



Exploring the role of the organized civil society (OCS) in achieving in Peru, Mexico and Colombia towards the fulfillment of the 2030 Agenda

Eduardo José Campechano-Escalona¹; Isabel Cristina Díaz de Campechano²; Gioconda Carmela Bellomo Montalvo³; Luis Enrique Ibarra Morales⁴; Giovanni Pérez Ortega⁵; Manuel Peñalver-Higuera⁶

¹Graduate School, Universidad César Vallejo, Perú

²Second Specialization Program, Universidad César Vallejo, Perú

³Graduate School, Universidad César Vallejo, Perú

⁴School of Business Administration, Universidad Estatal de Sonora, México

⁵Universidad Nacional de Colombia

⁶Universidad Privada Norbert Wiener, Perú

KEYWORDS

Agenda 2030
5Ps
Organized civil
society
Governance
Perú
Mexico
Colombia

ABSTRACT

This article examines addresses the role of organized civil society (OCS) in Peru, Mexico and Colombia in implementing of the 2030 Agenda. The objective was to analyze using a comparative approach the contributions, areas of action and challenges present in these countries on the basis of the 5Ps. The study adopts an interpretivist paradigm with a qualitative approach to conduct a hermeneutic content analysis of the websites of NGOs in Colombia, Mexico and Peru using the Atlas. TI. Using a content matrix to extract data from the mission and vision statements of each initiative analyzed, we derived categories and subcategories that enabled the construction of word clouds and a Sankey diagram aligned with the 2030 Agenda's 5Ps. The findings the importance of strengthening OCS. capacities through higher education institutions to promote citizen participation and foster collaboration among the various stakeholders involved. Among the final considerations, the role of Higher Education Institutions is emphasized as key actors in shaping a Governance model with action plans tailored to of each country's realities, in order to maximize the impact of OCS on achieving the 2030 Agenda.

RECIBIDO: 10/05/2025
ACEPTADO: 27/03/2026

1. Introduction

In a global landscape marked by the climate crisis, structural inequalities, and a loss of trust in traditional institutions, the 2030 Agenda serves as an integrative framework guiding the efforts of various social actors toward achieving sustainable development. This roadmap, adopted by United Nations member states, is structured around 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and five fundamental dimensions known as the "5 Ps": people, planet, prosperity, peace, and partnerships. Effective implementation of this agenda requires multisectoral and multilevel coordination across all sectors of society, including the active and transformative role of organized civil society (OCS); its participation is crucial for ensuring inclusive, democratic, and place-based approaches (Cleary, 2017; Hilbrich & Schwab, 2018).

How to cite this article / Standard reference: (APA 7th edition)

Campechano-Escalona, E.J., Díaz de Campechano, I.C., Bellomo Montalvo, G.C., Ibarra Morales, L.E., Pérez Ortega, G., Peñalver-Higuera, M.(2026). Exploring the role of the organized civil society (OCS) in achieving in Peru, Mexico and Colombia towards the fulfillment of the 2030 Agenda. *Prisma Social revista de ciencias sociales*, 55, 1-25. <https://doi.org/10.65598/rps.5848>

In Latin America—a region characterized by deep social inequalities and a history of uneven citizen participation—OCS has taken a leading role in promoting rights, strengthening institutions, and monitoring state action. Various studies show that these organizations act not only as service providers but also as agents of political and social innovation, capable of influencing the public agenda and driving structural transformations from the grassroots level (Galvão et al., 2023; Glandon et al., 2018). However, their work faces significant challenges, such as a lack of genuine recognition in policy planning, sector fragmentation, and a scarcity of regulatory frameworks guaranteeing their systematic and binding participation (Nwauche & Flanigan, 2022).

The implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in Latin America exhibits persistent issues characterized by poor coordination between state and non-state actors, limited institutionalization of citizen participation, fragmented sectoral efforts, and a lack of visibility regarding the contributions of organized civil society. There is evidence of weak integration of the 5Ps into national and subnational strategies, which hinders the establishment of effective governance based on multisectoral partnerships—a situation also observed in other Global South contexts (Di Nauta et al., 2020; Boadu, 2024). Consequently, many OCS initiatives remain isolated, lacking clear scaling-up mechanisms or structured channels for dialogue with governments.

Among the primary causes is the persistence of top-down, centralized governance models, which hinder community ownership of the SDGs and the formation of long-term partnerships. A lack of political will, an abundance of messianic political figures, and high levels of corruption—compounded by the limited technical capacity of public agencies to incorporate citizen participation and the financial instability of CSOs—combine to weaken their influence on decision-making (Espinosa & Rangel, 2022; Shanthosh et al., 2022). Added to this is a tendency to prioritize macroeconomic indicators and global metrics that obscure local approaches to sustainability, thereby perpetuating patterns of exclusion regarding knowledge systems and actors that do not align with dominant technocratic standards (Vanderslott, 2019; Wibeck & Linnér, 2021). In countries such as Mexico, Peru, and Colombia, this disconnect is exacerbated by the absence of robust regulatory frameworks to ensure access, transparency, and the continuity of civil society participation.

