

Idea



IDEASS

Innovation for Development and South-South Cooperation

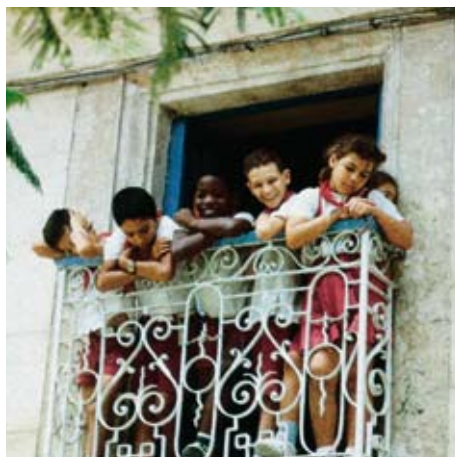
INTRODUCTION

IDEASS is an International cooperation programme aimed at strengthening integrated and participatory territorial development processes, by stimulating an increasing use of innovations. It seeks to enhance the capacity of public and private territorial actors to meet the needs of the local population by using innovative working methods and tools that have been effectively used both at the national level and in other countries.

The framework of IDEASS is the commitments of the main international summits of the '90s and the Millennium Assembly, with priority given to cooperation among Southern actors, and with the support of the more industrialized countries. IDEASS facilitates the identification, promotion, and transfer of those innovations which have demonstrated their contribution to human development, the enhancement of environmental resources and the reduction of poverty and social exclusion.

IDEASS is a thematic complement to the activities of human development and anti-poverty programmes realized by the Governments of various countries, with the support of UNDP, ILO, UNIFEM, UNOPS and other United Nations Organizations. These programmes promote integrated and participatory territorial development processes, in the framework of national policies and with the support of public and private actors, and civil society. They represent a framework within which various international cooperation actors can collaborate in a coordinated way. More than 300 local administrations of the most industrialized countries operate in these programmes through decentralized cooperation. IDEASS collaborates with those administrations that, through their specialized structures, identify qualified innovations which contribute to territorial development processes, enhancing technical solutions and working methodologies in various fields of action.

In involved countries IDEASS provides support to those national institutions responsible for promoting science and technology, for elaborating strategies and carrying out activities to increase the access of territorial development actors to innovations used elsewhere in the country, or available internationally. The programme is also a tool for fomenting south-south cooperation, by supporting these institutions in systematizing a potential supply of technologies and methodologies which could generate interest in other countries.



IDEASS ACTIVITIES

The main activities of IDEASS, both at national and international level, are:

- Building a “supply” of innovations through research both in participating countries and at international level. In collaboration with the respective authors of innovations, IDEASS produces brochures which present the innovations, gathering them into national catalogues and an international catalogue.
- Promoting innovations with potential users. The brochures produced are disseminated in involved countries by national institutions of science and technology and, internationally, through the IDEASS web page: www.ideassonline.org
- Formulating and implementing projects for methodological and technological transfer. In collaboration with those interested in adopting specific innovations, projects for their adaptation and transfer are implemented, with the technical assistance of the respective authors and with the support of international and decentralized cooperation actors.
- Supporting national policies and strategies. Qualified national institutions are involved directly in the realization of transfer projects so as to guarantee that innovations have a potential impact at national level. Moreover, national strategies of science and technology oriented towards territorial development actors are supported.
- Formulating and implementing strategic projects. In collaboration with national interested actors, IDEASS contributes to identify and realize projects which envisage the utilization of innovations related to different fields of action, within an integrated and sustainable territorial development strategy.

FIELDS OF ACTION

The fields of action correspond to issues addressed by the main world summits of the '90s and the UN Millennium General Assembly.

- Governance, improving the functioning of local institutions, promoting rights and active citizenship, facilitating concerted territorial development planning, managing public services, involving public sector institutions and social actors in the management of basic services.
- Sustainable management of environmental and territorial resources, managing the historical heritage, protecting and enhancing environmental resources, using renewable energies, recycling waste, territorial planning for risks reduction and emergencies management, appropriate use of technologies and methodologies.
- Developing sustainable health and social services, decentralizing services, increasing access to and coverage of appropriate services, appropriate use of technologies and methodologies, implementing territorial services for the social and economic inclusion of disadvantaged people.
- Developing sustainable educational services, decentralizing educational systems, widening access to education and professional training opportunities, valorizing cultural heritage, identifying appropriate technologies and methodologies.
- Local economic development, providing integrated services for local businesses, facilitating concerted planning of territorial economic resources, encouraging use of technologies and innovative products, facilitating access to economic processes most disadvantaged groups, promoting decent work.

