

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

EX-POST EVALUATION REPORT

4th MASTER PLAN OF THE *COOPERACIÓN VALENCIANA* 2017 - 2020



**GENERALITAT
VALENCIANA**

Conselleria de Participación,
Transparencia, Cooperación
y Calidad Democrática

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**Executive summary of the ex-post evaluation report
4th Master Plan of the *Cooperación Valenciana* 2017 – 2020**

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Executive summary of the ex-post evaluation report - 4th Master Plan of the
Cooperación Valenciana 2017 – 2020

The present work matches **the final external evaluation** of the 4th Master Plan of the Cooperación Valenciana (MPCV) 2017 - 2020, implemented in the frame of the Law 18/2017, of 14 December, of the *Generalitat*, about cooperation and sustainable development, where in its article 3rd it considers evaluation as a *Principle* in the whole process of cooperation, considering that it contributes to the *know-how* management and the impact optimization in cooperation policies; in article 4th about cooperation planning, it explicitly establishes to make a report of final evaluation of the corresponding Master Plan and, moreover, it indicates that it will get "its diffusion in the Transparency Portal of the Generalitat"; also the evaluation contemplates in the Plan, specifically in his section 10th, where it links with the knowledge management.

The specific purposes of the evaluation of the Master Plan, according to the technical specifications for contracting the service, are:

- a. To analyze the degree of consistency and internal and external suitability of the 4th MPCV.
- b. To determine if the structure and the management and participation mechanisms given to the 4th MPCV are suitable to achieve the goals.
- c. To provide an independent assessment on the fulfillment of the goals established in the 4th MPCV, attending us to system of results and indicators of evaluation elaborated by the General Direction of International Cooperation to the Development.
- d. Determine the contribution of the IV Master Plan to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals, in accordance with the indicators of the 2030 Agenda established by the National Institute of Statistics.
- e. Carry out an assessment of the effects of Covid-19 on the development of actions linked to the 4th MPCV and on the achievement of its objectives.
- f. Identify lessons learned and establish strategic and operational recommendations that provide useful, quality and evidence-based information for the elaboration of the 5th Master Plan of *Cooperación Valenciana* 2021-2024.

Particularly, the base for carrying out the evaluation has been the *Framework of Indicators of the IV Master Plan of the Valencian Cooperation 2017 - 2020*, which contemplates the following criteria:

- Consistency
- Adequacy of resources
- Capacities
- Participation
- Knowledge management
- Transparency
- Transversality
- Efficiency
- Effectiveness

To these criteria has been added an analysis on the Contribution to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals, and another on the Incidence of Covid-19 in the International Cooperation sector.

The **methodological approach** of the evaluation has a formative character and has been managed with a participatory and learning vision, based on qualitative tools, such as interviews, a discussion group, focus groups organized by the DGCID in the framework of the participatory process for the elaboration of the next plan, and the assistance in external events that have driven other agents of the cooperation during the period in which the evaluation was carried out; a total of 31 people participated in the interviews, 5 in the discussion group and 9 events were attended.

Quantitative information consists of a survey that has been answered by 44 organizations, and an analysis of structured data contained in internal and external databases in the DGCID; the tool used for quantitative analysis has been R, a specific programming environment for data analysis.

The results and conclusions have been ordered according to structure size, strategic level and operational level, all in accordance with the Framework Document of Indicators, to which have been added the levels referred to the SDGs and the incidence of the Covid- 19.

Regarding the *structural dimension*, it is necessary to stand out in the first place the approach of the MPCV to the new global scenario emerged in September 2015 in the frame of the Agenda 2030 for the sustainable development, being the structure of the Plan of in accordance with that of the Agenda itself with regard to Axes, in accordance with which the operational strategies and objectives are established; all this well valued by the informants in what supposes an adaptation of the Valencian cooperation to this global approach; the above is completed with the Management for Development Results (GPRD) approach, as part of an OECD / CAD work strategy focused on the generation and use of results information to improve prey of decisions.

