated with local organisations. Project coordinators write and negotiate project indicators with donors; those with a participatory approach employ co-creation methodologies with the community. This is more of an option than a requirement, as international organisations respond to larger institutions that, in turn,

demand purely quantitative and temporal data.

Within the existing reports, one of the constant challenges is the change of government and how this affects the sustainability of the project. Still, no clues are given as to how this barrier (which is also constant) could be overcome by exploring community autonomy and self-management strategies inherent to social innovation (Vanwambeke, 2015). It is also essential that these reports are done by a consultant (local third party) to examine the project and then generate the information according to GIZ, BMZ and OECD standards (Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit, 2018). Although the GIZ has a presence in Colombia through local experts, the evaluation centre is centralised and does not have experts specialised in the context in which the report is given, nor are there reports of evaluations made years later on the projects evaluated (Appendix Interview GIZ Evaluation Unit)

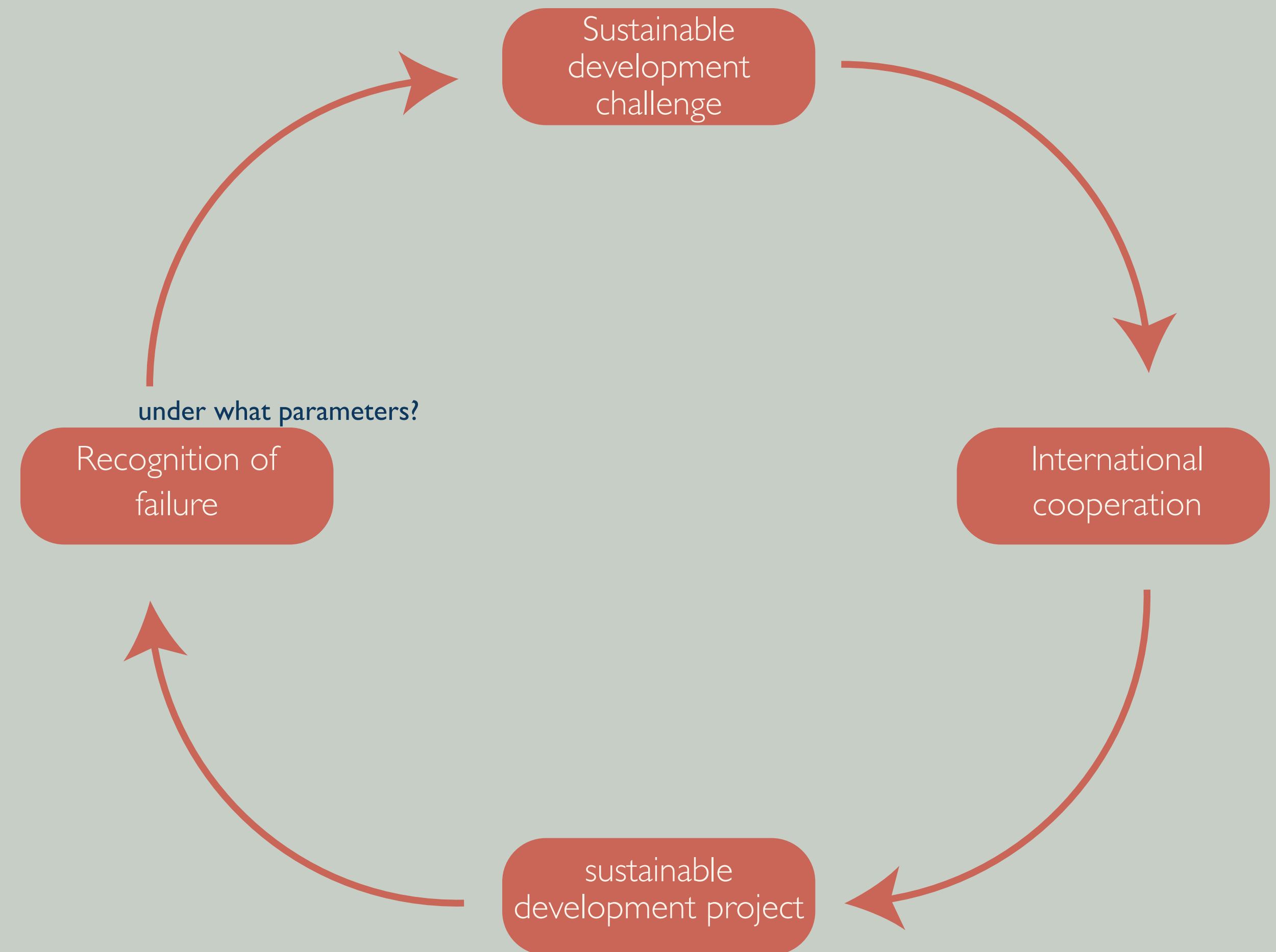
The OECD defines evaluation as "The systematic and objective assessment of an ongoing or completed project, programs or policy, its design, implementation and results. The aim is to determine the relevance and fulfilment of objectives, development efficiency, effectiveness,

