

# PROMOTING THE RIGHTS OF CHILDREN AND ADOLESCENTS THROUGH SOUTH-SOUTH COOPERATION

Brazil-UNICEF partnership



October - 2025

Photo: UNICEF BRZ / Alecio Cezar



MINISTRY OF  
FOREIGN  
AFFAIRS



**FEDERATIVE REPUBLIC OF BRAZIL – BRAZILIAN  
COOPERATION AGENCY (ABC) OF THE MINISTRY  
OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS (MRE)**

**MINISTER OF STATE**

Ambassador Mauro Vieira

**SECRETARY-GENERAL OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS**

Ambassador Maria Laura da Rocha

**DIRECTOR OF THE BRAZILIAN COOPERATION  
AGENCY**

Ambassador Ruy Pereira

**DEPUTY DIRECTOR OF THE BRAZILIAN  
COOPERATION AGENCY**

Ambassador Maria Luiza Ribeiro Lopes

**OFFICER RESPONSIBLE FOR TRILATERAL SOUTH-  
SOUTH COOPERATION WITH INTERNATIONAL  
ORGANIZATIONS**

Cecília Malaguti do Prado

**PROJECT ANALYST**

João Luiz Soares Clementino

**PROJECT ASSISTANT**

Hugo Peixoto Leão

**UNITED NATIONS CHILDREN’S FUND (UNICEF)**

**UNICEF REPRESENTATIVE IN BRAZIL**

Joaquín Gonzalez-Aleman

**DEPUTY REPRESENTATIVE FOR PROGRAMMES**

Layla Saad

**SOUTH-SOUTH COOPERATION OFFICER**

Niklas Stephan

**SOUTH-SOUTH COOPERATION OFFICER**

Juliana Monteiro Bernardino



Foto: unicef-brz-joao-ripper

# Content

<b>Presentation</b> .....	<b>4</b>
<b>Acronyms</b> .....	<b>6</b>
<b>1. Introduction</b> .....	<b>7</b>
<b>2. Key Achievements</b> .....	<b>9</b>
<b>General Context</b> .....	<b>9</b>
<b>The Trajectory of the Partnership</b> .....	<b>13</b>
2013–2016: A Partnership in the Making .....	13
2017–2019: A Period of Change .....	17
Key Findings and Recommendations of the Evaluation.....	18
2020–2021: Programme Redesign .....	23
2022–2024: “Resumption” .....	25
Technical Cooperation.....	25
Evidence Generation .....	30
Planning and Management .....	33
<b>3. Conclusion</b> .....	<b>34</b>

# Presentation

As we celebrate over ten years of existence of the Brazil–UNICEF Partnership Programme for Trilateral South-South Cooperation, the Brazilian Cooperation Agency (ABC), of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, reaffirms its commitment to promoting public policies focused on children and adolescents as a strategic dimension of its international engagement.

Since its creation in 2013, the Programme has consolidated itself as a relevant instrument of Brazilian cooperation by bringing together national institutions and international partners to strengthen institutional capacities and improve public policies in countries of the Global South.

Grounded in the principles of South-South cooperation—horizontality, solidarity, respect for sovereignty, and mutual benefit—the Programme has enabled not only the sharing of Brazilian experiences but also their adaptation to different realities, jointly developed with partner countries.

Throughout this trajectory, the Programme has responded to 40 requests and carried out 50 technical missions, reaching more than 20

countries. Activities have mainly focused on the areas of Social Protection and Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH), as well as initiatives in early childhood, child protection, public budgeting, and local governance.

These results highlight the role of Brazil and its international technical cooperation as a tool for strengthening institutions and enhancing more effective, inclusive, and sustainable public policies in the Global South. Promoting the rights of children and adolescents must remain central to national and international agendas.

We remain committed to deepening this partnership and expanding its impact so that more children and adolescents can grow up with dignity, secured rights, protection, and opportunities.



**Ambassador Ruy Pereira**  
*Director of the Brazilian  
Cooperation Agency*

UNICEF insists that the survival, protection and development of children are universal development imperatives that are integral to human progress everywhere.

As part of its core business, UNICEF mobilizes political will and material resources to help countries ensure a “first call for children” and to build their capacity to form appropriate policies and deliver services for children and their families.

UNICEF believes that sharing experiences across national borders among and between countries facing similar challenges can help accelerate progress towards sustainable results for children, especially those facing socio-economic vulnerabilities.

UNICEF has since 2011 partnered with the Government of Brazil to promote Trilateral South-South Cooperation based on a mutual commitment to the most vulnerable children, adolescents and their families. The partnership seeks to deliver results for children across the world, by supporting, brokering, and facilitating the exchange of technical expertise and successful

practices between countries, within the scope of the UNICEF mandate.

This report tells the story of over a decade of progressive collaboration between the Government of Brazil and UNICEF in South-South Cooperation, drawing out key developments and results.

It tells the story of an expanding partnership across borders where children are at the heart of the agenda.

We hope this report will demonstrate how collaboration, the exchange of experiences, and mutual learning can lead to meaningful improvements in the lives of children and their families across the globe.

We wish you a meaningful reading.



**Joaquin Gonzalez-Aleman**  
*UNICEF Representative in Brazil*

# Acronyms

ABC – Brazilian Cooperation Agency

CAGECE – Water and Sewage Company of the State of Ceará

CEDAW – Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women

CRC – Convention on the Rights of the Child

ENDICA – National School of the Rights of Children and Adolescents

ESARO – UNICEF Eastern and Southern Africa Regional Office

FAO – Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations

FUNASA – National Health Foundation

HRBA – Human Rights-Based Approach

HQ – Headquarters

IBGE – Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics

IBSA – India, Brazil, South Africa

ILO – International Labour Organization

IPEA – Institute for Applied Economic Research

MDS – Ministry of Social Development and Assistance, Family, and Fight against Hunger

MEL – Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning

MoU – Memorandum of Understanding

MRE – Ministry of Foreign Affairs

PPA – Pluriannual Plan

SDGs – Sustainable Development Goals

SINASE – National Socio-Educational System

SSC – South-South Cooperation

STP – São Tomé and Príncipe

SUAS – Unified Social Assistance System

TSSC – Trilateral South-South Cooperation

ToC – Theory of Change

UN – United Nations

UNFPA – United Nations Population Fund

UNICEF – United Nations Children's Fund

UNSDCF – United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework

WASH – Water, Sanitation and Hygiene

WFP – World Food Programme



# 1. Introduction

The Government of Brazil has been actively engaged in South-South Cooperation (SSC) for decades, through bilateral, trilateral, and multilateral partnerships with developing and developed countries, as well as with United Nations agencies and other regional and international organizations.

In 2011, UNICEF and the Government of Brazil joined efforts to promote Trilateral South-South Cooperation (TSSC)<sup>1</sup> for Development. That year, a global Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed, grounded in the commitment to advancing the rights of children and their families, as well as women's rights. Building on this MoU, in 2013 UNICEF Brazil and the Brazilian Cooperation Agency (ABC) of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MRE) signed a cooperation agreement, formally

establishing the Brazil–UNICEF TSSC Programme.

The partnership reflects the recognition that countries can learn together and adapt successful strategies to accelerate development and inclusive socioeconomic growth. As a result, these efforts contribute to improving the situation of children and families involved in the initiatives, with positive impacts at the national level.

Under the leadership of ABC, the Government of Brazil and UNICEF work together to establish trilateral technical cooperation initiatives with countries of the Global South that wish to partner with Brazil. These initiatives are grounded in a shared belief: that a fairer world for children and women can be achieved through the joint implementation of proven policies designed to address pressing challenges.

**UNICEF plays a key role in supporting and facilitating South-South cooperation**

<sup>1</sup> In this report, Trilateral South-South cooperation refers to a cooperation model in which the Government of Brazil, the Government of a partner country, and an international organization (in this case, UNICEF) participate.

for development. Its aim is to maximize the benefits of knowledge exchange while fostering synergies and complementarities across the contributions of developing countries. In this way, UNICEF helps to advance children's rights in a more coordinated and impactful manner.

