

Summary: VII Regional Conference on Trilateral Cooperation with Latin America and the Caribbean 2024: “Overcoming Obstacles, Building Bridges”





Executive Summary

The VII Regional Conference on Trilateral Cooperation with Latin America and the Caribbean 2024 was hosted by the Brazilian Cooperation Agency (ABC) and the *Bundesministerium für wirtschaftliche Zusammenarbeit und Entwicklung* (BMZ) of Germany. Held on March 23-24 in Salvador, Bahia, Brazil, the conference combined in-person and virtual participation, drawing over 400 registrations from 17 countries. It provided a platform for sharing experiences, best practices, and exploring new partnerships.

In the context of Brazil's G20 presidency in 2024, the conference was pivotal in advancing discussions within the G20 Development Group, positioning Trilateral Cooperation (TrC) as a strategic priority for tackling sustainable development challenges.

The event facilitated the exchange of knowledge and best practices on TrC implementation at the technical and policy levels, focusing on the main developments and obstacles that TrC has encountered over the past two years along four thematic priorities:

- ▶ Protection, mitigation and adaptation strategies to climate change,
- ▶ Gender equality and social inclusion in Latin America and the Caribbean,
- ▶ Strengthening Interregional Trilateral Cooperation,
- ▶ Localization of Trilateral Cooperation and inclusion of local actors.



Regarding climate change and just transition, international collaboration is essential for developing sustainable technologies and renewable energies. TrC faces challenges in enhancing results and promoting climate justice, involving vulnerable groups such as indigenous and rural communities. There is also a need to increase technical and financial cooperation.

Concerning gender equality, several countries in the region are already committed to the care agenda and work to integrate a gender perspective in all aspects of international cooperation. The intersection of gender and climate change is crucial, with various experiences in LAC where TrC can foster the exchange of knowledge and experiences.

On interregional Trilateral Cooperation, its contribution to addressing global challenges, sharing knowledge, and strengthening capacities was highlighted. However, it still needs to evolve towards greater horizontality, involve strategic partners, and design tools for small-scale technology exchange that promote “technical diplomacy” between regions. Multilateral organizations play a significant role in developing the modality.

Addressing the participation of local actors and presenting the particularities of the Amazonian region, it became evident that integrating the perspectives and participation of local actors and institutions from the initial phase of any cooperation initiative is crucial. At the same time, localizing TrC requires a clear approach aimed at linking local impact with global development.

The participation of multiple actors in TrC has significantly impacted its scope and effectiveness, contributing to the comprehensive development of the actors involved. Still, a persistent challenge is the distribution of resources when non-public actors are involved in projects.

In presentations of **experiences of training and capacity development** by Brazil and Germany as host countries, it was emphasized that training activities must necessarily respond to current and future challenges, identifying gaps and needs, and increasing online offers. Furthermore, it is essential to promote the integration of a gender perspective through training activities from the beginning of the projects.



The conference concluded with messages about the advantages and contributions of TrC to be considered in the **G20 Development Working Group**:

- ▶ **Closing the financing and sustainability gap:** In the current global context, it is crucial to close the financing gap and promote the sustainability of development projects during times of crisis. Existing funds for trilateral partnerships help establish and formalize mechanisms to close this gap, complementing rather than replacing traditional financing.
- ▶ **Leveraging comparative advantages:** Through TrC, countries leverage comparative advantages, sharing knowledge, resources, and experiences to accelerate equitable development. Investing in technical capacities, specialization, and technology transfer is fundamental, for example, in promoting women in skilled workspaces in developing countries.
- ▶ **Holistic cooperation approach:** TrC has proven to be a modality that allows working and organizing processes holistically; it shows how for example how just transition and inclusion must be addressed jointly to find integrated solutions.
- ▶ **Promoting mutual learning:** Trilateral cooperation fosters mutual learning and the exchange of local knowledge. Participants agreed that there can be no long-term results without local participation. All TrC has to be locally led, contributing to a shift in narrative towards horizontal relationships where all countries have something to share and learn.
- ▶ **Maturity and success of the modality:** The growing level of understanding of the modality was highlighted. Participants agreed that its importance has shifted from being a niche to becoming an indispensable method of international cooperation, especially in Latin America and the Caribbean. The convergence of different actors and an understanding of the opportunities and benefits arising from the collaborations were cited as key success factors.
- ▶ **Momentum from Latin America and the Caribbean:** As a region with recognized and positively evaluated experiences, LAC has both the interest and capacity to drive trilateral cooperation and further advance it through the G20 and all invited countries.