These limitations negatively affect the democratic quality of SDG monitoring and evaluation processes. They restrict the potential to co-create solutions tailored to local contexts, diminish the legitimacy of public policies in the eyes of the public, and perpetuate inequality gaps across the five dimensions of the 2030 Agenda. As experiences in Colombia and Ecuador demonstrate, CSOs acting as promoters of participation or data innovators face significant obstacles in sustaining their efforts over time—particularly in the absence of continuous funding or institutional recognition (Espinosa & Rangel, 2022; Fortune et al., 2018). This hinders the consolidation of territorial peace processes and initiatives to advance gender equity and ecological sustainability, while also limiting the impact of public policies aimed at the most vulnerable populations.

Overcoming these challenges requires implementing structured collaborative governance strategies that integrate, in a cross-cutting manner the principles of human rights, environmental justice, gender equity, and territoriality.

In light of this scenario, suggested measures include: strengthening national regulatory frameworks to ensure the binding participation of civil society organizations (CSOs); engaging universities in designing indicator systems that recognize community action and the generation of alternative data (citizen-generated, led, ethnographic, and narrative); and fostering inter-institutional partnerships that guarantee sustainable resources and permanent spaces for dialogue and consensus-building (Boadu, 2024; Espinosa & Rangel, 2022; Di Nauta et al., 2020). In other words, the proposal is to adopt analytical frameworks—such as the "5Ps"—using a holistic, non-hierarchical approach, thereby allowing the agendas of People, Planet, Prosperity, Peace, and Partnerships to be co-constructed based on local practices and knowledge, as demonstrated in studies on waste management (Wilson, 2023), public health (Shanthosh et al., 2022), and youth food policies (Boadu, 2024).

This research was conducted within this framework, with the general objective of analyzing the contributions, areas of action, and challenges of organized civil society in Peru, Mexico, and Colombia regarding the implementation of the 2030 Agenda through the lens of the 5Ps. The study seeks to reconstruct semantic networks to identify intervention patterns and emerging governance models, with the aim of proposing mechanisms that strengthen the role of organized civil society as a coordinating force in these contexts. This inquiry is justified not only by the need to generate empirical evidence from a regional perspective but also by its contribution to contemporary debates regarding the reconfiguration of relationships between the State, the citizenry, and sustainability in Latin America.

Since the United Nations General Assembly adopted the 2030 Agenda, the study of its implementation has gained prominence across multiple disciplines, particularly regarding multi-stakeholder governance and the participation of organized civil society. Specialized literature has shown that, while states bear formal responsibility for reporting progress, non-governmental organizations, religious communities, universities, and local networks play a crucial role in localizing the SDGs, generating alternative data, and fostering social innovation (Azubuike et al., 2024; Supaat et al., 2024; Banerjee, Murphy, and Walsh, 2020). This recognition has driven a paradigm shift in the understanding of sustainable development governance, moving away from top-down models toward more collaborative and adaptive approaches capable of integrating multiple scales and diverse forms of knowledge (Delabre, Alexander, and Rodrigues, 2020; Schilling-Vacaflor, 2021).

Over the last decade, civil society organizations (CSOs) have gained strength through their actions and their presence in political discourse. As De Zan (2006) posits, these organizations are defined—independently of their relationship with the state—by their specific goals or thematic focuses, the values legitimizing those goals, the nature of their practices, and the type of social relationships they foster, which may or may not be community-based in character.

From their inception, all such organizations have possessed immense social potential, manifesting in efforts to promote processes of comprehensive, sustainable, and equitable development. Yet, despite their significance and the time that has elapsed, the realm of CSOs has not been explored, developed, publicized, or fostered with the same vigor as the commercial private sector; addressing this remains an outstanding challenge (Bombarolo, 1995).

Nevertheless, one must acknowledge the efforts of various specialists who have advanced our understanding of CSOs through their characterization and differentiated analysis. In this regard, and by way of example, it is worth mentioning some of the unique properties of these organizations outlined by Torres (2004), such as: 1. The strong volunteer component within their workforce; 2. Their non-profit nature; 3. Their status as private entities engaged in public action; 4. Their independence or autonomy from the state and private sector enterprises; 5. Their pluralistic ideological framework; 6. Their objectives, which generally focus on serving a target population—whether by championing social interests or providing products and services that address social needs; and 7. An origin independent of the state, yet a reality shaped by significant state-imposed constraints, among others.

In regions such as Latin America, Africa, and Asia, civil society action has been particularly significant in filling institutional gaps, mobilizing resources, and strengthening accountability. In Nigeria, for instance, the potential of religious institutions to serve as hubs for social cohesion and channels for implementing public policies aligned with the SDGs has been documented (Azubuike et al., 2024). In Ethiopia, subnational health management levels have proven crucial for promoting equity amidst significant geographic and cultural disparities (Bergen et al., 2019). In Latin America, experiences in water governance, agroecological production, and tropical forest protection demonstrate how CSOs have articulated local demands to influence global agendas, even while facing substantial regulatory and financial obstacles (Cisneros, 2019; Delabre et al., 2020; Galvão et al., 2023).