A special effort has been made to give consistence to the commitment to cross-cutting priorities, to the orientation of the Plan towards the SDGs, to the formal education strategy, to the Humanitarian Action strategy, to the commitment to the approach of GPRD, and to functional diversity or the human rights-based approach to gender, through the development of tools (strategic documents and guides) that have made it easier for cooperation agents to orient their actions towards the strategy of Valencian Government, but the cross-cut priorities of democratic governance, environmental sustainability and children's rights have been left without the development of instruments.

In terms of geographical priorities, they have been set with an open approach, which is valued very positively; It should be noted that, at the level of countries and territories, only projects in competitive basis have been developed in those that have been defined as priorities, and Humanitarian Action, in part, has been developed in others, not identified in the PD; in Valencian territory there has not been a specific strategy in the Plan, although the annual action plans have tried to make up for this deficiency in some way.

The system of indicators has been oversized which has made difficult any follow-up action as well as the task of understanding, after the analysis and synthesis, of the impacts produced; this is a situation that needs to be clearly corrected in the next master plan.

The same goes for general indicators and operational indicators, in which it is not always clear their definition in terms of components (numerator / denominator), units of measurement, sources, databases and variables where to store them, and moreover, they have no quantitative goals since there is no baseline on which to sustain themselves.

The harmonization of policies with the local administration is weak, because the Territorial Sectorial Council has not been set up, and the CAHE is the only common space; this situation should be corrected especially because in addition a good part of the city councils, with those of Valencia and Castellón at the head, are showing an important commitment to cooperation, which requires closer coordination.

Until now the Master Plan has not its own budget, which would be useful to a greater extent to guide the cooperation action of all the agents involved. Anyway, the budget has increased substantially, from 0.02% to 0.14% of the total budget of the GVA, reaching during the period a sum of 100,606,920 euros, ranking fourth in relation to the rest of the autonomous communities, and the fifth in relative terms.

The budgetary distribution of the GVA in terms of non-reimbursable aid addressed to countries prioritized in the Plan has been adjusted to the planned targets, being 67.6% (minimum 60%, the indicator states); the budget for EpCG (*Education to Global Citizenship*) projects is 12% of total ODA; in Humanitarian Action the allocated budget was 13.8% and specialized training 3.4%.

All the modalities of cooperation have been developed, except the multilateral one – although agreements have been signed with the organisms of the United Nations for the implementation of particular actions–, and the technical cooperation of the same GVA: in this case, there have been cooperation actions through agents external to the GVA.

In the Strategic Area, it has been identified that the structure and functions of the CVCD (Valencian Council of Development Cooperation) would be the right ones in this kind of collegiate bodies that assume the consultation and participation functions of the different sectors involved, highlighting in its operation the workgroup of Education to Development.

The Plenum may be a bit broad in terms of members, although some of them do not participate, which leads to some possible changes in this regard, as well as the profile and role of experts, or the review of the functions of the Permanent Advisory Committee.

A key strategic issue of the Master Plan has been the generation and management of knowledge on the basis of evaluation, although during this period other instruments have been implemented which the organizations consider *unequally useful*.

Among these instruments, the evaluation and the baseline stand out. The 82% of the organizations indicate that the *evaluation* is useful or very useful, being the second best valued the *study of the baseline*, with 68%; no organization considers the evaluation of little use, in the case of the baseline it is 7%.

The least useful instruments for organizations seem to be the *Project Cycle Closing Report* (31%), the *results socialization plan* (26%) and the *evaluation response sheet* (19%).

The incorporation of knowledge seems to happen in almost all organizations, to a greater or lesser degree, half of the organizations state “yes”, and 45.5% point out that “sometimes”. There is a clear correlation between the size of the organization with the incorporation of knowledge.

The groups with the lowest budget claim to incorporate learning in 30-33% of cases, while in the group with the largest budget it is almost double, 64%; the above would be reversed in the case of socialization of results.

The use of the INDICA database has been limited because not all its capabilities are used, which has reduced its possibilities in terms of its ability to report on what has happened in the execution of the Plan, especially in what refers to training actions or research; field visits by DGCID staff have been limited, thus not allowing an in-depth knowledge of what is happening on the ground with the projects promoted by the GVA.