UNICEF brings a unique comparative advantage to these processes. With its global presence, technical expertise, and strong capacity for knowledge generation, UNICEF is well positioned to connect cooperation demands with innovative practices that strengthen the rights and well-being of children and women.

Through ABC, UNICEF and the Government of Brazil jointly implement trilateral cooperation projects that build strategic partnerships, mobilize stakeholders, and leverage technical, financial, and human resources in both Brazil and partner countries. These projects open space for meaningful South-South exchanges, enabling countries to identify, adapt, and scale innovative solutions to barriers that stand in the way of children's rights.

In recent years, countries from all regions have approached UNICEF Brazil for guidance on establishing technical cooperation with the Government of Brazil in areas linked to UNICEF's mandate. This growing demand highlights the increasing recognition

of Brazil's successful practices and the interest in adapting them to national contexts.

This report provides a summary of key activities implemented between 2013 and 2024 and the main results achieved under the ABC and UNICEF TSSC partnership. Beyond a descriptive account of activities, it presents a historical overview of the Programme, which since 2013 has been operationalized through the Brazil–UNICEF TSSC Programme (hereafter “the Programme”). It is expected that this report will serve as a temporal record to help readers situate the TSSC partnership in its current context and understand the trajectory the Programme has followed to reach its present stage.

The document is organized into four timeframes:

1. 2013–2016 – exploratory phase and development of the partnership between ABC and UNICEF in relation to the TSSC agenda;
2. 2017–2019 – a period marked by contextual, institutional, and programmatic changes;
3. 2020–2021 – a period shaped by the challenges of the COVID-19 crisis;
4. 2022–2024 – a period of recovery, strengthening, and strategic alignment of the Programme.



Photo: unicef-brz-joao-laet

## 2. Key Achievements

### General Context

South-South Cooperation is grounded in a set of principles that align with the UNICEF mandate, including human rights, gender equality, and equity. These SSC principles are central to shaping partnerships. One such principle is horizontality, which in practice translates into participatory and collaborative processes in which all partners contribute on equal terms. Accordingly, all the content presented in this report was developed and implemented collaboratively, with the active engagement of UNICEF, ABC, and other partners.

Importantly, ABC's contribution, and that of other Brazilian partners, extends beyond financing: the essence of Brazilian SSC lies in the engagement and commitment of specialized institutions and their technical teams. Together, these contributions have a positive impact on children's lives, while also strengthening partnership management, particularly in planning, monitoring, and evaluation.

Since the Programme's inception, UNICEF and ABC have implemented trilateral SSC initiatives with more than 20 countries worldwide. These activities have been carried out in collaboration



Figure 1: Normative and operational framework of reference for Brazil-UNICEF Trilateral Cooperation

with numerous Brazilian institutions at both federal and subnational levels.

As illustrated in Figure 2, most initiatives focused on two main areas: Social Protection (11 countries) and Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) (8 countries). In addition, cooperation has also taken place in areas such as early childhood development, health, child protection, public budgeting, and local governance. To date, the Programme has responded to 40 cooperation requests, supported 50 technical missions, and carried out numerous online activities.

Some Programme initiatives were continuous, involving multiple activities over a year or more, while others were short-term and targeted. In certain countries (such as Angola, Argentina, Jamaica, Nepal, and São Tomé and Príncipe), separate activities on different themes were carried out at different points in time (see Figure 3 for details).

In addition to implementing technical cooperation, the Programme has produced a wide range of knowledge products. These include mappings of good practices, policy briefs, and communication materials.

Dissemination has been ensured through the Programme’s dedicated website—jointly developed by ABC and UNICEF—as well as through the institutional websites of both organizations.

These products serve multiple purposes. They share knowledge on Brazilian public policies and on the

Programme itself. They also inform the design and direction of the partnership, feeding into a cyclical process of learning, refinement, and improvement. At the same time, they enhance accountability to Brazilian society, ensuring transparency regarding the use of public resources in international cooperation.

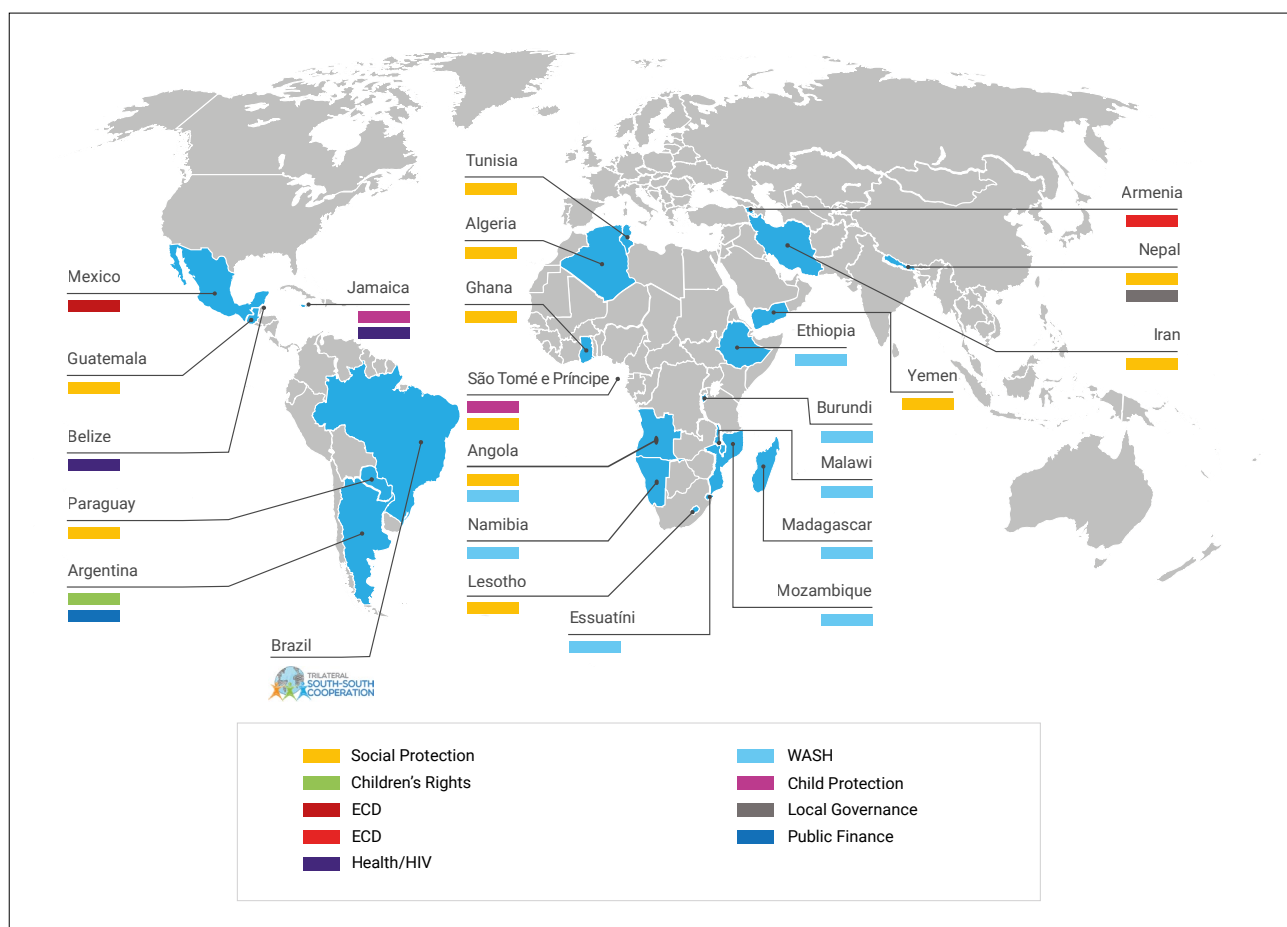


Figure 2: Scope of the Brazil-UNICEF Trilateral South-South Cooperation Programme (2013-2024)

