



Italian cooperation for sustainable development

Three-year planning amid promises and shortfalls

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Introduction

Armadilla is a social cooperative committed, primarily, in the context of international cooperation. (www.armadilla.coop)

It also conducts training and information on the issues of the 2030 agenda proposed by the United Nations, for the defence of human rights and for the achievement of the 17 Goals for sustainable human development: <https://www.unric.org/it/agenda-2030>

In this context, these notebooks want to help to disseminate among students and the public opinion to which Armadilla is addressed, information, critical analysis, possible answers to the priority problems that are addressed. The collection of all the Notebooks from 2015 to the present is located in: <http://armadilla.coop/quaderni/>

In this Notebook we present and comment on the three-year planning document of Italian cooperation for sustainable development.

This document was approved to in July 2020, covering the period 2019 - 2021. The delay was made by so many critical interventions, due to bureaucracy which had to find different tools and procedures to be efficient.

The preparation of the Three-Year Plan, with annual review, for the effectiveness of the interventions was coordinated by the Directorate General of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs for Development Cooperation (DGCS) with the technical-operational support of the Agency (AICS). It provides a tool to facilitate the implementation of the **4 principles of effectiveness (ownership of development priorities by partner countries; outcome-based management; Inclusive partnerships; transparency and *mutual accountability*)** and the recommendations made by the OECD-DAC in the Field of Peer *Review* on results and effectiveness, which has been added a focus related to humanitarian crises and fragile situations and the principle of *Leave no one behind*.

The renewed strategic vision of Italian Cooperation rests on the 5 Pillars of the 2030 Agenda. **At the heart of the action is the full development of the person, of human capital: the protection, the empowerment of young people and women, starting with those in situations of greatest**

distress and vulnerability; human capital also as a "development multiplier" to affect the ability to generate prosperity at the local level in balance with the planet by stimulating effective partnerships also in order to contribute to peace.

Italy's commitment to support peace and stabilisation processes will be strengthened in key crisis areas, from the Middle East to Africa and Asia, aimed at reducing fragile situations, strengthening the resilience of populations, and enhancing local crisis management and response capabilities. The response to humanitarian crises cannot come from the humanitarian system alone and cannot be separated from a joint analysis of needs and the definition of shared policy objectives between humanitarian aid, sustainable development, and peace.

1. Identify priority

When there are too many priorities, there is none. A serious assessment needs to be made, especially in operational decisions, to apply consistent criteria both on the choices to be made at geographical and sector level, and on how to invest the limited resources, in relation to the pretentious objectives, which the Italian system wants to manage within the framework of international cooperation on sustainable development.

And a consideration should be kept in mind: **international cooperation for sustainable development, human rights, and peace, as the first article of Law 125/2014 says, is an integral and qualifying part of Italy's foreign policy. Not a mere instrument or operational arm, but "an integral and qualifying part".**

A remarkable recognition of dignity in this area but which humbly must recognize its limitations. **Sustainable development cooperation activities alone will never achieve the desired aims and objectives. Both because of the scarcity of resources invested (always much less than the promised and the commitments made) and the inconsistency of different policies in international relations. What is given in humanitarian aid and solidarity projects is taken up by unfair trade and financial policies, which keep billions of people in poverty and exclusion from rights.**

The Italian Cooperation Planning Document, for the three-year period 2019-2021, confirms the aim of contributing to the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) proposed in the 2030 Agenda.

The thematic areas are articulated around the 5 Pillars (the 5 "P": people, prosperity, planet, partnerships, peace.

In this strategic framework, it is expected, as a novelty, that from 2019, the Annual Report will report data and information on the activities and progress towards the implementation of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the 169 related Targets and the indication of the OECD-DAC codes, Rio indicators for the Environment and indicators of OECD-DAC Policy, which will allow to verify the compliance of the actions carried out with respect to the objectives contained in the three-year programme.

To ensure greater effectiveness and in accordance with the principle of division of labour, interventions will focus on a limited number of sectors (3-4) in each country.

This strategic vision combines more defined policy objectives and priority needs that the Italian system wants to achieve and fill gaps that have been identified in the periodic evaluation that made the OECD DAC *Peer review* in 2019.