4. Analysis and Discussion  
impact and sustainability." (OECD, 2019a) Since what cannot be measured will be challenging to improve, there are different indices to assess the three aspects of the sustainable development of each nation. Among the most used are Ecological Footprint (EF), Human Development Index (HDI), Living Planet Index (LPI), Index of Sustainable Economic Welfare/Genuine Progress Index (ISEW/GPI), Environmental Performance Index (EPI), Environmental Adjusted Domestic Product (EDP), Environmental Sustainability Index (ESI), Well-Being Index (WI), City Development Index (CDI), Environmental Vulnerability Index (EVI) and Genuine Savings Index (GS). However, the Centre for European Economic Research found that these do not comply with the three crucial reporting steps (normalisation, weighting and aggregation), leading to a lack of relevance in policy practice and hampering policy advice (Böhringer and Jochem, 2011). In the case of the Colombian government, for many of the indicators, there is little guarantee of establishing lines of information that would allow data to be collected for comprehensive analysis (under the complexities of the social and political landscape).



Although sustainable development objectives are mentioned in the reports reviewed, there is no apparent connection between these and the evaluation criteria proposed by the OECD. The figures presented in the information go more towards the volumes of participants, beneficiaries and number of actions implemented. This makes it difficult to determine the real impact of the projects. Project coordinators and experts agree that this reporting process is bureaucratic and requires parameters that are sometimes difficult to meet. "One of the indicators was the number of registrations in the chamber of commerce. Being in a rural area, asking people to do this was very complicated, but it was required to be reported". (Appendix interview Juliana). The lack of unification makes it challenging to identify change and generate baseline information. "Each organisation requires different indicators, but they all have the purpose of reporting expenditures and justifying actions taken" (Juliana on the green business project).

This dynamic of the projects for the development of the Colombian territory is similar to The cycle of the "development" gaze proposed by Aram Ziai (2015), which looks as follows based on the information collected and analysed.



Adapted from The cycle of the "development" gaze



The international organisation provides resources that a local organisation acquires that writes the strategy (project) for the development in which the community is the beneficiary; a report is made on the resources spent and the project's limits that generate certain deficiencies that keep the development wheel turning generating dependency.

These dynamics do not solve the most urgent problems of the communities in Colombia. Especially those communities that need this type of project to guarantee their wellbeing because the government is not present. During the different stages of the project (planning, execution, and evaluation), it is possible to see the lack of active participation of the community in all these stages. This is probably associated with the lack of resources (money, money) available to these projects and how the expert approaches the community to investigate and frame the problem.

3. The opportunity to set negotiation spaces to find the appropriate success indicators with the community.

Although most organisations require the inclusion of communities through participatory and co-creation methodologies, the expert ultimately makes the decisions that will affect the community that needs the change.

Actors like Vladimir always try to build the projects with the communities, including the evaluation process. He meets with the community to ask them "what do we need to achieve", which gives him clues to establish measurement indicators with the donor (Appendix Interview Vladimir). He mentions that this is easier when the donor does not have rigid frameworks for the project. This flexibility allows him to create projects more efficiently with indigenous and rural communities. How Vladimir executes his role as a project coordinator is aligned with the South American one, i.e. in all phases of the project, he understands that he is a facilitator in the flow of resources to meet the real needs raised by the community. Within this framework, he prefers to work with flexible organisations and with a non-political approach to aid.

Like Vladimir, the (PCIS-Uniminuto) seeks to establish indicators that allow it to measure the impact and change generated by the projects in the communities it works with. The PCIS has been working on finding a tool to measure the impact of its projects. This motivation is aligned with the quest to develop better projects whose change is sustained over the long term. Recently PCIS decided to opt for the tool "IRIS+", the generally accepted system for measuring, managing, and optimising impact" (IRIS+, 2022) however, Nicolas acknowledges that one of the significant challenges will be collecting the initial data to start mapping this impact (Appendix Interview Nicolas).

The actors interviewed (Experts, project coordinators and academia) recognise a lack of national standards for reporting the objectives and progress of social projects in Colombia. Although many try to map community feedback, they admit that it is not a rigorous exercise. The lack of local frameworks could be related to the fact that the donors define the reporting parameters and that the scope of the resources does not contemplate the evaluation of the project outside these parameters.

In the case of the Meaningful cycling actions with a gender focus in Bogotá project, Daniela has been present in similar versions of the project. She recognises that feedback from the community is key to ensuring better performance in the future (Appendix Interview Daniela). This exercise is empirical and is not recorded every time. Still, the leaders of these versions are attentive to the comments made by the community, which allows them to incorporate these voices in the planning of the next version. It is worth noting that this project is different from the typical triangular cooperation model, as the objective is "Train and raise awareness on safe cycling with a gender perspective." (Appendix Despacio docs). Despacio's project seeks precisely to collect the experiences of a specific group to map the urgencies and communicate them to decision-makers who, by order, are far from the reality of the community they are reporting on. Its funding is small and covers the development of activities and the delivery of the report to decision-makers.