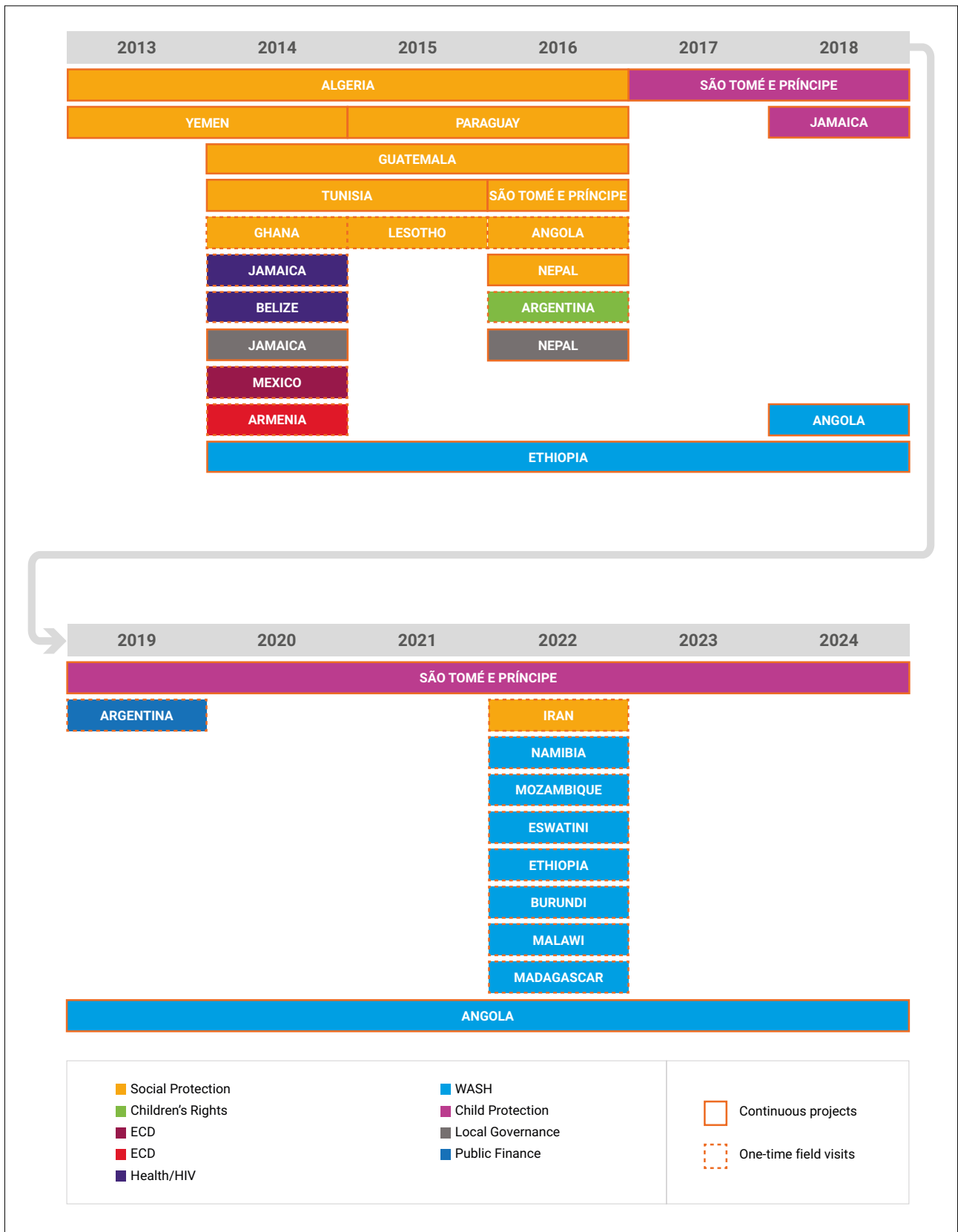


Figure 3: Partner countries, thematic areas, and temporality of initiatives, between 2013 and 2024

# The Trajectory of the Partnership

## 2013–2016: A PARTNERSHIP IN THE MAKING

The partnership between UNICEF and ABC within the framework of TSSC emerged in response to increasing requests from countries seeking, through UNICEF, to learn from Brazil's experience in developing and implementing child-focused public policies.

Activities during the initial years were made possible through financial contributions and efforts from both the Government of Brazil and UNICEF. These included capacity-building processes, exchanges of experience, and policy dialogues. At the same time, resources were invested in establishing the Programme's own structure.

A significant milestone was the development of the Brazil–UNICEF TSSC Guidelines, launched in 2015 in four languages (Portuguese, English, Spanish, and French). The document provided operational and programmatic orientation to partner countries on how to develop cooperation initiatives under the Programme. It also presented tools that supported strategic planning, defined clear objectives, and promoted results-based approaches. These guidelines and tools were aligned with

ABC's Technical Cooperation Manual and built on UNICEF's principles and those of South-South Cooperation.

As shown in Figure 3, most TSSC initiatives from 2013–2016 focused on Social Protection. At the time, the Government of Brazil received numerous requests from countries interested in learning from successful experiences such as *Bolsa Família* and the *Cadastro Único*. In partnership with the Ministry of Social Development and Fight Against Hunger (MDS)<sup>2</sup>, the Programme facilitated knowledge exchanges and capacity-building with ten countries<sup>3</sup>. Some activities took place through technical or policy missions, such as study visits to Brazil (Angola, Ghana, Lesotho), while others involved a broader set of actions—including study visits, training, and participation in international conferences—conducted in Brazil and/or in partner countries (Algeria, Guatemala, Yemen, Nepal, Paraguay, São Tomé and Príncipe, and Tunisia).

As illustrated in Figure 4, there was clear alignment between UNICEF's global programming on Social Protection and

2 Today the Ministry of Social Development and Assistance, Family and the Fight Against Hunger.

3 Angola, Algeria, Ghana, Guatemala, Yemen, Lesotho, Nepal, Paraguay, Sao Tome and Principe and Tunisia.



Ministers Tereza Campello (MDS, Brazil) and Molahlehi Tiisetso Letlotlo (Lesotho) meet in Brazil in 2015. Photo: MDS

Source: MDS

the group of countries seeking to learn from the Brazilian experience in this area.

Beyond Social Protection, the Programme also implemented activities in 2013–2016 with six countries<sup>4</sup> in other areas of UNICEF’s mandate. These included early childhood development (Armenia and Mexico), health (Belize and Jamaica), local governance (Jamaica and Nepal), WASH (Ethiopia),

4 Argentina, Jamaica, Belize, Mexico, Armenia, Ethiopia, Nepal.

and broader child rights issues (Argentina)<sup>5</sup>.

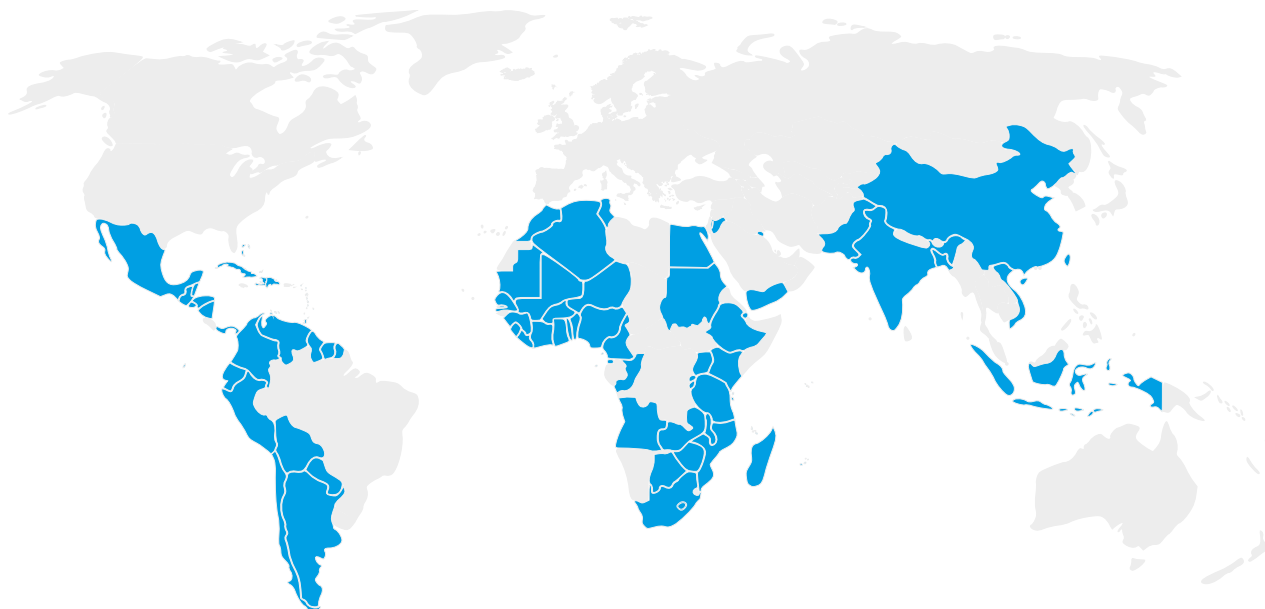
The Ethiopia initiative marked the first structured project under the Programme. Signed in 2014 for a two-year period, it served as a pilot TSSC project between Brazil and a partner country, and the first to be implemented in the WASH sector<sup>6</sup>.