The study draws on various theoretical approaches that allow for an analysis of the phenomenon's complexity from a systemic perspective: reflexive governance (Bauknecht et al., 2020; Cisneros, 2019), which posits that sustainability systems require adaptive capacities, collective learning processes, and deliberative structures that foster the inclusion of diverse actors, particularly in contexts of uncertainty; and the symbolic governance approach, which analyzes how global quantification processes—such as SDG monitoring indicators—create fields of power where international organizations legitimize specific forms of knowledge while sidelining more contextualized forms of measurement (Grek, 2020; Yamada, 2024).

Also included is the ESG (environmental, social, and governance) transformation perspective, as it offers a normative and operational framework for assessing how ethical, social, and environmental criteria are integrated into public and private decision-making (Chung, Margolin, and Vyakina, 2023; Schilling-Vacaflor, 2021), proving particularly useful for analyzing the role of economic actors in supply chain sustainability (Delabre et al., 2020). Finally, the concept of social capital—drawing on Durston (2003)—asserts that "social capital can be understood as the effective capacity to productively mobilize, for the collective benefit, the associative resources embedded in the various social networks accessible to group members"; from this, it is inferred that the essence of social capital lies in the ability to derive benefits by leveraging social networks.

These perspectives converge to provide a richer understanding of the role of CSOs as agents of emerging governance; however, the literature warns that a lack of institutionalization, regulatory fragmentation, and financial dependency among these organizations can limit the sustainability of their interventions (Amiraslani and Caiserman, 2018; Hussein, Menga, and Greco, 2018). There is a tendency to instrumentalize social participation as a legitimation strategy, lacking effective mechanisms for influencing decision-making (Espinosa & Rangel, 2022). In light of this, a comparative assessment across countries sharing structural similarities—such as Peru, Mexico, and Colombia—is necessary to identify patterns of success, limiting factors, and potential avenues for improvement.

This study aims to contribute to the academic debate regarding the role of organized civil society in implementing the SDGs through the "5Ps" framework. It offers a critical, contextualized, and constructive analysis that integrates theory, empirical evidence, and recommendations for designing public policies that are inclusive, sustainable, and sensitive to territorial contexts.

Analyzing—through a comparative lens—the contributions, areas of action, and challenges of initiatives in Peru, Mexico, and Colombia based on the 5Ps (People, Planet, Prosperity, Peace, and Partnerships) makes it possible to structure an analytical framework. This framework is designed to identify intervention patterns, institutional gaps, and levels of coordination among the social actors involved in implementing the 2030 Agenda. This objective is considered clear, as it precisely defines both the subjects of analysis (existing initiatives in the three countries) and the study's guiding conceptual framework (the 5Ps). It is also considered achievable, as it relies on a verifiable body of documentation and a methodological strategy based on qualitative, comparative case analysis. This approach allows for the establishment of thematic categories to classify the contributions of organized civil society, characterize their spheres of action (local, national, or regional), and categorize the challenges they face regarding participation, advocacy, sustainability, funding, and institutionalization.

This analysis will generate evidence useful for formulating more inclusive public policies and consolidating multi-stakeholder governance mechanisms that strengthen the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals through a territorial and participatory approach.

The study is justified by the need to understand—from a comparative and integrative perspective—the role played by organized civil society initiatives in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in Peru, Mexico, and Colombia, centering on the "5Ps" framework: People, Planet, Prosperity, Peace, and Partnerships. Theoretically, the study contributes to consolidating a conceptual framework that links the notions of collaborative governance,

sustainable development, and place-based collective action, integrating recent insights from literature on "regionalism from below," citizen-generated metrics, and rights-based social transformation.

The research is original in its proposal to operationalize the 5Ps as analytical categories that make it possible to visualize and compare the substantive contributions of social organizations—moving beyond their traditional roles as policy beneficiaries or implementers to highlight them as producers of knowledge, network coordinators, and generators of social oversight mechanisms. At a practical level, the findings will help identify replicable strategies to strengthen these organizations' capacity to influence the formulation, monitoring, and evaluation of public policies linked to the 2030 Agenda. Methodologically, the research relies on comparative analysis and initiative mapping, combining network analysis, semantic coding, and document review with multi-criteria and multi-scalar approaches; this represents an innovation compared to studies focused exclusively on regulatory frameworks or state policies.

Finally, the study's social relevance lies in its potential to provide concrete inputs for redesigning more inclusive and sustainable citizen participation mechanisms. This is particularly significant in contexts marked by deep structural inequalities and an urgent need to rebuild trust between citizens and institutions through strategic partnerships aimed at the common good and at social and environmental justice.

2. Design and method

The study follows the guidelines of the interpretive paradigm with a qualitative approach and a methodological design for conducting a hermeneutic analysis of the content found on the websites of NGOs in Colombia, Mexico, and Peru, utilizing ATLAS.ti software. By employing a content matrix to collect data from the mission and vision statements of each initiative analyzed, a series of categories and subcategories were derived, enabling the reconstruction of semantic networks based on the 2030 Agenda's 5Ps.

This design aims to reveal meanings, narratives, arguments, and concepts within texts (Wiesner, 2022), thereby seeking to understand the phenomenon under study through the interpretation of the mission and vision statements found on the digital portals of each initiative. This approach facilitates a flexible research process aimed at generating systematic and in-depth knowledge within the scientific field (Creswell & Creswell, 2017; Sampieri & Mendoza, 2018).