After talking to the two project participants, Diana and Laura, it is possible to determine that although they did not know the project's objective at the interview, they imagined

something similar to what Daniela wrote in brief about the project. Both participants have different definitions of sustainability but identical descriptions of success "that politicians who do not ride bikes know what we experience on the cycle routes" (Appendix Interview Laura – Diana). Laura and Diana recognise many actors relevant to the project's success and identify challenges that could negatively affect long-term outcomes. There is a lack of knowledge of the time frames that such a project may have. However, their insights highlight the clarity and ability to evaluate the project's outcomes. These two women admit the need for a long-term mixed study that allows them to map the changes that have been implemented after the presentation of the report to policymakers makers.

While academia is a Eurocentric institution (Ziai, 2015), research centres could become allies in rethinking and reorganising (Escobar, 2018) the dynamics of internationally funded projects. This could open up the horizons of local knowledge, registering more social innovation projects in territories. Where projects arise from and for the community. Where the community organises itself and, from its autonomy, manages a series of varied resources (money, energy, time and knowledge) to

solve a problem that affects them. Here the role of the specialist, more than an expert, must be that of a facilitator—the actor who puts their knowledge to work for what the community needs. In the case of manocambiada, the designer has no more agency than the community that builds the project; he cannot impose his knowledge. From his reality, which is generally far from that of the community, he only has the tools to facilitate creative processes and learn from new forms of knowledge.

A starting point in building these negotiation spaces would be starting the conversation with community members about what should be evaluated. Research centres, especially those with a design focus, understand the relevance of these exercises to the community. However, time and resources are not sufficient.

When such projects have only quantitative measurements, there are incalculable insights lost in the process, and the feedback from the beneficiary community is lost in numbers and percentages of participation. After all, what can a number indicate without questioning the reasons behind those figures?

If there have been no changes in project approaches in the various GLZ project reports, change of government, project ownership, and so are presented as limits? One would assume that evaluations provide clues to overcome such challenges. After talking to the evaluation department of GLZ, they recognised that the post-project assessment is complex, as it is challenging to try to locate the actors who took part in the projects.





## 5. Conceptualization

After understanding the phenomenon of this type of project and receiving input from project participants Laura and Diana, two approaches are determined to answer the research question. The first is thought within an exploration framework that allows the community to position their expectations and frame them within the project's results. The second is designed to shift the power structures where resources from international organisations serve to strengthen the autonomy of communities. As well as facilitate the development of capacities that contribute to new strategies to solve their needs and contribute to their life projects.

# The first exploration to evaluate with the community.

Understanding that the evaluation is the closing point of the projects and that indicators are not negotiated directly with the community, the researcher proposes an initial mapping exercise of expectations and timelines to deliver results. This exercise is done with all participants of the DESPACIO project. It is essential to clarify that Despacio has the resources to implement the project but not the resources to carry out a detailed evaluation beyond the quantitative report presented at the beginning of this document. Having the shortage of recourses, on this occasion, this exploration has two fundamental requirements; 1. it must take up the minimum amount of time and energy of the team and 2. it must consider the limits of the evaluation itself.

For this purpose, a mini-workshop is proposed, divided into two parts. The first part will take place minutes before the first session of project

activities. This first meeting will be virtually on Friday 3 June at 5:00 pm (GMT-5). The second part of the mini-workshop will take place like a closing activity after the end of the session. This first meeting aims to share information about the project and communicate the project activities with the participants. The reason behind the two-part exploration division into two moments relays on the idea of identifying a pre and a post moment. The pre aims to map the imaginaries. The “post” looks for contrast to discuss how similar or different the two types of actors (coordinators and community) are in the project notions.

This initial exercise seeks to activate a discussion about the expectations and agencies of the project participants. It also aims to create the basis for negotiating indicators for future DESPACIO-led projects. Similarly, it is hoped that this exercise will gain implementation space within other projects. It could work for both parties to agree on the desired outcomes before presenting the project to investors. In the ideal scenario, project evaluation has the potential to become a tool that allows projects to evolve or identify what is not working. More co-evaluation exercises can generate the spaces for negotiation and mapping with communities that could warn of new project

opportunities and new routes for action to improve the livelihoods of project participants. This space can allow for identifying information gaps and diverse forms of knowledge.

In the first part of the exercise, the participants are asked about the project's relevance in their lives, what they think is the project's goal, how they define the timeframe for action and how the expected results at the end of the project are anchored to it. They are also asked to identify the most relevant actors of the project and whose participation could affect the project results. For this first part of the exercise, the participants will have 15 minutes to answer the questions.

After the proposed activity designed by DESPACIO, the second part of the mini-workshop will take place. In this part, the opening questions are "the project will be considered successful when..." and "my agency in the project is ....". After this, the participants have to rate how close they came to their predictions about the project's goal, timing and results. Finally, the exploration ends with identifying the limits of the Project to open a space for discussion about what can be done.

Once this first exploration exercise is over, the answers are reviewed and categorised to find common ground. These answers can account for the participants' expectations and knowledge before starting the project activities. In the same way, it seeks to complement the map of actors identified above. Finally, the most relevant results and findings of the exercise are discussed with the coordinators and sent to the participants with the expectation of reopening this space at the end of the project to examine how aligned were the imaginaries with the actual “results”.