1.1. Geographical priorities

There seem to be two main criteria applied in the choice of priority cooperation countries:

- 1. intervening in countries that, for historical, commercial, and cultural relations and for foreign policy choices, not least the need for security and control of migration flows, are of importance to Italy.** The last 20 years of commitments made with these countries are considered and only gradually there is a need to reduce or conclude cooperation activities. Very often the absence of updated technical and policy assessments perpetuates no investments in countries that are no longer considered priorities and we forget no areas and sectors that deserve more attention. **These areas include The Italian émigré communities and their descendants (Italians in the world) who are no longer considered as priority subjects for cooperation activities** (although in countries in crisis and impoverished such as Argentina and Venezuela deserve more consideration).
- 2. Another criterion is to take into account the socio-economic and governance framework of partner countries, favouring some less advanced countries** (PMA), in order to meet the international

commitment made by Italy to reach the target of 0.15 percent-0.20 percent CPS/GNI for PMA by 2020-2030.

It confirms the choice of 22 priority countries. These 10 are classified as less advanced countries: Burkina Faso, Senegal, Niger, Ethiopia, Somalia, Sudan, South Sudan and Mozambique in Africa, Afghanistan, and Myanmar in Asia.

Africa: Egypt, Tunisia,
Africa: Ethiopia, Kenya, Somalia, Sudan, South Sudan,
Western Africa: Burkina Faso, Niger, Senegal
Southern Africa: Mozambique
Middle East: Jordan, Iraq, Lebanon, Palestine
Balkans: Albania, Bosnia
Latin America and the Caribbean: Cuba, El Salvador
Asia: Afghanistan, Myanmar, Pakistan

In one circle are **the countries of priority importance for migration routes.**

In another circle of countries, the interventions will be mainly aimed at managing **the impact of climate change.**

There is also a circle of countries where the first objective is not the eradication of poverty and zero hunger, and the focus of interventions is economic development. Some middle-income countries are included.

With regard to Africa, in recent years the political and economic and environmental circumstances at the root of the migration phenomenon have increased the importance of some macro-regions: **in addition to traditional priorities, countries such as Libya or regions, such as the Sahel, where humanitarian programmes are being used in terms of humanitarian and development, are taking on particular weight in order to facilitate the transition in the medium term.**

It should be noted that in June 2017, the G7 Environment, meeting in Bologna under the Italian presidency, indicated the need for a pole specifically dedicated to promoting sustainable development in Africa. The Centre for Climate and Sustainable Development of Africa, based in Rome, on 28 January 2019, was established with the UNDP in collaboration with FAO to provide a general overview of actions on climate, sustainable agriculture ("*Climate Smart Agriculture*"), access to water, clean energy generation, on the basis of a focus on gender issues.

Given the objective differences of a continent as large as Africa, it was decided to divide it into four geographical areas, Mediterranean Africa, West Africa, East Africa and Southern Africa, which are also those "coded" within the framework of International Cooperation.

In Mediterranean Africa, geographical proximity pushes to focus efforts on **the "physically" neighbouring countries that need strong support for the consolidation of the ongoing democratic process (Tunisia) or for the role in the process of regional stabilization (Egypt), in a difficult negotiation concerning the protection of human rights.**

In Libya, aware of The historical responsibilities that Italy has with this country, and in relation to the role of the crossroads of the country with respect to the large population movements from sub-Saharan Africa, it is working according to two guidelines of intervention: emergency initiatives aimed at giving humanitarian assistance and protection to the most vulnerable sections of the population, development programs aimed at promoting the stabilization process. The activities aim to support administrative decentralisation, to strengthen governance capacity at local and individual municipalities.

In West Africa, the priority countries are Burkina Faso, Niger, and Senegal, while important regions are the Sahel with a focus on the Lake Chad region. At the regional level, Italy was among the first countries to join the *Alliance Sahel*, which brings together 14 countries and international bodies. The aim is to have an immediate impact on the living conditions of the population, consistent with the sustainable development priorities identified by the G5 Sahel countries (Burkina Faso, Chad, Mali, Mauritania, Niger).