This descriptive and critical study has allowed for the observation of a social reality through the deconstruction of statements published on digital portals. Drawing on Hernández et al. (2014), the objective of this research was not to test hypotheses, but rather to describe and analyze the characteristics of organized civil society (OCS) initiatives regarding the SDGs, viewed through the lens of the 5Ps. The study focuses on language to highlight semantic and syntactic structures; consequently, the methodology was grounded in the qualitative-interpretive paradigm and a phenomenological epistemic model, underpinned by Critical Theory and Critical Discourse Analysis (Maniglio & Barboza da Silva, 2021).

The research focused on analyzing the language, semantic structures, and lexicon of the mission and vision statements of NGOs in Peru, Colombia, and Mexico. Interpretative qualitative analysis techniques were employed, grounded in Critical Theory and Critical Discourse Analysis, and supplemented by the use of ATLAS.ti. This methodological approach highlighted the significance of language in discursive construction and its correlation with other forms of expression and ways of making sense of the world; consequently, the mission and vision statements found on digital platforms were treated as units of discursive communication amenable to analytical examination.

3. Fieldwork and data analysis

Data collection was carried out using content matrices designed according to the principles of Van Dijk, Bakhtin, and Critical Theory to address the research objectives and questions. Analysis focused

on topics, semantic structures, and lexicon, drawing on the theoretical frameworks of Bakhtin (1985), Eco (1995), and Van Dijk (1999).

The corpus sample was purposive and emergent in nature, taking shape as the research progressed. Discourse units were selected sequentially to meet the criterion of maximum variation, with the sample continuously adjusted based on emerging themes. Data collection concluded when these themes became redundant—that is, saturated (Guba & Lincoln, 1994).

The data collection process spanned ten months. Tasks were distributed among study team members based on each participant's nationality and place of residence, as this provided the advantage of familiarity with local realities and access to relevant information. Regarding the data gathering for Mexico and Colombia, the data were collected first and then organized into content matrices. For Peru, the process was divided by region to identify organizations operating in the northern, central, and southern parts of the country.

The analysis process took as its starting point the mission and vision statements published on the NGOs' websites in the countries under study, as these reflected the ideological component of the discourse participants and could therefore be evaluated as a living discourse that reproduces a conceptual category. From this perspective, the stated mission and vision were approached as a form of written discourse that plays a decisive role in reproducing the mental models of those who wield social power. According to Van Dijk (1997), the content and nature of media discourse—including the topics addressed, the information presented or omitted, and the perspectives of journalists and their institutions—influence how, when, and to whom specific information is communicated, as well as the context in which this occurs. The analysis of these discourses was complemented, strengthened, and deepened through the use of ATLAS.ti (v. 9) software.

4. Results

An analysis of governance and social capital perspectives within the institutional statements (mission and vision statements) of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in Peru, Colombia, and Mexico revealed discursive patterns reflecting predominant priorities and approaches. Based on the data presented in the accompanying charts, explicit and implicit references to these key concepts were examined as indicators of institutional positioning regarding sustainable development.

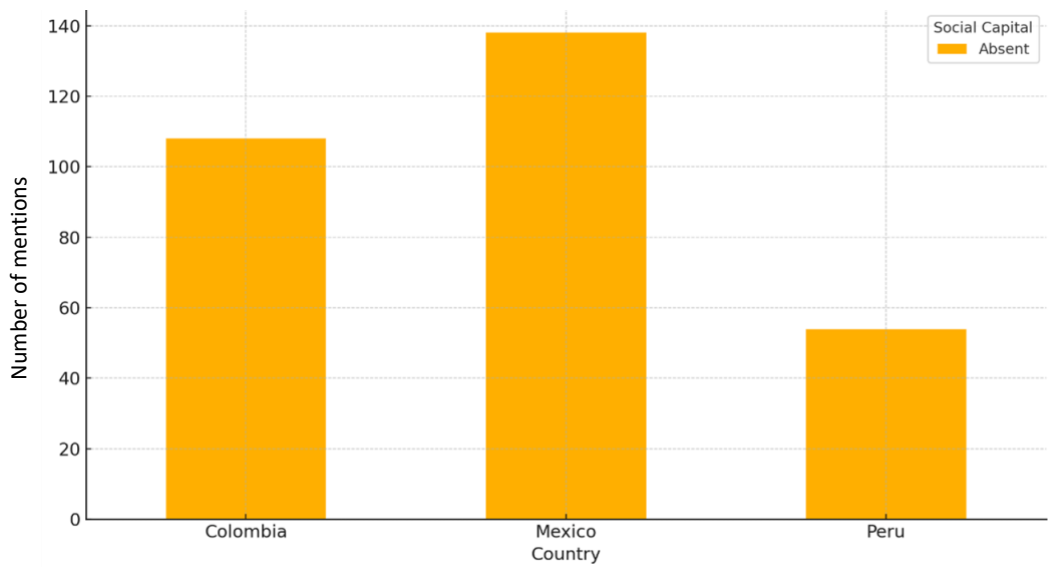
Regarding social capital, a widespread absence of references was observed across organizations in all three countries. In Colombia and Mexico, none of the analyzed NGOs included mentions of this category, while in Peru, a slight relative presence was noted—though insufficient to be considered significant. This finding was revealing, given that social capital—conceived as the network of ties based on trust, reciprocity, and cooperation among individuals and groups—is an essential component in building resilient communities and fostering sustainable processes of social transformation.