The goal of the project is:

Define	Results	influential actors
Short term		
Medium term		
Long term		
Point the limits		

the project will be considered successful when..." and "my agency in the project is ....".

Super close

How close was my goal definition?

Very different

the project will be considered successful when...

My agency in this project is....



# The pivot towards the subversion of power dynamics

If communities were to evaluate internationally funded projects on their terms, what would be the results of this evaluation?

When the community is seen as an expert on the project, it reorganises the dynamics of these projects. This new order enables the redesigning of the project and presents a solution to stop the cycle of gaze occurring in these projects.

International funded projects will continue to occur in Colombia and, in some cases, are vital for some communities neglected by the government. However, there must be an essential twist to allow the project to generate changes that benefit the community. This is why the community should set the standards and indicators of the project or at least say what worked and what did not. The exercise of imagining with the community what should happen at the end of the project can give clues as to what will work in the long run without relying on international institutions. In other words, when the community defines what should

happen, the results build an independent system that allows the community to exercise its autonomy. This is not to deny that when resources are involved, there is some accountability, but that a set of figures is no indication unless it is complemented by qualitative information.

In the bigger picture, the structures of international funding projects work from the top down. Those who influence the way projects are done are those "developed" who have the resources to guide others towards development. It is proposed to reverse this dynamic, so that project outcomes align with the priorities of a group of people (community) who have been silenced in this process—taking the moment of evaluation to turn towards the reorganisation of powers where the ultimate goal is the wellbeing of the community in harmony with nature. The first step is to recognise that the dynamics established in the South by the North have delegitimised a diversity of knowledge and know-how that now needs to be identified. The second is to make visible other ways of knowing and doing, giving them relevant relevance in a map of actors. Finally, to rethink the roles developed in the projects to accept new orders and facilitate agencies.

Calls for proposals are opened to grant resources to projects in line with the SDGs, and that meet a series of requirements proposed by the donor. The project is written by a local organisation based on a problem related to the SDGs that a group of experts identifies, where community feedback is taken into account. Still, it is the experts who ultimately define the project. If the project meets the requirements, resources are given to this organisation to implement the project, which, once completed, must account for what was done.

A first approach is to prioritise what the community has to say about the project at the first meeting. While prioritising the community from the outset, the local organisation could communicate transparently to the community that it will be working with. There are several resources to carry out activities to pursue a goal. Several requirements are non-negotiable (for now), and some limits frame the project (non-negotiable such as budgets, timelines, and reporting).

To open the project to the community, it is necessary to map all the actors and factors of the project and include components that the expert

could overlook due to its lack of proximity to the problem.

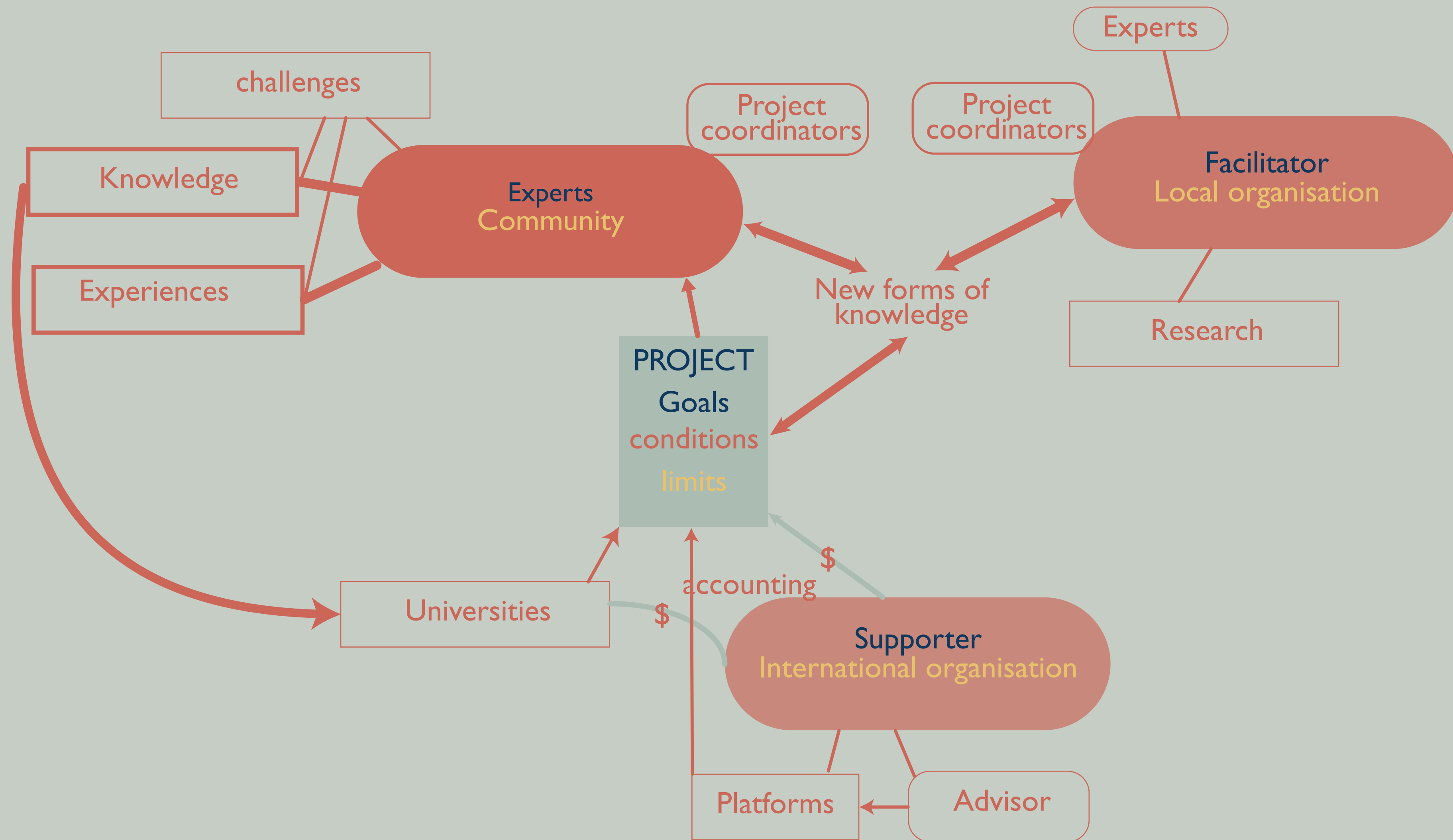
Once the map is complete, the facilitator can start with the question: what can we expect at the end of this project? Recognising what Escobar says about the autonomy of communities, this first exercise invites the community to establish what would work for them. It also gives them agency from the question, "for this to happen, we must...". This creates appropriation of the project that can guarantee participation. It also functions as a space for negotiation where the project's possibilities are discussed according to the limitations of the project.