5 More information and details about the CSST activities implemented by the Program, in the period 2014-2016, can be accessed [here](#) and [here](#).

6 More information about the project with Ethiopia can be found [here](#).

## UNICEF support on social protection

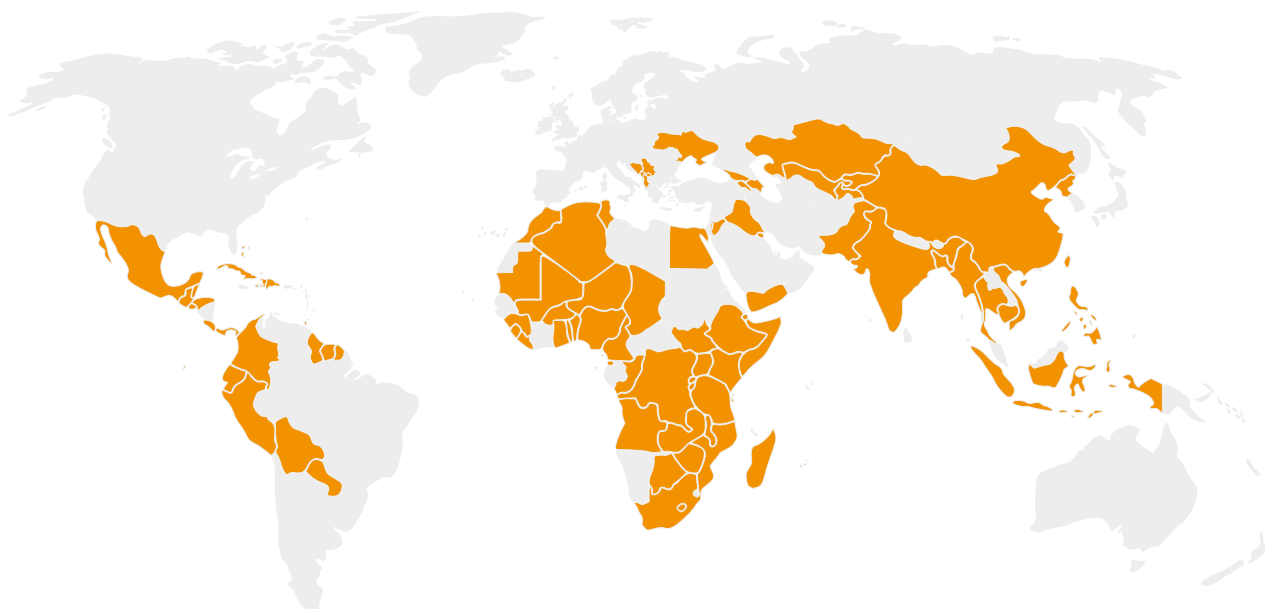
---



Source: UNICEF social protection mapping database 2015

## Government of Brazil social protection beyond borders

---



Source: MDS

Figure 4: UNICEF presence vis-à-vis Brazil's partner countries in the area of Social Protection (2015)

Source: [UNICEF, 2016](#)

In addition to technical cooperation, the Programme produced two key knowledge products: a publication on youth participation and the systematization of the *Proteja Brasil* mobile application.

The publication on youth participation sought to systematize experiences and provide a reference framework. It presented core concepts of participatory processes from the perspective of young people, compiled international standards and national laws, and documented practices and participation spaces to inspire further debate and reflection on rights and participation. It aimed to serve as a reference for both national and international audiences.

The *Proteja Brasil* mobile application was developed to facilitate reporting and provide information on violence against children. Based on the user's location, the app identified phone numbers, addresses, and directions to specialized police units, child protection councils, juvenile courts, and organizations combating violence against children in major Brazilian cities. The app was part of the Convergence Agenda, a national initiative created to protect children from violence during mega-events such as the 2014 FIFA World Cup. The Agenda involved federal, state, and municipal governments, civil society, the private sector, and

international organizations, including UNICEF. It was also part of UNICEF's global #ENDViolence initiative<sup>7</sup>.

During these first years, the Programme established partnerships with multiple Brazilian actors at both federal and subnational levels. Partners included the MDS; Ministry of Cities; National Health Foundation (FUNASA); Ministry of Health (MS); Ministry of Human Rights; Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics (IBGE); Institute for Applied Economic Research (IPEA); state governments of Rio de Janeiro, Bahia, São Paulo, and Ceará; and the municipalities of Salvador, Paulo Afonso, Fortaleza, Sobral, Eusébio, and Cotia, among others.

<sup>7</sup> Protect Brazil was discontinued in 2020.



Photo: unicef-brz-nay/jinkriss

## 2017–2019: A PERIOD OF CHANGE

Between 2017 and 2018, the Programme underwent significant shifts. It evolved from a model characterized by multiple ad hoc demands—primarily implemented through study visits and training—towards more structured projects, designed for longer duration and with medium- to long-term results.

During this period, the Programme received requests from two countries seeking to develop TSSC projects with Brazil and UNICEF:

1. São Tomé and Príncipe (STP) in the area of child protection;
2. Angola in the area of WASH.

In addition, a short-term collaboration with Jamaica was carried out through two knowledge-sharing and capacity-building activities.

In response to the requests, two projects were developed. The first, with STP, was elaborated between 2017 and 2018, signed in 2019<sup>8</sup>, and designed for one year of implementation. The second, with Angola, was developed between 2018 and 2021, signed in 2022<sup>9</sup>, and planned for two years of execution.

8 Project still in the implementation phase.

9 Project still in the implementation phase.

In line with the then newly adopted Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), ABC and UNICEF updated and refined the tools guiding the Programme's implementation. In 2017, a second edition of the Brazil–UNICEF TSSC Guidelines was released.

In 2019, UNICEF commissioned an external evaluation of the Programme, carried out by Articulação Sul and financed by UNICEF. The study examined the Programme's implementation across 16 countries between 2013 and 2018<sup>10</sup>. Its findings confirmed that this South-South cooperation initiative had become a highly relevant channel for all partners, serving as a catalyst for dialogue on child-focused policies and programmes, with Brazilian experiences as an entry point.

The evaluation also highlighted that the good practices shared by Brazil were not only relevant but also inspiring—offering valuable lessons for partner countries and for the broader UNICEF system. Beyond facilitating exchanges, the Programme helped strengthen institutional and individual capacities, generate knowledge, and foster intersectoral approaches. Most

10 It's important to emphasize that without the collaboration and support of UNICEF teams in the countries involved in this evaluation exercise, it would not have been possible to implement the evaluation. UNICEF's presence in the countries and existing relationships with government counterparts were essential in facilitating access to information and key informants.

importantly, it contributed to tangible policy improvements in partner countries, including stronger legal and institutional frameworks and greater recognition of the importance of child rights-based social policies for vulnerable children.