In the *Operational Area*, the instruments that have been promoted are valued in a similar way to when knowledge generation has been addressed, so organizations consider evaluation to be useful or very useful for their management processes (78%), baseline (71%), final report (63%) and follow-up planning matrix (61%); at the bottom is the project cycle closure report (41%) and the socialization plan (40%).

Analyzing the modalities of cooperation, we see how the instruments that develop economic cooperation have a high valuation, the same as those of EpCG, although in the first case it would be necessary to adapt the strategy of multilateral cooperation that is the least valued, and in the second case, it will be necessary to clarify the call for *Human Rights Activists*, and especially to coordinate with Valencia City Council, which has a similar line.

The execution of the analyzed interventions adjusts to the transversal priorities of the PD, although of unequal way according to approaches; thus, 97% of the projects include the Gender approach in development based on Human Rights, in Democratic Governance it is in 53%, in environmental sustainability 55% and in childhood 21%.

Regarding the *contribution to the achievement of the SDGs*, it should be noted that there is an important level of alignment of projects with the SDGs, although very variable according to the SDGs and project types; thus we find that the highest levels of alignment between Humanitarian Action projects are observed in the SDGs 3 Health and well-being, 5 Gender equality, 10 Reduction of inequalities, 16 Peace, justice and solidarity institutions.

In Development Cooperation are observed with the SDGs 1 Ending poverty, 2 Zero hunger, 4 Education of quality, 5 Gender equality, 8 Decent work and economic growth, 12 Responsible production and consumption, 16 Peace, justice and solidarity institutions .

In EpCG it is totally concentrated in two: 4. Education of quality, 12 Production and responsible consumption, and finally the projects of Investigation and formation the alignments are observed in the SDGs 4. Quality education and 17. Alliances to reach the Objectives .

As for the *incidence of Covid-19*, the time perspective is very short to draw conclusions, but the immediate consequences could happen in some projects leading to their readjustment, in many cases, or to paralysis; in addition, in EpCG, working with schools a special difficulty is added at the time the assessment was conducted.

The impact on organizations would be manifested in an additional workload arising from the adjustment of projects or teams, as a result of telework or the implementation of "bubble groups", with an impact on the conciliation of working life and familiar.

The risks are related to the uncertainty generated, which can arise from a possible drop in funding by both public funders and members of organizations; a risk has also been detected as the pandemic leads to hiding or diverting attention from other problematic situations that arise.

With regard to the **recommendations**, we first have the *Strategic Guidance to contribute to the development of societies*, proposing the maintenance of the commitment to align cooperation with the 2030 Agenda, in addition to the new master plan being formulated in an open way and with adaptive capacity, endowing it with some instrument, as it could well be a technical paper of follow-up that by means of the joint reflection has capacity to orient the cooperation through the annual plans of action.

With regard to *cross-cutting priorities*, it is proposed to maintain in the future those included in the Plan being evaluated, and at the same time open a debate on disaster prevention, local governance or youth, or disaster prevention, local governance or youth.

Review and establish geographical priorities according to country-criteria according to HDI, regions or areas of least development and territories, as well as in the Valencian Community itself to promote action especially in inland areas.

The strategic lines and priorities should be supported for their development in guides and strategy documents, as well as in the work of technical papers or specific groups that to some extent guide their development, all with the purpose of to offer instruments to the organizations to promote their actions within the framework of the Valencian strategy.

Orient the cooperation to be a reflection of what is the Valencian society, and strengthen the link, for this should promote implantation and territorial rooting, connecting the organizations with the citizens through the activities that perform, in this sense it is proposed to include in the terms of the calls some requirement in this sense, beyond the assessment that can be given about some criteria of the ex-ante evaluation. In addition to the above, volunteering as well as the participation of other civil society actors in cooperation policies should be strengthened in some way, giving priority to non-profit public-private collaboration.

A commitment should be made to the training of staff in organizations, contributing to what is stated in the guidelines or strategies. In this sense, universities –also in research– and the CVONGD –through their agreements– should play a prominent role; The town councils should also be strengthened in this regard, and in this case the FVMP and the Valencian Solidarity Fund could play a relevant role.