In this process, the expert must recognise that they are just another expert, as the community has knowledge that enriches the project's vision. The knowledge that is as valid as that of any profession and where the role of the "expert" must be transformed into that of an "advisor" or "facilitator" in the function of a communally agreed good. By understanding this, the project outcomes can align with community ways of functioning. The project can also generate more contextually relevant results that ensure that positive impacts are generated in the long run.

When the community draws its knowledge on this constellation, and the facilitator enables the reconfiguration of priorities, the project outcomes are aligned with what the community needs.

Finally, once accepting new knowledge, granting agency and reconfiguring roles and priorities have been done, all available parties (local organisation and community) come to strategies to meet the communal agreements and commitments. This is necessary to ensure that the project outcomes go beyond the reporting required by the external funder and align with what has been identified with the community. Once the project is finished, these agreements should be reviewed and the extent to which they were fulfilled. To perform this exercise, both parties need to check what was missing and what can be done? All this is to incorporate the learnings from the process in future versions and consider the community as key in constructing other projects.





## **6. Conclusions and Final remarks**





The complexity of the Colombian context makes it difficult to translate frameworks for an action brought from the North. Implementation plans for projects to be developed in the Colombian territory must begin to be built locally. In this process, institutions support knowledge generation and provide technical solutions if they are explicitly requested and agreed upon by the community. Changing dynamics requires validating knowledge that has been part of a *pre-colonial* tradition, although not epistemologically "legitimate". This also influences how experts are determined under the need to recognise all participants as equals. The challenge here is to start thinking about projects in the long term and not within the government's timeframe. For this, public policies should be evaluated by the communities most affected.

In the framework of triangular cooperation, when the community does not co-create the projects, the needs and agency of the population are excluded from the outset. Therefore, although the project indicators could be considered successful, the absence of the community's voice to feedback on the process invalidates the outcome determined by the two parties furthest removed from the local reality. In this sense, the district

should decide if the project was successful or not, how viable it is for the future, and how it can respect the non-negotiable limits of the environment.

The problems in Colombia do not need technological solutions but structural ones. These structural solutions must be in line with the needs of communities historically neglected by the government. It is also necessary to pay attention to the context-specific ways of thinking and organising, prioritising autonomy and capacity building over following an international framework. Finally, structural solutions are needed to meet basic demands such as access to clean water, energy, education and health care. This would be the basis for building a system that welcomes all and indeed "leaves no one behind".

This project responds to the question of How can social innovation projects implemented in Colombia with international funding be actively assessed by the community? By proposing concepts that enable communities to be the ones to design the parameters of assessment and outcomes of the project. This active action to establish the project's results from the community redesigns the dynamics of the project. All this is

done by recognising actors into peer roles. The community is recognised as an expert, and external actors shift from sole experts to facilitators acknowledging other practices and forms of knowledge that do not come from the donor.

It is necessary to map the social innovation projects developed autonomously by the community and their impact on the territory. An example of such a study could be the analysis of mingas and ollas comunales (actions of self-organisation) concerning the solutions that these spaces generate. This would provide a clearer picture of how these organisational structures are created and what conditions facilitate these spaces and the nodes where there are similarities and particularities of the context that enable the reproduction of these solutions in other communities with similar contexts. In addition, this type of mapping could provide clues as to how experts from outside the context could support these processes without imposing their perspective on that of the community. It would be interesting to carry out the same exercise in other projects and then compare what similarities exist and how the findings could be incorporated into future projects.