The omission of this perspective from institutional discourse highlighted a potential disconnect between the values underpinning the NGOs' work and the theoretical frameworks supporting their efforts in community settings. This is illustrated in Figure 1.

Regarding governance, a marked tendency toward omission was also observed. Mexico had the highest number of organizations that made no reference to this concept in their mission or vision statements, followed by Colombia and, to a lesser extent, Peru. This lack of references was striking, given that NGOs typically operate within spaces of shared governance and play a significant role in facilitating participatory processes, social oversight, and public policy advocacy.

The limited presence of the term “governance” could be explained by a discursive focus on direct action that fails to formally acknowledge the institutional, regulatory, and relational framework within which such interventions take place. This is reflected in Figure 2.

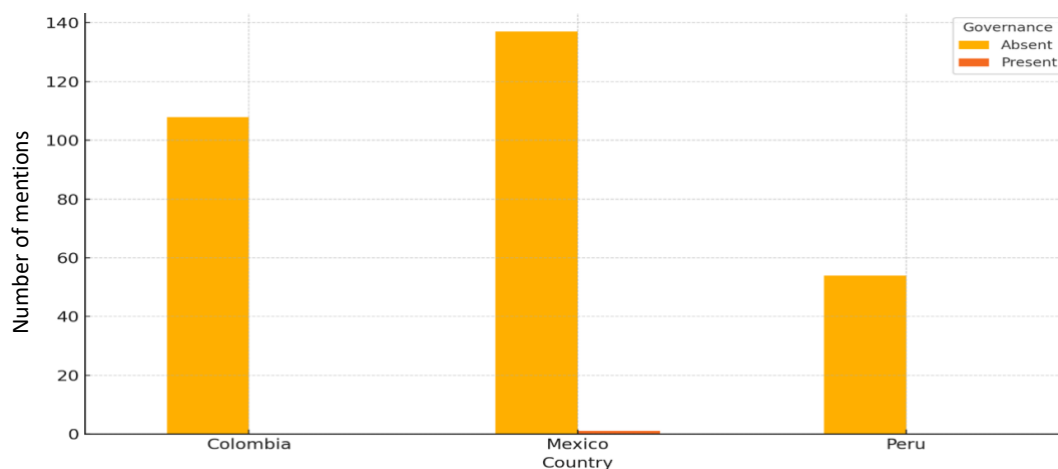
Figure 1: Social capital perspective by country



Source: Prepared by the author.

Overall, these results highlighted an opportunity to improve how the analyzed NGOs construct their institutional narratives. Explicitly integrating concepts such as social capital and governance could help strengthen their alignment with global frameworks like the 2030 Agenda—particularly regarding the "5Ps" approach (people, planet, prosperity, peace, and partnerships). Incorporating these concepts would better showcase the structural role these organizations play in territorial development processes and in shaping inclusive governance models.

Figure 2: Governance perspective by country



Source: Prepared by the author.

It was deemed appropriate for NGOs to revise their institutional narratives to incorporate language that not only described their actions but also reflect their strategic contribution to social cohesion, democratic institution-building, and sustainability. Such a reframing of their discourse would not only enhance their legitimacy in the eyes of state and international actors but also open up new possibilities for coordination, funding, and multi-stakeholder collaboration aimed at achieving the Sustainable Development Goals.

Figure 3: Word cloud



Source: Prepared by the author.

The word cloud presented in Figure 3 offers a visual representation of the most recurring categories and subcategories linked to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)—within the framework of the 2030 Agenda and its relationship with the concepts of governance and social capital—as addressed in the document "Social Capital and Governance of the 2030 Agenda." This tool made it possible to clearly identify the frequency and prominence of specific terms in the institutional discourse of the organizations analyzed, serving as qualitative input for a deeper thematic analysis.

This analysis revealed that the five structuring spheres of the SDGs—People, Planet, Prosperity, Peace, and Partnerships—emerged with high semantic density, highlighting their significance in the NGOs' narratives and their alignment with the 2030 Agenda's guiding principles. The emphasis on "Societies," "People," and "Partnerships" underscores an orientation toward development models based on inclusion, cooperation, and social transformation through a collective approach. The prominent presence of these concepts suggests that non-governmental organizations recognized—at least at the level of stated intent—the need to operate through collaborative structures, building synergies with other social, institutional, and territorial actors.