In Africa, which traditionally corresponds to the "Horn" region (enlarged or not, if you want to consider only Ethiopia, Somalia, Eritrea, and Djibouti), the priority countries are Ethiopia, Somalia, Sudan, South Sudan, and Kenya. The recent positive political developments (2018) have also translated into a renewed focus on Eritrea.

In Africa, the only country to benefit from development initiatives for the Italian APS is Mozambique, with a view to "certain" and "long-term" assistance, a direct consequence of Italy's leading role in the peace process between the government and the guerrillas in the early 1990s.

In the Middle East, development cooperation is in the wake of the European Union's policies and strategy, in particular the European Neighbourhood Initiative 2014-2020, and is based on the following **priority areas of intervention: the promotion of rights, good governance, democracy and the rule of law, economic development and Small and Medium**

Enterprises; agriculture and rural development for employment; socio-health, in particular the improvement of the quality of health care systems. Attention will also be reserved for the protection of archaeological and cultural heritage.

The priority is given to Lebanon and Jordan for the key role they are playing in welcoming the epochal human exodus caused by the Syrian crisis.

The continuing lack of negotiating prospects between Israel and Palestine is making the situation in the area increasingly fragile. Therefore, in order to strengthen the Palestinian leadership, in addition to the gift initiatives, the aid credits instrument can also be used. We will look with attention to the needs of the people of the Gaza Strip.

The urgent need to support the process of stabilizing areas liberated from ISIS control between 2014 and 2017, as part of the wider international community's competition to rebuild Iraq, makes it necessary to include Iraq as a priority.

In the Balkans, the presence will be maintained in Albania - a country to which we are linked to a dense network of cultural, economic, and human relations, and where Italian cooperation is historically present - and in Bosnia and Herzegovina. **The policy of Italian Cooperation in Latin America aims to frame its interventions in the perspective of "good governance" and the protection of human rights.** In El Salvador, the commitments made with the December 2017 Bilateral Agreement will be maintained, focusing on rural development issues through the enhancement of supply chains, such as cocoa and coffee, on strengthening the inclusive education system, enhancing cultural heritage and creating employment.

The main activities that will involve the countries of the Central American Region, the responsibility of the regional AICS headquarters in San Salvador, are the **management of risks from natural disasters, water management, juvenile justice and the prevention of youth violence** in collaboration with the SICA (Central American Integration System) of which Italy is an observer country.

With regard to Cuba, the new reformist impulse determined by the approval of the new Constitution in July 2018 opens up new prospects for Italy, and for the Italian Cooperation, committed in the country in support of agricultural development and food security as well as on issues of restoration and conservation of historical and cultural heritage.

Cooperation programmes can also be implemented thanks to the resources provided by debt conversion. Finally, the presence will be maintained in Colombia, a country that represents for Italy a reality of specific interest thanks to the political process that has been going on since the end of a civil war that has lasted for more than half a century.

In Bolivia, a country no longer a priority due to its lower geopolitical importance in the current international scenario and the lack of capacity to absorb the resources granted in the past, in the three years the current initiatives on aid credit and gift credit will be completed and no new commitments will be made. AICS is required to reorganize its network of locations abroad, which considers a more efficient allocation of available human and financial resources and security aspects (including terrorism risk). The AICS will also define an exit strategy in view of the closure of its offices in countries not included in the list above (Bolivia, Vietnam) over the three-year period.

1.2. Sectoral

The debate is open, and we have not yet reached a shared and consolidated position. The OECD *Dac Peer Review* calls on Italy, "to ensure greater effectiveness and in accordance with the principle of division of labour, interventions will focus on a limited number of sectors (3-4) in each country". **This involves prioritizing specific territorial focus and prioritising solving the most serious problems that communities face in a holistic and multi-sector logic, operationally enhancing the skills of those operating in the territory.**

Other opinions propose that, in accordance with the assessment made for the achievement of the Millennium Goals (proposed in 2000) climate change, the issue of food security and technological innovation are the three priority areas that the Italian system should give priority.