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE INNOVATIONS

Innovations can be products, technologies or social, economic or cultural practices. The most important features of the innovations promoted by IDEASS are the following:

- They contribute to human development. IDEASS promotes those innovations which contribute to solving problems acknowledged internationally. Moreover, it gives priority to methodologies and technologies which represent innovative solutions in terms of human development both for developing countries/territories and for industrialized countries.
- Impact. Innovations should have proved to have a significant and sustainable impact on the objectives for which they were designed.
- Transfer potential. IDEASS promotes innovations able to be replicated in various contexts. Therefore, it takes into account the existence of possible legal barriers constraining intellectual property, the level of technological complexity, the dependence of an innovation on special social, institutional, cultural or environmental situations.
- Validation at national and international level. IDEASS does not try to evaluate the effectiveness of the innovations. Hence, priority is given to innovations that have already received a reliable national or international validation.
- Cost-benefit advantage. Innovations should demonstrate a cost/benefit advantage compared to the alternatives which respond to the same needs.
- Availability of technical assistance. Inventors of innovations should be willing to provide technical assistance for methodological and technological transfer processes, in the countries and with the actors that may require it. During the transfer processes, intellectual property rights of the inventors are protected. During the transfer process of innovations which generate economic value, IDEASS guarantees that, through the active participation of public institutions and working in the framework of public development policies, the entire population will draw benefit.



BUILDING A SUPPLY OF INNOVATIONS

IDEASS identifies innovations created and implemented in each involved country in collaboration with national institutions in charge of promoting science and technology (Ministries, National Councils, Science Academies, and so on). This work results in a National Innovations Catalogue consisting of brochures prepared by the authors of the respective innovations, using a standardized format.

Innovations are identified by consulting qualified institutions, universities, research centers, local governments, territorial services, international cooperation organizations as well as producer associations and civil society organizations and all the other interested actors.

National science and technology institutions may also convene national competitions about innovations for human development. The documentation necessary for launching such competitions is available at the IDEASS web page. Beyond representing a way to identify innovations, these competitions, valorize the creativity that exists in the country and generate a broad interest on how to best take advantage of the existing national capacity.

The IDEASS Secretariat also works on building and enlarging an international supply of innovations, collected in an International Catalogue, published on the IDEASS web page. This catalogue, which does not try to be exhaustive, represents an incentive for the countries and is a stimulus for south-south cooperation. Innovations are identified by consulting web pages specialized in innovation dissemination, universities, qualified experts within different fields of action, international cooperation actors, and also by organizing specific international competitions on innovation. The requests for innovation expressed by national and territorial actors of the countries participating in the programme represent a fundamental criterion.

PROMOTING THE INNOVATIONS

Each innovation is presented in a brochure prepared by the authors of the respective innovations, using a standardized format. The brochures are internationally promoted through the IDEASS web page. In order to deepen specific aspects of the innovations, the brochures provide all the information needed to facilitate initial contacts with the authors of those innovations.

In the interested countries, national science and technology institutions, in collaboration with human development programs, are responsible for the diffusion of their respective National Catalogues, which should create an interest in their utilization at national level. The diffusion is realized in different ways: by opening a specific session in the web page of the institution, directly by potential users, specific events, Innovations Fairs, the qualified United Nations Agencies and national Universities.

The brochures of the innovations coming from other countries are promoted in the same way. The diffusion of these brochures seeks directly to increase the request for a better knowledge about the related innovations, to assess their relevance for solving problems of national and local contexts, and to realize methodological and technological transfer projects when interested actors may require them.

The promoted activities envisage the systematic involvement of those national institutions responsible for different fields of action, in order to guarantee that possible transfer projects could be framed into their respective national policies.

THE TRANSFER PROJECTS

Once these promotional activities generate a specific interest for a national or international innovation, the necessary steps are taken to formulate a technological and methodological transfer project. The nature of the project activities may vary according to the innovation in question, but in all cases they are carried out with the technical assistance of the innovation's creators.

The implementation of the projects will follow these stages. When the innovation of interest comes from another country, IDEASS International Secretariat organizes for the creators of the innovations, a first mission to the interested country.