## KEY FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE EVALUATION

According to the evaluation's conclusions, the Programme successfully mobilized additional

resources and achieved significant results in public policy, demonstrating strong cost-effectiveness. It also contributed to strengthening and refining Brazilian and UNICEF practices in TSSC, particularly through the development of planning, monitoring, and management tools.<sup>11</sup>

Beyond presenting results, the evaluation offered important recommendations and lessons learned that guided the Programme's future work across its three dimensions:

<sup>11</sup> Further details on the results achieved by the Program in the period 2013-2018 can be accessed [here](#).

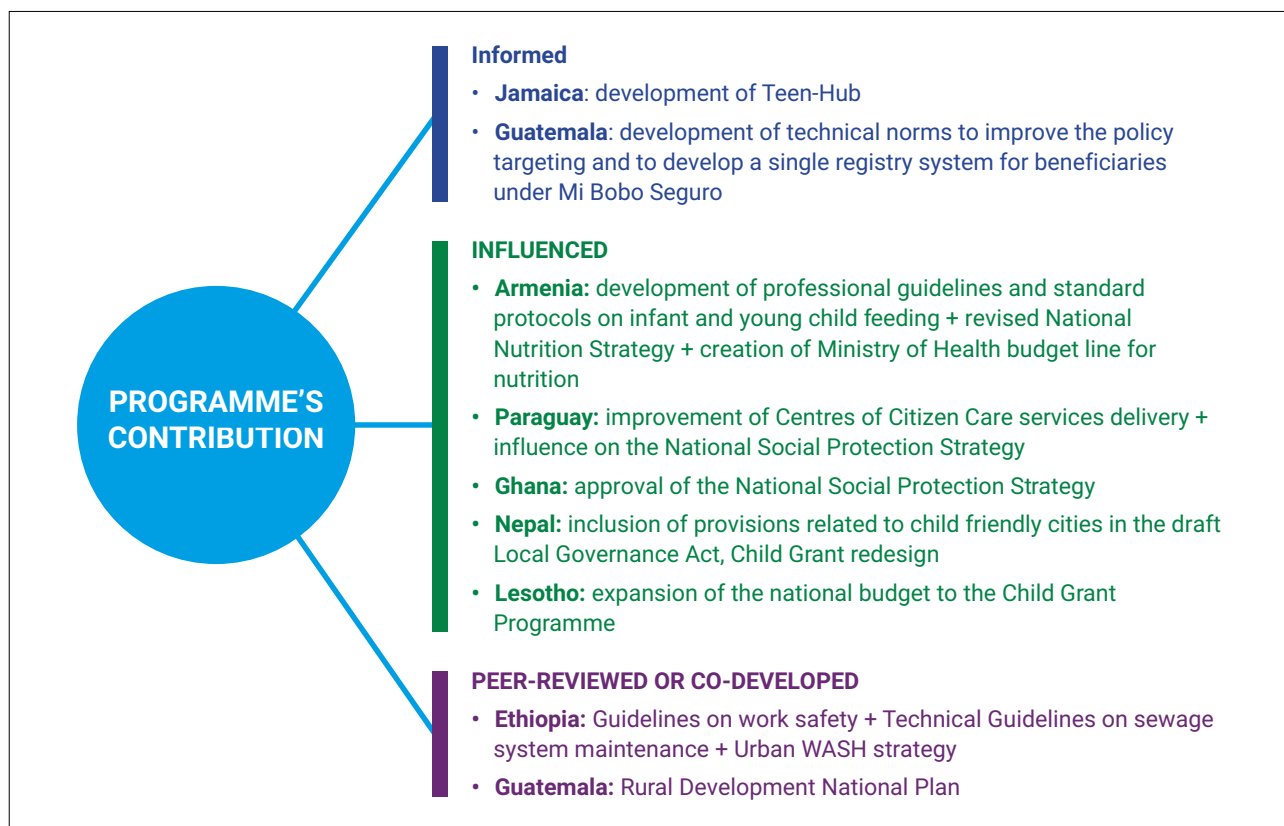


Figure 5: Examples of the Programme's contribution to improving partners' legal and institutional frameworks

Source: Articulação Sul, 2019

technical cooperation, evidence generation, and management.

In summary, recommendations emphasized the importance of:

1. Conducting a new round of strategic planning with broad partner consultation to inform Programme design;
2. Making explicit the Programme's approach to childhood and gender through the development of a Theory of Change (ToC);
3. Developing tools and criteria to identify priority areas where the Programme could mobilize greater efforts and enhance results in partner capacity development;
4. Strengthening the Programme's ability to design demand-responsive initiatives through closer dialogue with partners, aligning expectations;
5. Improving the Programme's knowledge management component;
6. Refining follow-up actions to enhance sustainability;
7. Supporting the engagement and responsiveness of UNICEF country offices to TSSC through collaboration with UNICEF Headquarters;
8. Expanding the Programme's Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEL) component, starting with the implementation of an online MEL platform.

Additional findings are presented in Figure 6 below.

## Evaluation of the Trilateral South-South Cooperation Programme of the Government of Brazil and UNICEF (2013-2018)

### Regions:

- Latin America and the Caribbean
- Africa
- Asia

### Numbers:

- Countries: 16
- Demands: 20
- Study visits: 42
- Evaluative interviews: 78

### Thematic programme areas:

Social Protection, Child Protection, Local Governance, Early Childhood Development, Adolescent Health, Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene (WASH).

### Highlights

- Increased knowledge and technical capacity development for the design and implementation of public policies.;
- Significant results with low financial investments;
- The Programme leveraged 3,5 times the amount of its own total budget, through UNICEF and other international partners;
- Strengthened TSSC practices with the development of new methodologies and guidelines, applicable to future initiatives.

The evaluation presents the results of the Brazil-UNICEF Trilateral South-South Cooperation (TSSC) Programme, including its contributions to change processes in partner countries with regards to promoting equitable and human-rights oriented development for children, adolescents, and women.

The study points out key challenges and bottlenecks as well as the quality and sustainability of Programme activities and results.

The evaluation assessed the contributions of the Programme at national and international levels, while bringing about recommendations for the future.

### Relevance

- Relevant to all partners involved: countries, institutions, Brazilian foreign policy, UNICEF global agenda;
- Support for the rights of children and women – sharing of public policies on social protection targeting vulnerabilities.

### Efficiency

- Low investments of Programme resources generated significant results;
- Standard procedures provided partner countries with clarity on the participatory Governance mechanisms of the Programme.

### Sustainability

- Improved legal and institutional frameworks in eight out of 15 countries; generation of interinstitutional and intersectoral arrangements in six countries;
- Strengthened relations between the Government of Brazil and UNICEF as well as with partner countries; incentivized SSC between other countries.

### Effectiveness

- Mobilization capacity at political and technical level in partner countries. Increased technical and diversified knowledge;
- Effective sharing of knowledge between partners through SSC exchanges: planning and organization, dissemination, and adaptation.



Figure 6: Main findings: Evaluation of the Brazil-UNICEF Trilateral South-South Cooperation Program.

The evaluation took place alongside a broader reflection process led by ABC and UNICEF to strengthen the Programme’s design, including its planning, monitoring, and evaluation mechanisms. The conclusions and recommendations of the evaluation directly informed this process, particularly in shaping the Theory of

Change (ToC) and the Programme’s Logical Framework.