Also, because Italy is home to the three UN entities that deal with agriculture and food (FAO, WFP, and IFAD). It places the fundamental urgency of putting together the different subjects of the Italian system, not as monads, who do not communicate with each other and who operate independently while they share their goals, values and promote synergies to be effective. Using all possible instruments and rebalancing the investment of resources between multilateral, multi-bilateral and bilateral in more balanced and non-separate quantities.

The data show that the Ministry of Economy and Finance -MEF - confirms in the reference two-year period the main provider of Public Development Aid - APS - with 1.97 billion euros, corresponding to 37.86 percent of the total of the Italian APS in 2017 and with 1.8 billion in 2018, equal to 41.8 percent.

With regard to the channels of **intervention, in 2017 the multilateral represents 49 percent of the total ODA, amounting to 2,556.16 million euros** (including contributions to the European Union budget and the European Development Fund), while the net amount of bilateral ODA is 2,653.73 million euros, or 51 percent of the APS.

In 2018, the multilateral represents 57.57 percent of the total ODA. In particular, multilateral contributions amount to around EUR 2.54 billion, including contributions to the European Union budget (the share that can be reported as APS) and the European Development Fund (EDF). It should also be noted that an additional EUR 154 million has been earmarked for projects and initiatives that are not geographically allocated or carried out across geographical areas.

The main countries receiving bilateral aid

Africa was also the main beneficiary of the financing in 2017 with a disbursement of 164.05 million euros, followed by the Balkans and the Middle East with 88.25 million, Asia and Oceania with 48.40 million and the Americas with 18.81 million for a total of 319.51 million euros. In Africa, bilateral aid is particularly focused on humanitarian aid (28.1%), Agriculture (16.1%), Health (17.7%) Governance and Rights (14.8%), environment (4.6%); Water and Hygiene (3.3%), Infrastructure (2.8%), Private Sector (1.7%) and other sectors (2%).

In 2017, the Africa Fund was created, which Italy set up to address migration issues (both in terms of development cooperation and security), in line with the European Investment Plan, adopted by the European Commission. For Mediterranean Africa, the medium and long-term lines already adopted have been consolidated, to respond concretely to the delicate phase of transition and reconstruction of the countries of North Africa, protagonists in 2011 of the "Arab Spring".

In sub-Saharan Africa, the priority countries for Italian cooperation are: Burkina Faso, in particular for economic development and health; Ethiopia, a country that has faced four humanitarian crises linked to drought, cholera epidemic, the flow of migrants from neighbouring

countries and forced returnees from Saudi Arabia; Kenya, Mozambique, Niger, Senegal, Somalia and Sudan.

Other interventions of Italian cooperation, other than priority ones, are sporadic and depend on past commitments, crises, situations of instability and vulnerability, among which are planned interventions in Mali, Sierra Leone, and Tanzania.

In addition to interventions for individual countries, a number of regional programmes have been financed in the areas and sectors considered to be priorities, in particular a contribution to the World Bank of EUR 900,000 over the three-year programme for the programme 'Strengthening Statistical Capacity for Surveying Families for the Analysis of Poverty and Inequalities'; a contribution of EUR 3,500,000 over the three-year period to the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights for a project to support children who are victims of violence in Senegal, Mali, Gambia, Guinea Bissau and Niger; a contribution of EUR 875,000 to the IOM for a Communication Programme in the Field of Migration and Development, covering Burkina Faso, Guinea, Mali, Niger and Senegal; Unicef has been awarded a contribution of EUR 3 million over the three-year period for a programme to combat child malnutrition in West Africa.

In East Africa – a region to which more than EUR 56 million has been allocated in 2018 for gifts (35.6 million for development programmes and 21 million for emergency interventions) and about EUR 35 million in aid credit (27 million to Kenya and 8 to Ethiopia) – the initiatives focus mainly on food security, agricultural development and the growth of integrated supply chains of local production, and basic services (especially healthcare).