Similarly, subcategories with strong ethical and social significance—such as "Dignity," "Poverty," "Hunger," and "Equality"—were identified; these point to fundamental human rights and reflect an explicit concern for equity and social justice. These elements not only reinforce the "People" pillar of the 5Ps but also align with concepts of social capital and community cohesion as necessary conditions for sustainable development. (Table 1)

Table 1: Visualization of category and subcategories

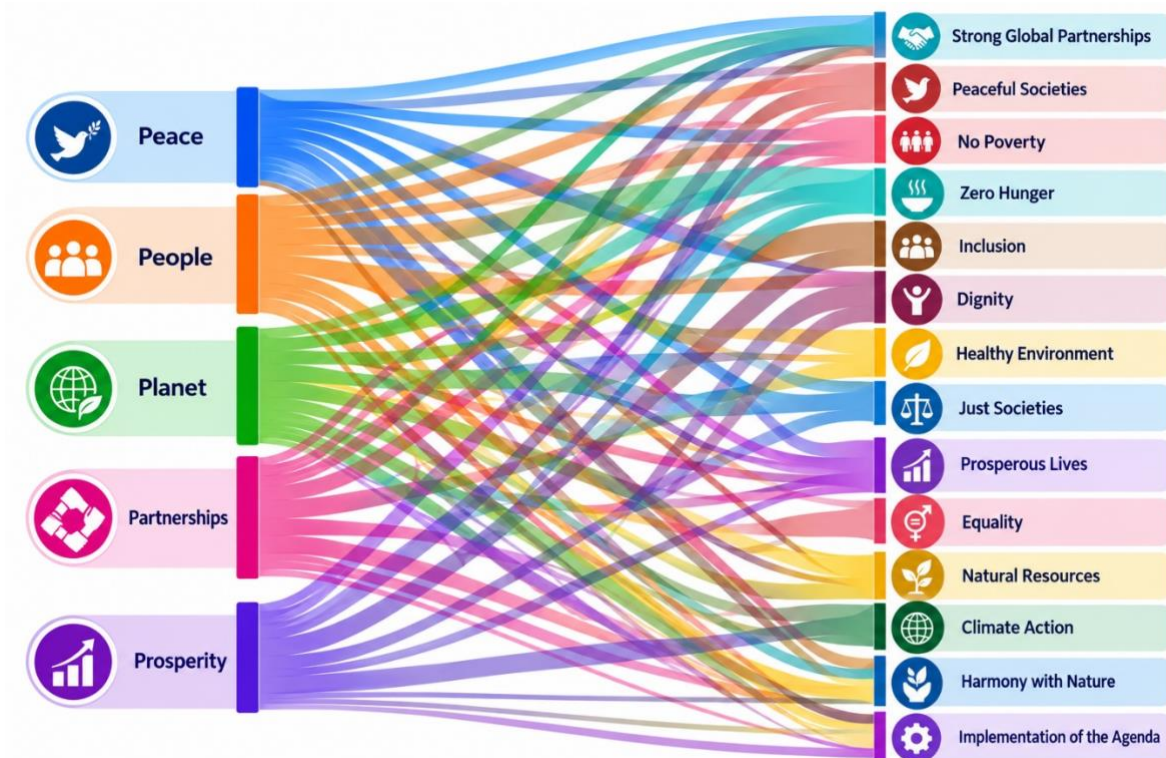
Category	Subcategories
People	• Poverty • Hunger • Dignity • Equal
Planet	• Natural resources • Climate change • Decent environment
Prosperity	• Prosperity life • Harmony with nature
Peace	• Peaceful societies • Just societies • Inclusive
Partnerships	• Agenda implementation • Strong global partnerships

Source: Prepared by the author.

From an environmental perspective, terms such as “climate change,” “natural resources,” “environment,” and “planet” signaled an acknowledgment of ecological limits and the interdependence between ecosystems and human well-being. This ecological perspective—while not always prioritized—demonstrated a growing institutional sensitivity to the environmental crisis and the urgent need to adopt strategies geared toward comprehensive sustainability.

Finally, the recurring use of words like “implementation,” “prosperity,” “harmony,” and “inclusive” points to a vision that, however idealized, seeks to outline a horizon for transformative action. The integration of these dimensions into institutional discourse suggests that, despite existing operational and regulatory challenges, the discursive foundations for sustainable governance are in place; however, they still require practical strengthening through structures capable of translating these commitments into systematic, measurable, and participatory actions.

Figure 4: Sankey diagram "Social capital and governance of the 2030 Agenda"



Source: Prepared by the author.

The Sankey diagram "Social capital and governance of the 2030 Agenda" (Figure 4) provided a graphical representation of the relationships between the main categories (left) and the subcategories linked (right) to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) proposed by the United Nations. This visualization facilitated an understanding of how conceptual flows are structured among the five key dimensions of sustainable development—People, Planet, Prosperity, Peace, and Partnerships—and specific themes such as poverty, climate change, or inclusive societies. Concurrently, the document "Social Capital and Governance of the 2030 Agenda" provided the theoretical and practical basis for interpreting these relationships through the lens of participatory governance and the strengthening of social capital.

A clear correspondence was established between the diagram's content and the central tenets of the aforementioned document. First, the centrality of the "5Ps" as a structuring axis for strategies aimed at achieving the SDGs was confirmed. The need to adopt a comprehensive approach—encompassing social, economic, and environmental spheres while incorporating principles of shared responsibility, equity, and citizen participation—became evident. By visualizing flows toward various subcategories, the diagram served as a useful resource for identifying the discursive and operational priorities of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) regarding the SDGs.

Regarding the diagram's practical applications, various uses aligned with the document's proposals were identified. In terms of participatory governance,

the tool enabled the mapping of the linkages between social actors and prioritized categories, revealing a significant concentration of flows around dimensions such as Inclusion and Partnerships. This aligned with the document's premise, which emphasized the importance of coordinating inter-institutional and community efforts to ensure the effective implementation of the SDGs.