The ToC was developed in 2019, during the evaluation itself, as a first step toward establishing a pilot Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEL) system—one of the evaluation’s key recommendations. Later that year, a workshop brought together UNICEF

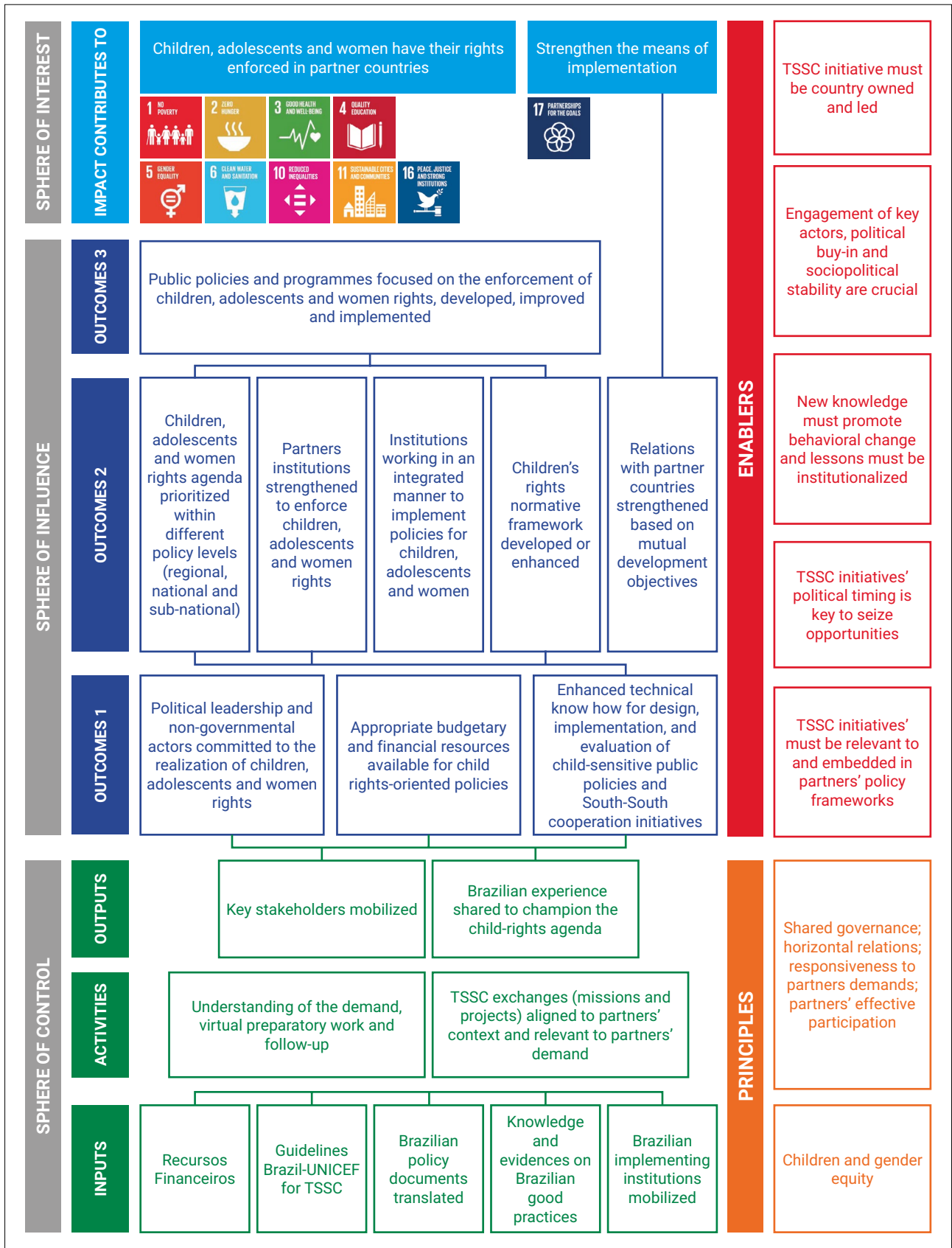


Figure 7: Theory of Change of the Brazil-UNICEF CSST Programme (developed within the scope of the 2019 evaluation)

(Brazil and HQ), ABC (across several departments), Articulação Sul, and other UN agencies<sup>12</sup>. This collaboration resulted in a proposal for a Programme Logical Framework that outlined a shared vision for the future.

That same year, the Programme promoted an innovative collaboration between Argentina and Brazil, exemplifying the principle of mutual benefit in TSSC. Initiated at Argentina's request, the cooperation focused on public budgeting and created opportunities for exchange on budget transparency and methodologies for analyzing public spending on children.

12 UN Women, ILO, FAO, WFP, UNFPA.

Beyond supporting Argentina's learning, the cooperation stimulated strategic work in Brazil on monitoring and analyzing public financing for children. It helped the Brazilian government develop methodologies to track public allocations for children, later adapted to early childhood. This has informed joint UNICEF–government strategies to promote budget transparency and monitoring of social spending on children and early childhood. These advances, inspired by Argentina's experience, have also influenced Brazil's public policy planning, including federal, state, and municipal multi-year plans (PPAs).



Cooperação Brasil-Argentina, 2019. Oficina no IPEA sobre orçamento público para crianças e adolescentes.

Photo: UNICEF Brasil

## 2020–2021: PROGRAMME REDESIGN

The context in which the Programme operated between 2013 and 2019 changed significantly in 2020. Shortly after the presentation of the evaluation results in early 2020, the COVID-19 pandemic emerged, bringing profound impacts on the Programme. Among the most significant were the suspension and delays of planned activities and initiatives, including the implementation of the Management Response Plan. This Plan had been jointly developed and agreed between ABC and UNICEF in early 2020, in direct response to the evaluation's recommendations.

One of the initiatives most directly affected was the TSSC project with São Tomé and Príncipe (STP). As noted above, this initiative had been signed and launched in 2019 through a technical mission to STP, which also enabled the first training activity focused on supporting children and adolescents who were victims and/or witnesses of violence. By 2020, this was the only TSSC project under implementation within the Programme. To avoid its complete interruption, efforts were made to adapt the initiative to an online modality, with

the promotion of remote exchanges of experience.

This process coincided with the development of the TSSC project with Angola, which at that time was still in its design phase. Following a technical mission to Brazil in 2019, the Government of Angola submitted an initial project proposal (in the form of a concept note) to the IBSA Fund in 2020. This proposal was approved in April 2021. In the same year, the drafting of



the project document began, followed by its review by the IBSA Fund Board.

Due to travel restrictions, members of the project's technical group<sup>13</sup> conducted the scoping process remotely. As a result, and following a series of online technical meetings, a virtual scoping mission to Angola was carried out in July 2021. This mission was instrumental in defining the project's logical framework.

While the Angola project was being developed in parallel with the remote implementation in STP, ABC and UNICEF also joined efforts to continue strengthening the Programme's overall design, in line with the 2019 evaluation recommendations. This included, for example, the development of the conceptual framework for the MEL system.

Still in 2021, and in line with the 2019 evaluation's recommendations—particularly recommendation 5, which called for strengthening the Programme's knowledge management component—the Programme launched a new area of work focused on evidence generation. This entailed documenting Brazilian good practices to inform TSSC processes. As a first step, a case study was initiated on the implementation of Law 13.431/2017 (commonly known as

<sup>13</sup> The technical group included representatives from ABC, UNICEF (Brazil and Angola), FUNASA, the Ceará State Water and Sewage Company - CAGECE, and the Ceará Cities Secretariat.

the “Law on Protective Hearing”) in the municipality of Vitória da Conquista, in the state of Bahia.

The choice of this study was motivated by three key considerations:

1. Its relevance to the ongoing cooperation with STP, where one of the main objectives was to strengthen child protection systems, particularly in relation to specialized and protective services for children and adolescents who are victims and/or witnesses of violence.
2. Its potential contribution to the expansion of the Law's implementation across Brazil, which remains a significant challenge, as the vast majority of Brazilian municipalities have not yet been able to implement it in their territories.
3. Its alignment with UNICEF Brazil's programming, which aims to support local government counterparts in implementing the Law through the UNICEF Seal initiative.

In addition, the case study could also serve as a valuable reference for potential future TSSC initiatives.

This work represented the first step in an important process of evidence generation—an agenda that, in recent years, has become increasingly central to the Programme.

## 2022–2024: “RESUMPTION”

In 2022, restrictions related to the COVID-19 pandemic began to ease. As a result, the number of Programme activities started to increase. During this period, the Programme advanced significantly along three main fronts: (i) technical cooperation; (ii) evidence generation; and (iii) planning and management.