A specific mention deserves programmes to enhance production chains, job creation and development of a local agricultural business in Ethiopia and Sudan, and interventions in Kenya (on aid credit) to improve waste cycle management in Kajado County, and promote local development in the Malindi area. In Somalia, the wide spectrum of initiatives includes multilateral food security projects (with IFAD and FAO), infrastructure development (with African Development Bank and EU) and maternal-child health (with UNFPA), and bilateral initiatives in the field of higher education in support of the Somali National University.

The Italian Cooperation is also engaged in East Africa with a comprehensive programme of emergency interventions to deal with the serious crisis in South Sudan and neighbouring countries (with contributions of 4 million euros), and the situation of endemic instability in Somalia (5.25 million euros), with projects on food security, water, hygiene and health. Finally, EUR 7 million has been

allocated to humanitarian programmes in Ethiopia to support drought-stricken communities, and thus also to improve the living conditions of populations in areas at risk of irregular migration, and to provide basic services - water, education and health - in refugee camps housing Eritrean citizens.

Regarding Mediterranean Africa, the most important countries are Egypt, Tunisia, and Libya, which is one of Italy's top priorities.

The same area - which in 2018 was allocated about 38 million gift resources (25.5 million for development projects, and 12.5 million for emergency programmes in Libya) and 55 million in aid credit (to Tunisia) - continues to be strategic in view both because of the priority given to the stabilization of Libya and the consolidation of Tunisian democracy, and in light of the challenge posed by the management of migration phenomena on the southern shore of the Mediterranean.

In Tunisia and Egypt, where Italian Cooperation has been present for decades, the focus is on economic development (with an emphasis on supporting the private sector), job creation and strengthening of institutions and social cohesion.

In particular, in 2018 Tunisia, as mentioned, a credit line of 30 million euros - in addition to 20 million euros of own resources of Cash Deposits and Loans - to finance private investments in agriculture and the solidarity economy (PRASOC project), and a credit of 25 million euros to improve infrastructure and school services , while among the initiatives financed with gift resources stands out support for decentralisation aimed at improving municipal services and assisting 31 newly established municipalities (PRODEC programme).

In favour of Egypt, gift initiatives have been decided to promote the inclusive and sustainable development of the tomato supply chain (with UNIDO), the involvement of the Egyptian diaspora to offer economic alternatives to irregular migration (with IOM), the rehabilitation of the Museum of Islamic Art in Cairo (with UNESCO), and the conscious management of population growth with local "media" campaigns (with UNFPA).

In Libya, on the other edge, the difficult conditions on the ground have only recently set the stage for the start of limited development activities, including a child protection programme and one to improve waste cycle management in Tripoli, which is financed with resources from the Africa Fund.

In 2018, the 13 delegated cooperation initiatives in Africa assigned to the DGCS and AICS, worth a total of around 170 million euros, took on a total value of around 170 million euros, with activities in priority countries such as Burkina

Faso, Egypt, Ethiopia, Libya, Niger, Senegal and Sudan, for a total volume of more than 186 million euros.

In line with the approach of bilateral projects, the main objective of delegated cooperation programmes is the fight against poverty with interventions to promote economic development and agriculture, social cohesion - paying particular attention to the conditions of women and young people - and the creation of employment as susceptible factors, among other things to affect the root causes of migration.

In 2017-2018, the Italian Cooperation continued its efforts to address the issues of the Balkans and the Middle East.

Italy thus ranked 9th among EU countries in terms of its humanitarian aid budget, preceded by Germany, the United Kingdom, Sweden, the Netherlands, Denmark, Belgium, France and Ireland, confirming a virtuous trend that began in 2013 that brought the budget up, registering a 16% increase compared to 2016.

In particular, 24% of the resources went to the Syrian crisis, 16% to the Lake Chad area (Niger, Nigeria, Cameroon, Chad), 13% to the Horn of Africa, 8% to Libya, 5% to Central African Republic, Yemen and South Sudan (including Uganda), 4% respectively to Palestine, Iraq, Sudan, and West Africa, 2% to Afghanistan and 1% respectively to the Democratic Republic of Congo and Ukraine.