The expert agency in these projects needs to shift from the “expert” to becoming a facilitator of negotiations between a community with urgent demands and an international organisation that can fund a project to build solutions that evolve and meet community expectations. In other words, break the gaze cycle to scale an evolver. It would be interesting to have a complete picture of social innovation projects in the Colombian territory in the future. Future research could manage an information bank with all the reports of projects carried out in the past to connect these results with current realities. It would also be possible to build a bank of local knowledge and practices that practice the principles of communality and autonomy.

Future research could look further into other types of projects under this form of cooperation. For example, universities and research centres could pool resources to explore community self-managed projects. Thus, to begin to record other forms of knowledge registered in the territories.



# References

Agencia Presidencial de Cooperación Internacional de Colombia (2022) Rendición de Cuentas, Transparencia y Acceso a la Información Pública. Available at: <https://www.apccolombia.gov.co/transparencia-y-acceso-la-informacion-publica/4-planeacion/rendicion-de-cuentas>.

Alex Simoes and Hidalgo, C.A. (2022) Colombia, The Observatory of Economic Complexity (OEC). Available at: <https://oec.world/en/profile/country/col?compareExports0=comparisonOption1>.

Álvarez, L. and Coolsaet, B. (2020) 'Decolonizing Environmental Justice Studies: A Latin American Perspective', *Capitalism, Nature, Socialism*, 31 (2), pp. 50–69. doi: 10.1080/10455752.2018.1558272.

Assembly, U. G. (no date) 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Available at: <https://sdgs.un.org/2030agenda>.

BALL, S. et al. (2019) 'Co-Design of an Integrated Operational Water Management Tool for the Valle Del Cauca, Colombia', 38th IAHR World Congress - 'Water: Connecting the World', 38, pp. 438–447. doi: 10.3850/38wc092019-1424.

Banco Nacional de la Republica (2022) Inversion extranjera directa en Colombia - Total y por actividad económica, Inversión extranjera directa en Colombia (IED).

Barberi, C. B. de, Nicholls, Á. O. de and Rodríguez, L.A. (2018) National Strategy for International Cooperation.

Bautista, A. J. (2022) Inflando datos para no rajarse, *El Tiempo*. Available at: <https://blogs.eltiempo.com/no-hay-derecho/2022/04/22/inflando-datos-para-no-rajarse/>.

Biblioteca Nacional de Colombia (2021) Las Bibliotecas Públicas Rurales para la Paz fortalecerán el desarrollo de los territorios. Available at: <https://bibliotecanacional.gov.co/es-co/actividades/noticias/en-la-bnc/bibliotecas-publicas-rurales-paz-fortalecen-territorios-2021#:~:text=El proyecto Bibliotecas Públicas Rurales,desarrollo territorial en otras zonas>.

Böhringer, C. and Jochem, P. (2011) 'Measuring the Immeasurable: A Survey of Sustainability Indices', Centre for European Economic Research, (Discussion Paper No. 06-073). doi: 10.2139/ssrn.944415.

Bonada Chavarría, A. (2014) 'Escobar, Arturo, 2014, *Sentipensar con la tierra. Nuevas lecturas sobre desarrollo, territorio y diferencia*, Medellín, Universidad Autónoma Latinoamericana UNAULA, 184 págs, ISBN: 978-958-8869-14-8', *Agua y Territorio*, (9), pp. 131–132. doi: 10.17561/at.v0i9.3485.

Cajaiba-Santana, G. (2014) 'Social innovation: Moving the field forward. A conceptual framework', *Technological Forecasting and Social Change*, 82(1), pp. 42–51. doi: 10.1016/j.techfore.2013.05.008.

Calderón, P. and Vanwambeke, E. (2015) 'AGENCIA DEL DISEÑO PARA UNA INNOVACIÓN SOCIAL SOSTENIBLE'.

Calvo, M. and De Rosa, A. (2017) 'Design for social sustainability. A reflection on the role of the physical realm in facilitating community co-design.', *Design Journal*, 20(sup1), pp. S1705–S1724. doi: 10.1080/14606925.2017.1352694.

Cancillería de Colombia (2022) *Asistencia oficial al desarrollo, Cooperación Bilateral y Asistencia Oficial para el Desarrollo*. Available at: <https://www.cancilleria.gov.co/cooperacion-internacional/asistencia-oficial-desarrollo>.

Ceschin, F. and Gaziulusoy, İ. (2019) *Design for sustainability: A multi-level framework from products to socio-technical systems*, *Design for Sustainability: A Multi-level Framework from Products to Socio-Technical Systems*. doi: 10.4324/9780429456510.

CNMH Centro Nacional de Memoria Historica and CNMH (2022) *El conflicto armado en cifras*, Observatorio de Memoria y Conflicto. Available at: <https://micrositios.centrodememoriahistorica.gov.co/observatorio/portal-de-datos/el-conflicto-en-cifras/%0D>.

DANE (2018a) *Censo nacional de Población y vivienda., ¿Dónde estamos?* Available at: <https://www.dane.gov.co/index.php/estadisticas-por-tema/demografia-y-poblacion/censo-nacional-de-poblacion-y-vivenda-2018/donde-estamos>.