### Technical Cooperation

While the project with São Tomé and Príncipe (STP) experienced delays due to government transitions in both countries, the project with Angola was launched in May 2022, with a first technical mission of a Brazilian delegation to Angola taking place in the

same month. The mission represented an important milestone, marking the beginning of project implementation.<sup>14</sup>

Throughout the implementation phase, UNICEF and ABC have worked jointly to document progress. This was done with the perspective that the initiative could serve as a reference for a potential future scale-up in Angola, as well as for other countries interested in developing similar initiatives. To date, three publications (available [here](#), [here](#), and [here](#)) and two videos on the project (available [here](#) and [here](#)) have been produced.<sup>15</sup>

14 As agreed between the project counterparts, and as also approved by the IBSA Fund Executive Board, the project, currently underway and initially scheduled to last two years, has been extended until March 31, 2026.

15 Further details on progress within this project can be found in these materials.



In the area of WASH, the Programme’s TSSC agenda underwent significant expansion in 2022. This growth was driven by demands from eight African countries<sup>16</sup> seeking to learn from Brazil’s experience in the sector.

The articulation with these countries was coordinated through the UNICEF Regional Office for Eastern and Southern Africa (ESARO), together with the respective UNICEF Country Offices. In response

16 Burundi, Eswatini, Ethiopia, Madagascar, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, and Rwanda.

to these requests, the Programme developed a strategy to launch a WASH-focused TSSC initiative between Brazil and Africa, initially concentrating on the geographic region covered by UNICEF ESARO.

The decision to engage with multiple countries in the same region, under a single thematic focus, not only aligned with the recommendations of the 2019 evaluation but was also consistent with the commitments set out in the Management Response Plan.



Figure 8: Map of the ESARO region



ESARO Mission, November 2022. Visit to the Secretariat of Cities of the State of Ceará.

As an initial activity, a [mission](#) to Brazil was organized with the participation of seven of the eight countries<sup>17</sup> from the ESARO region. Representatives from the Government of Angola and UNICEF Angola were also invited to share insights from their ongoing cooperation with Brazil and the IBSA Fund. Building on the foundations laid by the Angola experience, as well as on earlier TSSC initiatives between Brazil, UNICEF, and the Government of Ethiopia, the mission was designed as a starting point for a broader TSSC agenda on WASH with Africa. It provided

<sup>17</sup> Due to logistical challenges, Rwandan representatives were unable to participate in the mission.

participating countries with access to Brazil’s accumulated technical expertise in water, sanitation, and hygiene—particularly through the experience of the state of Ceará.

Beyond the knowledge gained by mission participants, the visit to Brazil facilitated a mapping exercise, through which the participating countries identified priority areas of interest. The purpose of this exercise was to inform potential next steps in the cooperation agenda between Brazil and the ESARO countries.<sup>18</sup>

<sup>18</sup> More details about the mission and its results can be found [here](#).

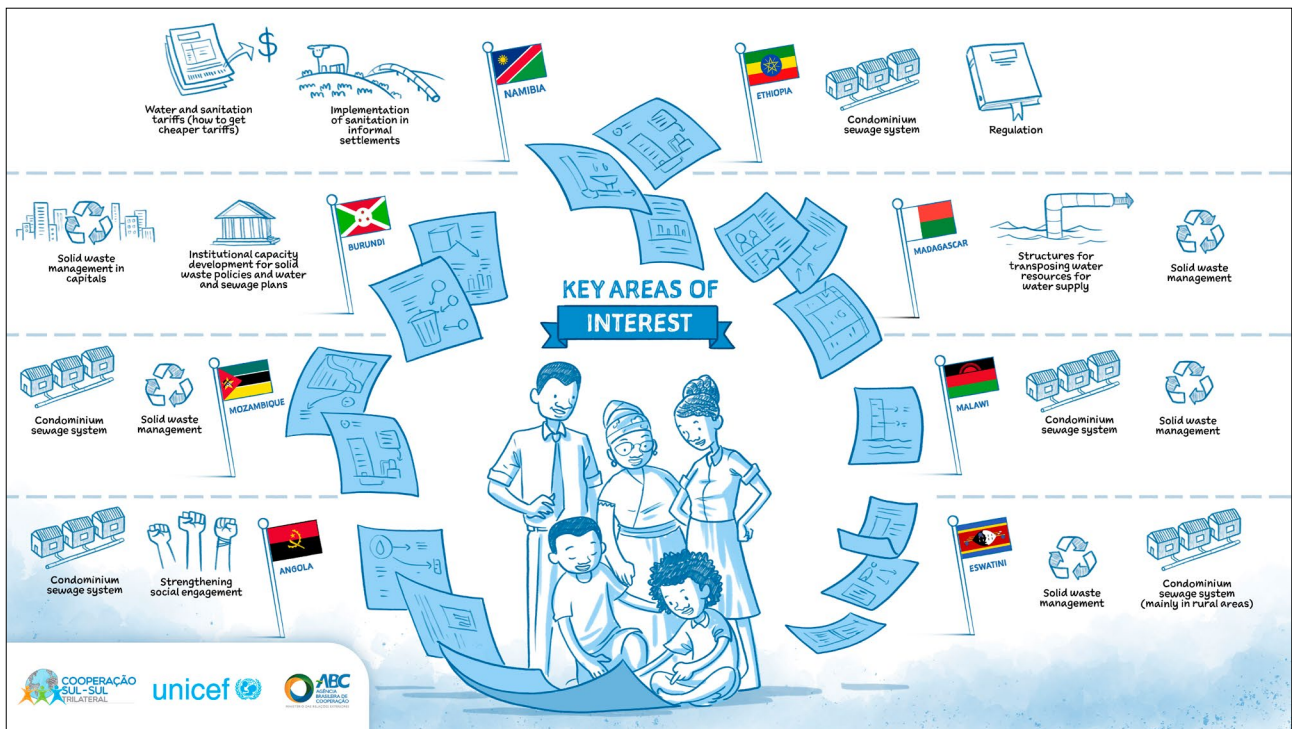


Figure 9: Topics of greatest interest to the countries participating in the mission to Brazil in 2022.

In 2024, as a follow-up to the mission, the Government of Eswatini formally requested Brazil to deepen cooperation in the area of WASH. Based on this request, a concept note was submitted to the IBSA Fund, which subsequently (in 2025) approved financing for the implementation of a two-year cooperation project. It is expected that this project will benefit from the lessons learned and experience gained from the Angola project.

With respect to the child protection project with São Tomé and Príncipe (STP), a second technical mission was carried out at the end of 2023, following an extended period of dialogue and knowledge sharing through remote meetings. The mission had been

delayed by the COVID-19 pandemic and governmental transitions in both STP and Brazil.

This time, the delegation included a multisectoral team from STP and visited the Municipality of Vitória da Conquista and the city of Brasília. The objective was to learn about the implementation of Brazil’s Law No. 13.431/2017 (the “Law on Protective Hearing”), the Family Foster Care Service, and the Socio-Educational System (SINASE).

The mission created valuable opportunities for knowledge exchange and peer learning. It contributed to strengthening the capacities of government institutions in STP and raising awareness on the comprehensive protection of children,

particularly those who are victims or witnesses of violence, those who have experienced neglect or temporary separation from their families, and adolescents in conflict with the law.

More specifically, the mission contributed to:

1. Enhanced knowledge among STP counterparts regarding the hearing and care of children in situations of violence, with emphasis on the implementation of such services;
2. Strengthened understanding among STP counterparts of the Family Foster Care Service, providing elements to assess the feasibility of adapting this service to the existing legal framework in the country;
3. Increased knowledge among STP counterparts regarding the

implementation of socio-educational measures for children in conflict with the law;

4. A validated work plan, endorsed by the initiative's steering committee, with clear guidance on next steps for implementation.

In 2024, the project faced new delays and, due to limited resources within the Programme, dialogues and activities continued to be conducted remotely. In line with the work plan agreed upon in 2023, counterparts in São Tomé and Príncipe (STP) were offered access to multiple online courses through the [ENDICA](#) platform. In total, 42 participants from STP expressed interest in enrolling in one or more courses. By the end of 2024, the project was extended, with implementation of a capacity-building plan scheduled for 2025.



Delegation from São Tomé e Príncipe in the Municipality of Vitória da Conquista, BA. Mission, December 2023.