In 2018, with a budget of 135.41 million euros, of which 131.5 million for the year 2018 and 3.91 million of eur 2017 residual funds, the Italian Cooperation has helped to meet the growing global humanitarian needs arising from the multiplication of hotbeds of crises, even prolonged over time, caused by conflict situations and natural disasters.

2. Resources for Sustainable Development Cooperation

With regard to resources, the data available is based on the budget law for 2019; we are reminded that Italy has in recent years started a path of gradual realignment of the CPS/GNI ratio, which rose from 0.14% in 2012 to 0.30% in 2017.

In absolute terms, in 2017 the amount counted as Public Development Cooperation (CPS) amounted to EUR 5,209.89 million.

From 2018 this figure is declining: already in the General Statement of the State Administration 2019 and precisely in the attached Report and on cooperation activities in 2018 (former art. 14, paragraph 2, l. 125/2014) was noted that, according to the latest estimated data, in 2018 the Italian APS recorded a decrease compared to 2017.

This decline is largely attributable to the significant decrease in expenditure on the temporary reception of refugees and asylum seekers in Italy and will be interesting as the Covid 19 pandemic will affect future budgetary decisions.

The OECD-DAC 2018 report (presented on 10 April 2019) shows a global decline of 2.7% in the ODA and 4% in aid to African countries.

This is due in large part to the decrease in expenditure on aid for the hospitality of refugees and asylum seekers as a result of the slowdown in the number of arrivals, with these expenditures expected to be accounted for as development aid.

In this context, the 2018 OECD-DAC report in Italy recorded one of the largest declines, from 0.3% in 2017 to 0.23 percent; The Italian figure also affected the reduction in the cost of providing for refugees.

The 2018 Report attached to the Document in question shows that the amount of the APS for the year 2018 amounted to EUR 4,405.76 million, or 0.25% of GNI.

In the budget for 2020, the total number of development cooperation interventions, set out in Exhibit 28 at Tab. 6, amounted to EUR 4,403.42 million for 2020.

The 2019 budget law also stipulated that the CPS/GNI ratio would remain stable in 2019, but will decline from 2020, in anticipation of a significant decrease in the cost of assistance to refugees and asylum seekers.

The document in question states that: "It is the government's commitment, starting from the next DEF, to relaunch a path of adjustment of the annual appropriations for development cooperation, such as to put Italy in line with the commitments made at international level in accordance with article. 30 of Law No. 125/2014".

The forecasts of the budget law for 2019 were therefore as follows:
5,011.85 mln. 2020;

4,428.21 mln. euro for 2021;
4,477.20 mln. 2022.

3. The effectiveness of development cooperation

To be effective, it is necessary, as a management priority, to enable the Agency to be able to work in efficiency conditions. It lacks both quantitative and qualitative human resources and the headquarters is logistically inadequate for its operation.

To monitor progress and measure commitment to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals, data availability and quality need to be improved. The European Development Consensus calls on Member States to adapt their statistical systems to enable *follow-up* of the 2030 Agenda.

For Italy, ISTAT conducts national coordination in the production of indicators for the monitoring of agenda 2030.

Starting in December 2016, ISTAT began to make the indicators available for Italy on a six-monthly basis on the information platform dedicated to the SDGs.

The indicators are then updated periodically. The 2018 OSS Implementation Report was released by ISTAT. The three-year collaboration with ISTAT, which is responsible for the production of indicators and the periodic collection of data, will continue.

The three-year Action Plan for the effectiveness of development cooperation will be finalised and implementation will begin. The Plan aims to bring the action of the Italian Cooperation system into line with the principles and commitments on effectiveness made in the Forums of Rome, Paris, Accra, Busan, Mexico City, Nairobi. The Plan sets out the actions expected to be carried out in the three-year period 2019-2021 to improve the quality and effectiveness of development cooperation, with a particular focus on identifying a set of qualitative and quantitative measurable result indicators according to THE OECD-DAC effectiveness indicators.

As a novelty, these indicators are expected to be used, starting in 2019, in the Annual Report on the activities carried out. In order to verify the compliance of the activities carried out and the results achieved in relation to the DTP's objectives of action, in line with art. 12 and 4 of Law 125/2014. **In addition, a results-based management system (RBM) is expected to be**

introduced within the AICS over the three-year period, which also includes the preparation of a report for results.