DANE (2018b) *Censo Nacional de población y vivienda, ¿Cuántos somos?* Available at: <https://www.dane.gov.co/index.php/estadisticas-por-tema/demografia-y-poblacion/censo-nacional-de-poblacion-y-vivenda-2018/cuantos-somos%0D>.

DANE (2018c) *Resultados preliminares CENSO NACIONAL DE POBLACIÓN Y VIVIENDA*. Available at: <https://geoapps.esri.co/censo2018/index.html>.

Daniels, J. P. (2020) 'State of anarchy' in southern Colombia as 13 killed in a week, governor says, *The Guardian*.



Dehghan, S. K. (2022) World's poorest bear brunt of climate crisis: 10 underreported emergencies, *The Guardian*. Available at: <https://www.theguardian.com/global-development/2022/jan/14/worlds-poorest-bear-brunt-of-climate-crisis-10-underreported-emergencies>.

Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (2018) GIZ 's evaluation system General description.

Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (2022) Project evaluations from Colombia, *Akademie für Internationale Zusammenarbeit*. Available at: <https://mia.giz.de/esearcha/browse.tt.html>.

Directorate, (DCD) Development Co-operation and OECD (2017) 'Development co-operation results under the 2030 Agenda: Challenges and opportunities in results monitoring', (January), pp. 1–26. Available at: [https://www.oecd.org/dac/results-development/docs/Results\\_and\\_development\\_co-operation\\_for\\_2030.pdf](https://www.oecd.org/dac/results-development/docs/Results_and_development_co-operation_for_2030.pdf).

Donella H. Meadows, J. R. (1972) 'Limits to growth', *Encyclopedia of Ecology*, pp. 367–369. doi: 10.1016/B978-0-444-63768-0.00630-2.

DPN (no date) Sustainable Development Goals Colombia. Available at: <https://www.ods.gov.co/en/goals>.

Elkington, J. (2004) 'Enter the triple bottom line', *The Triple Bottom Line: Does it All Add Up*, 1 (1986), pp. 1–16. doi: 10.4324/9781849773348.

Escobar, A. (1997) 'The making and unmaking of the third world through development', in.

Escobar, A. (2010) *Latin America at a crossroads: Alternative modernizations, post-liberalism, or post-development?*, *Cultural Studies*. doi: 10.1080/09502380903424208.

Escobar, A. (2018) *Designs for the Pluriverse*, Duke University Press.

García, J. T. (1994) *Universalismo Constructivo*. Buenos Aires: Poseidón.

GIZ (2018) 'Toolkit for identifying, monitoring and evaluating the value added

of triangular co-operation', pp. 1–33. Available at: [http://www.oecd.org/dac/dac-global-relations/TOOLKIT\\_August\\_2018.pdf](http://www.oecd.org/dac/dac-global-relations/TOOLKIT_August_2018.pdf)

*Global Partnership on Effective Development Cooperation (2019) Triangular co-operation in the era of the 2030 agenda.*

*Global Youth Coalition for Road Safety (2022) Local Actions winners 2022. Available at:  
<https://claimingourspace.org/meaningful-cycling-actions-with-a-gender-approach-in-bogota>.*

*Haskell, L., Bonnedahl, K. J. and Stål, H. I. (2021) 'Social innovation related to ecological crises: A systematic literature review and a research agenda for strong sustainability',  
Journal of Cleaner Production, 325(October), p. 129316. doi: 10.1016/j.jclepro.2021.129316.*

*Human Rights Watch (2021) World Report 2021 Colombia, Review of human rights around the globe. Available at:  
<https://www.hrw.org/world-report/2021/country-chapters/colombia>.*

*Ioannides, I. (2019) Evaluating EU efforts to support peace in Colombia. doi: 10.2861/833005.*

*IRIS+ (2022) IRIS+, IRIS+. Available at: <https://iris.thegiin.org/>.*

*Kuhlman, T. and Farrington, J. (2010) 'What is sustainability?', Sustainability, 2(11), pp. 3436–3448. doi: 10.3390/su2113436.*

*Loboguerrero, A. M. et al. (2018) 'Bridging the gap between climate science and farmers in Colombia', Climate Risk Management, 22(July), pp. 67–81. doi:  
10.1016/j.crm.2018.08.001.*

*Lucia, S. (2009) 'Project evaluation : summary report', (July), pp. 1–7.*

*Mensah, J. (2019) 'Sustainable development: Meaning, history, principles, pillars, and implications for human action: Literature review', Cogent Social Sciences, 5(1). doi:  
10.1080/23311886.2019.1653531.*

*Niño, J. P. and Martínez, M. F. (2016) Los Efectos del Boom de las Industrias Extractivas en los Indicadores Sociales COLOMBIA.*

*OECD (2019a) 'Better Criteria for Better Evaluation', OECD/DAC Network on Development Evaluation, (February 2020), p. 12. Available at:  
<http://www.oecd.org/dac/evaluation/revised-evaluation-criteria-dec-2019.pdf>.*



OECD (2019b) 'Triangular Co-operation: Why does it matter?'