Regarding social capital, the diagram facilitated the identification of connections between values such as reciprocity, solidarity, and trust—reflected in subcategories linked to Peace, Equality, and Social Cohesion. These components, identified in the document as fundamental to sustaining democratic governance processes, found a means of representation within the visualization, illustrating their integration into institutional strategies.

The diagram's potential for comparative analysis across geographic contexts was also recognized. Drawing on the case studies of Peru, Mexico, and Colombia mentioned in the report, it was proposed that adapting the diagram to feature country-specific flows would make it possible to highlight local priorities and tailor interventions to territorial realities.

A key observation arising from the analysis was that the categories with the highest flow density—specifically People and Partnerships—aligned with the document's emphasis on strengthening human and collaborative ties as a foundation for achieving sustainable development. Furthermore, subcategories such as Poverty and Climate Change were linked to multiple main categories, highlighting their cross-cutting nature and their capacity to impact various dimensions of development. This finding was consistent with the integrated vision of the SDGs put forward by both the UN and the analysis document itself.

5. Discussion and conclusions:

Discussion:

Breakdown of findings

The results revealed a significant omission of the concepts of governance and social capital in the institutional statements of the NGOs analyzed in Peru, Mexico, and Colombia. This discursive gap contrasts with the importance these concepts have gained in the literature on sustainable development. Social capital—understood as the set of relationships based on trust, cooperation, and reciprocity that strengthen the community fabric—has been widely recognized as a key driver of collective action and territorial resilience (Bourdieu, 2000, as cited in Grek, 2020). The limited presence of this term in institutional narratives suggests a lack of formalization regarding values that many organizations actually promote in practice.

A gap in strategic formulation was also identified regarding the participatory governance approach. This absence is particularly concerning given that NGOs often operate in contexts where collaborative, multilevel governance is crucial to compensate for weak or fragmented state action (Bergen et al., 2019; Galvão, Bastos Lima, & Ramiro, 2023). Unlike the situation observed in the Caribbean or Africa—where progress has been reported in cross-sector coordination and citizen monitoring of the SDGs (Hassell, Hutton, & Barnett, 2020; Azubuike et al., 2024)—the organizations analyzed showed little engagement with these collaborative frameworks.

Comparison with the ESG framework and symbolic governance

The ESG (environmental, social, and governance) approach posits that sustainability is effective only when these three dimensions are structurally integrated into organizational management. The omission of the governance component in the analyzed discourses represents a gap that could compromise the effectiveness of efforts to achieve the SDGs (Chung, Margolin, and Vyakina, 2023). This disconnect between ESG principles and institutional practices aligns with what Schilling-Vacaflor (2021) termed the "superficial assimilation of sustainability"—a situation in which organizations adopt the language of the 2030 Agenda without incorporating the institutional frameworks necessary for its actual implementation.

From the perspective of symbolic governance, it has been argued that the adoption of global metrics such as the SDGs creates new fields of power in which certain actors—including international bodies and NGOs—build legitimacy through the strategic use of technical language and standardized indicators (Grek, 2020; Yamada, 2024). The partial incorporation of key concepts into the analyzed mission and vision statements could be interpreted as an attempt to align discursively with this global narrative, albeit without fully embracing the substantive elements that define democratic and inclusive governance.

Implications for participatory governance

Scientific literature on reflexive governance maintains that sustainable development structures must be capable of adapting, learning, and incorporating multiple voices into decision-making (Bauknecht et al., 2020). The limited presence of this perspective in institutional discourses reveals a conceptual lag relative to current development demands. Although terms referring to justice, inclusion, and equity were identified, they lacked a narrative structure linking these goals to formal mechanisms for participation, monitoring, or inter-institutional collaboration (Cisneros, 2019; Supaat et al., 2024).

In contrast, governance experiences in regional contexts have shown that incorporating concepts such as partnerships, trust, and social capital strengthens not only the legitimacy of NGOs but also their capacity to influence public policy (Delabre, Alexander, and Rodrigues, 2020; Hassell et al., 2021). The analysis suggests that, in the Latin American context, a narrative centered on service delivery and direct action persists, with little formalization of the role these organizations play within territorial governance structures.

Linkage to visual results

The graphic tools employed revealed that categories such as "People" and "Partnerships" held a central place in institutional semantics; however, the absence of intermediate categories like "governance" or "social capital" pointed to a potential fragmentation between the declarative framework and institutional operations (Espinosa and Rangel, 2022). Subcategories such as "poverty," "equality," and "climate change" appeared with multiple links—reflecting their cross-cutting nature within the SDGs—yet this did not necessarily indicate a connection to structured participatory planning processes (Wilson, 2023).

Finally, it was recognized that, while there is general alignment with the principles of the 2030 Agenda, the observed discourse development is still far from reflecting the full integration of participatory, multi-stakeholder, and transformative governance approaches that underpin the effective implementation of the SDGs at the local level (Boadu, 2024; Raszkowski & Bartniczak, 2019).