Photo: Municipal Secretariat of Social Development, Vitória da Conquista

## Evidence Generation

Between 2022 and 2024, the Programme advanced its evidence-generation agenda, addressing key recommendations from the 2019 evaluation. That evaluation had underscored the importance of producing studies to demonstrate the impact of supported policies on the lives of women and children, as well as the need to develop materials that distill

lessons learned from relevant policy experiences.

The Programme pursued three main lines of work aimed at mapping and documenting good practices in the areas of WASH, social protection, and child protection (the latter already initiated in 2021 with regard to the implementation of the “Protective Hearing” Law in the municipality of Vitória da Conquista). As a result, a comprehensive set of knowledge products was developed:



### 1. Social Protection:

- A [report](#) on Brazil’s Unified Social Assistance System (SUAS).
- A set of [descriptive briefs](#) on the main programmes, benefits, and services under SUAS, as well as subnational experiences in social protection initiatives.
- A series of [five policy briefs](#) addressing different aspects of SUAS: (i) SUAS financing; (ii) cash transfers; (iii) adequacy of Brazilian social protection programmes for children; (iv) SUAS management; and (v) intersectorality within SUAS. These policy briefs were published in Portuguese and English, while the other materials were produced in Portuguese, English, and Spanish.



## 2. WASH:

- A [report](#) describing the organization of the WASH sector at the federal and subnational levels in Brazil.
- A set of [descriptive briefs](#) on good practices at the national, state, and municipal levels. Materials were developed in Portuguese, English, and Spanish.

## 3. Child Protection:

- A case study on the “Protective Hearing” Law, published in [three complementary documents](#) (in Portuguese and English):
- A [report](#) providing context and detailed description of the implementation process, identifying success factors and lessons learned;
- A [step-by-step](#) guide with practical orientation on the

implementation process and its key stages;

- A [policy brief](#) summarizing the main findings of the study and highlighting lessons learned and recommendations.
- In addition to these publications, [eight videos](#) were produced, collectively telling the story of the law’s implementation in the municipality. The videos include subtitles in [Portuguese](#), [English](#), [Spanish](#), and [French](#).



In parallel with documenting good practices, the Programme developed a dedicated [website](#) to centralize information and resources related to the initiatives, improving communication channels. The primary objective is to ensure that the Programme’s

accumulated knowledge and results reach a broader audience. Furthermore, the website aims to strategically position the Programme and enhance its visibility within the global landscape of international cooperation and child rights.

**COOPERAÇÃO SUL-SUL TRILATERAL** Uma parceria: **unicef** **ABC**

Contact POR ENG ESP A+ A-

HOME KNOWLEDGE PORTAL HOW TO ENGAGE PROGRAM OVERVIEW

South-South Cooperation | UNICEF Brasil

Projeto Aprovado.

Assistir no YouTube

...ely, a cooperation that works very well, since its goal is to promote Brazilian good practices, making use of existing capacities in each country:

### WHAT IS SOUTH-SOUTH COOPERATION?

South-South Cooperation (SSC) has been adopted by the United Nations (UN) as a key development cooperation modality. South-South Cooperation has the potential to play an important role in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) with equity and addressing children's and women's rights, with effectively scaled up solutions and leveraged resources from developing countries.

[Read more...](#)

### WHAT IS TRILATERAL SOUTH-SOUTH COOPERATION?

Trilateral South-South Cooperation (TSSC) brings together different actors—developing countries, developed countries and/or International Organizations—to share knowledge and implement initiatives aiming at the common goal of promoting development. TSSC builds on shared governance among the different actors involved and identifiable comparative advantages and can be implemented through different institutional settings. The Brazilian Government considers Trilateral South-South Cooperation as a modality for international development that benefits from comparative advantages arising from the partnerships with International Organizations in the search for cooperation and progress of mankind.

### BRAZIL-UNICEF TRILATERAL SOUTH-SOUTH COOPERATION

In the interest of tapping into the wealth of development experience, knowledge, skills and resources available in Brazil, UNICEF has joined efforts with the Government of Brazil (GoB) to foster horizontal trilateral South-South Cooperation (TSSC) partnerships with other developing countries. This strategy is based on the premise that a more equitable world for girls and boys is achievable by overcoming capacity gaps through sharing of highly relevant experiences and policy-

[Read more...](#)

#### TRILATERAL SOUTH-SOUTH COOPERATION INITIATIVES

- #WASH** Trilateral South-South Cooperation in WASH: The Trajectory of a Shared Learning Journey - Second year of implementation
- #WASH** Technical Guides - Simplified Sewage Systems

#### GOOD PRACTICES IN BRAZIL

- #WASH** Mapping of Good Practices in WASH in Brazil
- #SOCIAL PROTECTION** Programs, Services and Benefits of Brazilian Social Protection: Systematization and successful experiences

## Planning and Management

Following several years of work that contributed to improvements in management, planning, and monitoring instruments—and building on the prototype of an MEL system developed in 2021—the Programme advanced with the development of a operational pilot system in 2022–2023. This system was designed by contracted specialists in systems and software development, under the joint coordination of UNICEF and ABC. In 2024, an internal testing phase of the system was initiated.

Based on the new planning, management, and monitoring

instruments developed during 2021–2022, ABC and UNICEF also prepared a third edition of the [TSSC guidelines](#), published in 2023.

In addition to the development of the MEL system, and in line with the 2019 evaluation recommendations, ABC and UNICEF joined efforts to advance the Programme’s strategic planning. To this end, a participatory planning workshop was organized with the support of MATRES consultancy at the end of 2023. The workshop brought together 38 participants from 15 Brazilian federal entities, three subnational governmental entities, two international organizations, and one entity from the Federal District.

The workshop resulted in:

- Alignment among partners on results and lessons learned from the Brazil–UNICEF Trilateral South-South Cooperation;
- Participatory mapping of opportunities for collaboration in promoting the rights of children through Trilateral South-South Cooperation between Brazil and partner countries;
- A jointly designed and agreed roadmap for the next steps of the Programme’s strategic planning process, validated by ABC and UNICEF.



Photo: unicef-brz-gabriel-oliveira

## 3. Conclusion

Since its inception in 2013, the Programme has made significant progress. Through innovation and a continuous cycle of planning, implementation, monitoring, evaluation, and learning, it has grown not only in scale—with an expanding number of initiatives—but also in quality, with increasingly robust design aligned to medium- and long-term strategic objectives, and supported by instruments that strengthen implementation.

The 2019 external evaluation played a pivotal role in demonstrating the Programme’s contribution to the design and implementation of child-focused public policies. Equally, it generated lessons and recommendations that continue to guide and inform the Programme’s ongoing improvement.

Despite considerable challenges—including those imposed by the isolation of the COVID-19 pandemic—the Programme has continued to evolve, supported by programmatic refinements and stronger collaboration between ABC and UNICEF. The crisis prompted a reassessment of the Programme’s operating model, particularly in relation to technical cooperation. Activities previously carried out predominantly through travel had to be adapted to

remote modalities during the public health emergency.

A key lesson from this period is that while in-person missions remain indispensable to technical South-South cooperation—given the irreplaceable value of direct peer-to-peer exchanges—remote modalities can serve as a valuable complement, enhancing both reach and cost-efficiency. This became particularly evident in the cooperation with Angola and in the partnership with the IBSA Fund, which in 2023 supported a four-months remote training programme.

In recent years, the Programme has evolved through a strategic approach, aimed at developing evidence-based, structured cooperation initiatives with instruments that promote results-oriented design and clear objectives. The workshop held in late 2023 was a critical step in this evolution.

Looking ahead, it will be essential to advance the planning process to define the Programme’s operational model (“business model”) and scope for the coming years. A clear strategy for financing activities will also be indispensable, as financial sustainability remains an ongoing challenge.

As this report demonstrates, South-South Cooperation plays a vital role in advancing the child rights agenda across multiple dimensions—both technical and political. Sustained progress requires strong commitment and capacity at both levels. ABC and

UNICEF, together with their partners, remain committed to ensuring that the Programme continues to grow, expands its impact, and contributes to enabling more children to thrive, develop to their full potential, and enjoy their rights in dignity.



Photo: UNICEF/BRZ/Niklas Stephann