The above should be completed by a commitment to *strengthening the capacities of organizations*, especially strategic and knowledge generation, through external consultancy, support to project identifications or to hire their own staff that drives these processes.

The *reduction of administrative work* to direct resources to action, as well as the generation of knowledge can be a good strategy to strengthen organizations, and the administration itself. For which, processes should be readjusted especially in the presentation of projects, in accountability or in the management of some actions such as baseline setting or evaluation.

Continue to promote *instruments with the capacity to generate knowledge and learning in organizations* as is the case of project evaluations, which could be extended to strategic evaluations at country-level, territorial or sectoral level, both those promoted by the organizations themselves and by the administration, all this through an evaluation plan.

Alongside the above, and complementing the learning actions, we think that resources should be invested in activities encouraging the creation of spaces of experience

sharing activities: like the meeting about the evaluation on EpCG projects that took place in July 2019, or like initiatives like the "training pills" promoted by the CVONGD (NGO Valencian Association).

The DGCID (General Direction of International Cooperation to Development) must have a database with the capacity to check the evolution of the cooperation strategy and well managed. For this, it is necessary to review the current base and to study its adaptation or the design of a new one, for which the accumulated experience is decisive; in this regard, we propose that staff from the Directorate-General itself be trained and also from the organizations themselves, given the important role they play in providing the information required.

With regard to the modalities of cooperation, enhance technical cooperation, readjusting the amount to be financed and the duration of the interventions, in line, perhaps, with Modality B of projects.

Review the GVA strategy regarding multilateral cooperation as they have not been implemented in this PD, as well as the Region Association Frameworks; the same goes for the technical cooperation of the GVA itself which could constitute an important instrument for bilateral cooperation.

In addition to the above, and to strengthen the presence in the field, the above should be completed with a commitment to support internships in the field or scholarships to stay in the beneficiary countries, perhaps resuming the previous practice of presence in the OTC (Cooperation Technical Office).

In the case of the EpCG, in addition to continuing working group, it is proposed to rethink the actions and their balance with regard to formal, non-formal and informal education approaches, as well as alliances with schools and town halls; to review the amounts of the modality of sensitization and approaches of formal, nonformal and informal education.

To maintain the focus and commitment to Humanitarian Action, creating a specific paper that delves into its development, while clarifying and defining to a greater extent the three available tools, we refer to the annual call, the agreements and direct and exceptional humanitarian aid from the CAHE.

The link between the system by which the aid is channeled, through agreements and by competitive concurrence, seems to be right and we propose to keep the percentages of the budget within the current limits of: 85 competitive concurrence / 15 agreements.

Regarding the *adaptation to the new scenario derived from the Covid-19*, we think that it can be a great opportunity to orient the Valencian cooperation in a future scenario that will undoubtedly be more and more volatile, uncertain, changing and ambiguous, which will require a great deal of adaptability as it has already been said.

In addition, it is recommended that the new strategy be formulated in an open and adaptive way, as already mentioned, without losing perspective on the problems that persist and could be hidden by the pandemic.

Finally, we have to mention the major transformation produced in the Valencian cooperation in this period. We think that it could not have taken place without the urgency that arose in the previous period, we dare to think that the turning point was the Strategic Conference of November 2015, and which materialized in the elaboration of the law of cooperation and the strategy of EpD, the new Decree of Terms, the strategy of AH (Humanitarian Action) or the publication of this MP before the end and evaluation of the previous one, all this between 2016 and 2017.

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These were intense years, where a sense of urgency was created that fostered change through leadership with a long-term, global vision, and a political stance that was clearly reflected in budgets.

A shared vision was lacking to a certain extent with the other agents, but we think that now an opportunity opens up with the formulation of the new MP currently in action, with the participation of all the actors of the system and the learnings obtained, would have the capacities to make emerge and orient a new system of Valencian cooperation adapted to the challenges that poses the emerging future.

It seems that the period being evaluated has been a transition from a hard and dark stage to a different one which, as the agents of the cooperation point out, is more efficient and effective, with a greater prominence of the organized civil society with genuine Valencian characteristics, where each agent, from the place that corresponds to him, contributes to generate a feeling and a state of collaboration and trust.