In the 2019 annual programme, a feasibility study will be financed for the introduction of an RBM system in AICS in the amount of EUR 250,000. The study will allow you to define a work plan and its costs.

In terms of evaluation, a "Development Cooperation Assessment Assessment Guide" is also being finalised, defining the role and responsibilities of the MAECI-DGCS under Law 125/2014 (the latest "Evaluation Guidelines" date back to 2010) and will give guidance on the impact assessment, activities that relate to the improvement of the quality and effectiveness of development cooperation.

Finally, to consolidate processes and activities, the DGCS has reconstituted the Advisory Committee on Evaluation and, in the light of Law 125/2014, functions and composition.

In addition to the members of the DGCS, AICS and the Italian Evaluation Association, the Committee includes 10 delegates, academics (CRUI) and representatives of civil society and other actors in the development cooperation system. The Committee conducts advisory functions on the various aspects of the evaluation function of the MAECI-DGCS.

Over the three-year period, the three-year evaluation programme will be implemented, using external independent assessors (a new list of Italian providers of assessment services, for the first time digital and "open") has been established and financial resources for annual programme evaluations of gift interventions, on the basis of annual agreements between MAECI and AICS, approved by the Joint Committee. To ensure timely, sufficiently comprehensive, and international standards of data on development resources and cooperation activities carried out by Italy's central, regional, and local administrations and other public bodies,

The *open aid* model of the Italian Agency - now limited to initiatives managed by AICS - will be progressively extended to the other players in the Italian Development Cooperation System. The aim is to create a national database of all-encompassing development cooperation that, exceeding the time limits of the data communicated to the OECD-DAC, publishes "real-time" data and information on the development cooperation initiatives of all actors. To achieve these objectives, in addition to a minimal investment in the adaptation of IT tools, it will be necessary to invest in capacity building and staff training.

4. Towards the National Conference of International Cooperation

The National Conference of Development Cooperation is scheduled for January 2021 in accordance with Article 16, paragraph 3 of the Law 125/14. It will be organized by AICS, in conjunction with MAECI and will represent an important moment of reflection for the different players in the sector and a moment of verification on what has really been possible to do "system". In the coming months, the main local stakeholders (OSCs, diasporas, institutions, profit subjects) will be invited to organise according to a regional dimension. These assemblies will also draw up an Atlas of solidarity and development cooperation at regional and Italian level.

In order not to always start from scratch it would be important to consider what was signed in the Final Manifesto of the previous national conference of January 2018 which we report in full as a reminder.

"Italian cooperation: manifesto for changing the future"

We, volunteers, associations, professors, co-workers, experts, young people, women and men, engaged in international cooperation, have come to the National Conference of Development Cooperation to discuss its future, how to make it more effective and important.

We recognize that development cooperation is again at the centre of the political agenda today, with more financial, human resources, more initiatives, and ideas. This revival translates not only into a new institutional structure but into a new style and culture of inclusion, with more transparency of processes, participation, foresight, able to decide, risk and with a focus on new ideas.

We believe in a world, where it is possible not to leave anyone behind, in full compliance with the limits of natural resources. **We believe that international cooperation is a factor in the economic, social and cultural development of our country. In line with the fundamental challenges facing Italy and the world, international** cooperation:

- measures the confidence and solidarity with which Italy looks to the world and projects itself into the future;
- **It is a qualifying route of internationalization;**
- works for the global common good and responds to planetary imbalances;

- it represents a way of relating to other peoples, of making friends in the world, of participating in globalization without suffering or imposing it;
- weaves the places of living together, threatened by particularism and fear;
- **lives of authentic alliances, made up of stories of people's lives, of those who do and receive cooperation;**
- it is a life project to find your place in the world, even before a job.