- Presentation of the innovation. Through an organized national event, the innovation is presented to the interested public. These events are usually organized by the national institutions of science and technology in collaboration with the multilateral human development programmes. In their turn, they involve the appropriate national authorities, potential users, public and private bodies, universities, international cooperation organizations and United Nations Agencies.
- Formulation of the transfer project. Through an ad hoc working group with interested actors, the authors of the innovation provide technical assistance for feasibility studies and to formulate a project to implement the innovation in the country. The project indicates the responsible institutions and actors, activities, technical assistance required in the country from the innovation inventors, modalities of monitoring and evaluation, and costs.
- Presentation of the project to potential donors. The ad hoc working group organizes meetings with international cooperation actors or potential donors (foundations, regional banks, etc.), to present the project proposal and to solicit financial and technical participation in the implementation phase.
- Project realization. The project is implemented with the technical support of the innovation creators, specialized experts, and with the technical and financial support of the promoters' programmes and other international cooperation actors that have been mobilized.

SUPPORT TO NATIONAL STRATEGIES

During its activities, IDEASS gives priority to territorial development actors. Nonetheless, the use of innovative methodologies or technologies in different fields should be framed in national norms and policies established by the competent institutions.

In many cases, during the elaboration of policies and strategies which complete the proposed innovative approaches, the transfer projects envisage support to national actors. For example, even the best use of natural and traditional medical resources within an interested territory, can have a greater impact if the Health Ministry of the country elaborates a national strategy for the integration of these practices in its regular public health services. Specific technical assistance projects are therefore designed to support these activities in collaboration with the authors of the innovations, coming from countries of the north and south.

IDEASS also supports national actors in charge of promoting science and technology in elaborating strategies and instruments for the benefit of territorial development actors. These activities are carried out through south-south cooperation, valorizing those countries that already have established decentralized national science and technology systems oriented towards solving overriding problems in their own country.

THE IDEASS INTERNATIONAL TECHNICAL SECRETARIAT

The IDEASS Programme, as a whole, is implemented by UNOPS Switzerland Operation Centre in Geneva, and coordinated by an International technical secretariat located in the FAO buildings in Rome. The IDEASS secretariat works in close collaboration with ongoing multilateral human development programmes in interested countries and with the United Nations Agencies involved in the ART (Articulating thematic and territorial networks for human development cooperation) Initiative.

The ART Scientific Committee for human development cooperation, being Edgar Morin the president, (which links personalities from the worlds of science, culture and international cooperation as well as United Nations and national research and training centers) provides support to the IDEASS Programme throughout its activities.

The international technical secretariat guarantees the following functions:

- Coordinates the activities of innovation identification, including through international competitions.
- Collaborates with the respective authors in producing the brochures by guaranteeing translation works and graphic presentations.
- Guarantees the dissemination of the brochures to interested countries and with all participating actors, including through the web page.
- Supports the start up of the IDEASS activities in interested countries and provides the requested technical assistance.
- Organizes and co-finances, in collaboration with countries, travel for the inventors of the innovations in order to promote and formulate the transfer projects.
- Provides the technical support during projects formulation and start up, collaborating also in international fund raising activities.
- Organizes International meetings in order to promote innovations on specific themes and to involve new potential technical and financial partners.
- Realizes monitoring activities and produces periodic reports requested by donors.



CONTACTS

Bernhard Shlachter, Director Switzerland Operation Centre UNOPS in Geneva: bernhards@unops.org

Giulia Dario, IDEASS International Coordinator: giuliad@unops.org

The IDEASS Programme - Innovation for Development and South-South Cooperation - is part of the international cooperation Initiative ART. IDEASS grew out of the major world summits in the 1990s and the Millennium General Assembly and it gives priority to cooperation between protagonists in the South, with the support of the industrialised countries.

The aim of IDEASS is to strengthen the effectiveness of local development processes through the increased use of innovations for human development. By means of south-south cooperation projects, it acts as a catalyst for the spread of social, economic and technological innovations that favour economic and social development at the local level. The innovations promoted may be products, technologies, or social, economic or cultural practices. For more information about the IDEASS Programme, please consult the website: www.ideassonline.org.

IDEASS

Innovation for Development and South-South Cooperation



ART - Support for territorial and thematic networks of co-operation for human development - is an international co-operation initiative that brings together programmes and activities of several United Nations Agencies. ART promotes a new type of multilateralism in which the United Nations system works with governments to promote the active participation of local communities and social actors from the South and the North. ART shares the objectives of the Millennium Development Goals.

In the interested countries, ART promotes and supports national co-operation framework programmes for Governance and Local Development - ART GOLD. These Programs create an organized institutional context that allows the various national and international actors to contribute to a country's human development in co-ordinated and complementary ways. Participants include donor countries, United Nations agencies, regional governments, city and local governments, associations, universities, private sector organizations and non-governmental organizations.

It is in the framework of ART GOLD Programmes where IDEASS innovations are promoted and where cooperation projects are implemented for their transfer, whenever required by local actors.