OECD (no date) 'No Title'. Available at: <https://www.oecd.org/>.

Osorio-García, A. M. et al. (2020) 'Can an innovation platform support a local process of climate-smart agriculture implementation? A case study in Cauca, Colombia', *Agroecology and Sustainable Food Systems*, 44(3), pp. 378–411. doi: 10.1080/21683565.2019.1629373.

Pardo Martínez, C. I. and Alfonso P, W. H. (2018) 'Climate change in Colombia: A study to evaluate trends and perspectives for achieving sustainable development from society', *International Journal of Climate Change Strategies and Management*, 10(4), pp. 632–652. doi: 10.1108/IJCCSM-04-2017-0087.

Pedersen, S. (2020) 'Staging negotiation spaces: A co-design framework', *Design Studies*, 68, pp. 58–81. doi: 10.1016/j.destud.2020.02.002.

Pizarro Leongómez, E. (1996) *Insurgencia sin revolución : la guerrilla en Colombia en una perspectiva comparada*, Sociología y política.

PROCOLOMBIA (2022a) INVEST IN COLOMBIA AND DISCOVER FIVE REASONS WHY COLOMBIA IS THE BEST DESTINATION FOR YOUR INVESTMENT, WHY

COLOMBIA? Available at: <https://investincolombia.com.co/en/why-colombia#:~:text=DESTINATION FOR YOUR INVESTMENT, and quality goods and services.>

PROCOLOMBIA (2022b) País de regiones. Available at: <https://colombia.travel/es/blog/revista-colombia/pais-de-regiones#:~:text=El Caribe%2C el Pacífico%2C la,%2C costumbres%2C gastronomía y música.>

Reina-Rozo, J. D., Thompson, M. and Leal, D. (2019) 'Co-design spaces for peace-building in Colombia: A preliminary conceptualization', 2018 World Engineering Education Forum - Global Engineering Deans Council, WEEF-GEDC 2018, (November). doi: 10.1109/WEEF-GEDC.2018.8629673.

Rettberg, A. et al. (2020) Different Resources, Different Conflicts? A framework for understanding the political economy of the armed conflict and crime in the regions of Colombia. doi: 10.30778/2019.97.

Reynolds-Cuellar, P. and Delgado Ramos, D. (2020) 'Community-based technology co-design: Insights on participation, and the value of the “co”', *ACM International Conference Proceeding Series*, 1, pp. 75–84. doi: 10.1145/3385010.3385030.

Rodríguez, A. and Alvarado, H. (2008) *Claves de la Innovación Social en América Latina y el Caribe*, Comisión Económica para América Latina y el Caribe (CEPAL). Available at: [https://repositorio.cepal.org/handle/11362/2536%0Ahttp://ulegid.unileon.es/admin/UploadFolder/63\\_\(2004\).pdf%5Cn](https://repositorio.cepal.org/handle/11362/2536%0Ahttp://ulegid.unileon.es/admin/UploadFolder/63_(2004).pdf%5Cn).

Sandoval, C. J. (2021) *Colombia's Peace Accord is Not Weak, It's Duque Who Insists on Weakening It*, Washington Office on Latin America. Available at: <https://www.wola.org/analysis/colombia-peace-accord-is-not-weak-its-duque-who-insists-on-weakening-it/>.

Storni, C. (2015) 'Notes on ANT for designers: ontological, methodological and epistemological turn in collaborative design', *CoDesign*, 11(3–4), pp. 166–178. doi: 10.1080/15710882.2015.1081242.

The Sustainable Development Report (2022) *The Sustainable Development Report COLOMBIA*. Available at: <https://dashboards.sdindex.org/profiles/colombia>.

The World Bank Group (2021) *Overview Colombia*. Available at: <https://www.worldbank.org/en/country/colombia/overview#1>.

Urbina, D. A. and Rodríguez, G. (2022) 'The effects of corruption on growth, human development and natural resources sector: empirical evidence from a Bayesian panel VAR for Latin American and Nordic countries', *Journal of Economic Studies*, 49(2), pp. 346–363. doi: 10.1108/JES-05-2020-0199.

Uribe, L. et al. (2019) 'Corruption Trap: the case of Colombian regions', 2019 OECD Global Anti-Corruption & Integrity Forum, (2002), pp. 1–17.

USAID (2022) *Key Documents Colombia*. Available at: <https://www.usaid.gov/colombia/newsroom/key-documents>.

Vanwambeke, E. (2015) 'AGENCIA DEL DISEÑO PARA UNA INNOVACIÓN SOCIAL SOSTENIBLE :Autores Pablo Calderón Salazar'.

Whitney, P. and Kelkar, A. (2010) 'Designing for the Base of the Pyramid', *Design Management Review*, 15(4), pp. 41–47. doi: 10.1111/j.1948-7169.2004.tb00181.x.

World Commission on Environment and Development (1988) 'Our Common Future', Oxford University Press, 4(1), pp. 17–25. doi: 10.1080/07488008808408783.

Ziai, A. (2015) *Development Discourse and Global History*, Development Discourse and Global History. Routledge. doi: 10.4324/9781315753782.