We are also aware that the perception of development cooperation is going through a complex and critical period. On the one hand, the development aid scenario is radically changing with the new development agenda that overcomes the distinction between poor and advanced countries, universalising environmental and development challenges. On the other hand, there is a danger of misunderstandings and exploitation of cooperation, due to the difficulties of managing migration crises and the temptation to spectacularize and profit on the fears and closures that they bring. **To counter this climate of distrust, we need to better explain, better understand what we do, change the way we tell the country how Italy's cooperation changes people's lives, starting with those who do. We have a duty to be transparent, realising every euro invested and promoting the meeting between cultures, putting into practice the new national strategy of education global citizenship.**

The world of development cooperation is more diverse than has been said so far. It can account for thousands of public and private actors, for-profit and nonprofits. There are synergies to explore as well as inconsistencies to be reduced. We must recognize that the audience of the actors of cooperation has widened. For this reason it is necessary to incubate the new and original actors of cooperation, associations of migrants, remote support, small territorial authorities, social enterprises, accompanying them on a path that will make them subjects able to express their full potential.

We recognize the contribution of immigrant associations and second generations, native co-workers, bridges of peace, development, and integration because they maintain relations with the countries of origin by producing economic, social and cultural remittances. They represent a unique means for the internationalization of the territories and the Italian system. We must enhance the skills of diasporas for the development of countries of origin and foster free and conscious migration dynamics.

We recognize the positive role that businesses can play in eradicating poverty.

Some Italian companies are now at the forefront of the sustainability of their investments in research and innovation on environmental and social issues, for the use of extremely advanced materials and technologies. They can play an essential role in the transfer of knowledge and technology to the least developed countries, ensuring continuity, economic growth and social inclusion, while respecting the global standards of decent work. We must promote the inclusive and socially responsible business model in our country's corporate culture.

We face the challenge of involving young people in cooperation that will give rise to a new consensus in society around the values of solidarity, reciprocity, humanitarian principles, and a new way of belonging to a global world. Young people build bridges, not walls.

Their large presence at the Conference indicates that a new leadership class of cooperation is being formed. Young people want to be protagonists in building a new world, starting from themselves, from the possibility of making authentic life choices, of building genuine relationships and adopting lifestyles consistent with their values. It is an urgent objective to define a career path in cooperation that meets these needs of young people, starting with the school-cooperation link which must systematically enter the school training supply plan.

We believe that only our collective action, as individuals, civil society, businesses, and local, national institutions, is essential to overcome all these challenges of our time. Dialogue, partnerships, and relationships with each other are strengths that characterize us as Italy in the eyes of the world. Let us not take them for granted and find them today. With the courage to look far, with choices of commitment and civil passion, we ask politics to recognize, also through electoral programmes, that cooperation is a value and a fundamental opportunity for every citizen, both by choice of life and for the benefits that come with the country.

We intend to reconvene in 2021 and, in the period that separates us from that date, the Italian Cooperation is committed to some concrete steps:

- **Encourage widespread national awareness of the scope of the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda through extensive awareness campaigns aimed at all sections of the population;**
- Establish an annual award for journalists and communicators who award innovative productions that tell the many faces of cooperation;
- Periodically monitor national public understanding of development cooperation issues through demoscopic research and media coverage of the topic;

- Start the path to ensure the consistency of public policies with the objectives of cooperation, through the publication of a national study by the National Council for Development Cooperation that identifies the most critical issues;
- Establish paid internships for university students at the offices of the Italian Cooperation Agency;
- **To include a representation of young people, diasporas and parliamentarians within the National Cooperation Council;**
- To provide for the possibility of including junior or training human resources in the Projects funded by the Agency;
- Strengthen the skills of diaspora associations through training and technical assistance to ensure their autonomous initiative capacity in the design in international cooperation;
- Supporting the training of Italian SMEs aimed at facilitating their participation in public evidence procedures also by creating a platform of public-private initiatives to promote the intersection of demand and supply between profit and non-profits;
- **Identifying ways to finance feasibility studies to facilitate the creation of private public partnership initiatives with positive effects on development;**
- Promote the establishment of a fund by Cash Deposits and Loans (CDP) to support investments in infrastructure, SMEs and climate change in partner countries that will leverage national, European and CDP public resources.

An Italy open to the world that prepares a more just future is a great opportunity, this idea of a better Italy is our responsibility.