Conclusions

The comparative analysis of initiatives driven by non-governmental organizations in Peru, Mexico, and Colombia—based on the 5Ps framework (People, Planet, Prosperity, Peace, and Partnerships)—revealed common patterns, contextual divergences, and structural challenges regarding how these organizations approach sustainable development. Overall, the findings indicate a partial adoption of the 2030 Agenda's language, with an emphasis on social dimensions and direct assistance, yet limited integration of strategic elements related to governance and social capital; consequently, the organizations' institutional discourse leans toward a welfare-oriented approach as an initial step in building the bridges and partnerships that foster social capital.

A key concluding observation is that the NGOs analyzed presented institutional narratives centered on values such as human dignity, inclusion, equity, and social justice, demonstrating a commitment to objectives linked to the "People" dimension. Frequent references to the concept of partnerships were also noted, suggesting a rhetorical acknowledgment of the importance of inter-institutional cooperation, albeit without the corresponding development of formal frameworks for coordination or structured participation. The "Planet" and "Prosperity" dimensions were represented to a lesser extent, primarily through general references to issues such as climate change, environmental sustainability, and access to opportunities. The "Peace" and "Partnership" spheres were addressed only superficially or indirectly, lacking formulations that would allow for the inference of strategies regarding democratic governance or the building of active citizenship.

Regarding contributions, efforts were identified that focused on assisting vulnerable populations, promoting human rights, and strengthening local capacities. While valuable, these actions often lacked a conceptual framework explicitly linking them to processes of structural transformation or to the integrated, cross-cutting logic that characterizes the 2030 Agenda. In terms of areas of action, there was a strong emphasis on interventions in health, education, food security, and environmental protection; these were community-level interventions but lacked clear alignment with public policies at the national or sub-national levels.

As for challenges, significant gaps remain in formalizing the role of NGOs as governance agents within civil society. The absence of key concepts—such as social capital and participatory governance—in institutional statements suggests limited awareness of the need to consolidate organizational structures that do more than just execute projects; they must also influence the planning, implementation, and evaluation of public policies from a multi-stakeholder or inter-sectoral perspective. A lack of systematic integration of cross-cutting approaches—such as gender equity, evidence-based management, and participatory monitoring—was noted, limiting the effectiveness and sustainability of the initiatives.

The research objective was successfully met, as the study achieved a comparative analysis of NGO contributions, areas of action, and challenges across the three countries, using the "5Ps" analytical framework. The comparison revealed that, despite sharing broad commitments to the 2030 Agenda, the organizations exhibit varying levels of institutional development,

coordination capacity, and depth of discourse. These differences must be taken into account in future strategies for organizational strengthening, the design of collaborative public policies, and the construction of governance systems that promote the effective, contextualized, and inclusive implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals.

This study has enabled the systematization of data to highlight the role of universities as knowledge-generating institutions; they must assume a leadership role in supporting initiatives originating from organized civil society and steer efforts toward better governance in fulfilling the 2030 Agenda. Peru, Colombia, and Mexico—countries in the region—have long-standing traditions of cooperative movements in health, trade, education, and other services; however, their presence in state-level decision-making has recently been diminished or compromised by corruption and crises regarding politics and representation. These issues have eroded such behaviors and curtailed the use of social capital to empower social groups.

The challenge lies in creating a governance and public management system that fosters interaction among various actors at local, regional, and national levels to address priorities for social development and economic growth. Transitioning to new forms of societal governance requires the long-term establishment of necessary institutional balances through more pluralistic participatory systems. Throughout this process, the university plays a crucial role in equipping individuals with the knowledge needed to manage complex problems. To reinforce these concepts, a working framework must be developed across undergraduate and postgraduate programs, as well as in continuing education. In this framework, the university should establish synergies with organized civil society to create conditions for a governance model grounded in research, outreach, and social engagement. This enables a constructive dialogue for designing and implementing interdisciplinary strategies aimed at achieving the SDGs and the 2030 Agenda.

Achieving these goals demands a collective effort from citizens to promote a transition toward inclusive and sustainable development models; therefore, any study of 2030 Agenda governance must acknowledge the significant influence of organized civil society on decision-making processes as we strive to realize the desired objectives for the immediate future.

6. References

- Amiraslani, F., & Caiserman, A. (2018). Multi-stakeholder and multi-level interventions to tackle climate change and land degradation: The case of Iran. *Sustainability*, 10(2000), 1–17. <https://doi.org/10.3390/su10062000>
- ATLAS.ti Scientific Software Development GmbH [ATLAS.ti v.9 Windows]. (2022). <https://atlasti.com>
- Azubuikwe, P. C., Imo, U. F., Ogbonna, C. K., Enyam, M. O., & Nwadiche, M. (2024). Harnessing religion in the pursuit of sustainable development in Nigeria. *Discover Global Society*, 2(87). <https://doi.org/10.1007/s44282-024-00119-8>
- Banerjee, A., Murphy, E., & Walsh, P. P. (2020). Perceptions of multistakeholder partnerships for the Sustainable Development Goals: A case study of Irish non-state actors. *Sustainability*, 12(21), 8872. <https://doi.org/10.3390/su12218872>
- Bauknecht, D. et al. (2020). Exploring the pathways: Regulatory experiments for sustainable development – An interdisciplinary approach. *Journal of Governance & Regulation*, 9(3), 49–71.
- Bajtín, M. (1985). Literature, culture, and historical time: Texts and contexts.
- Bergen, N. et al. (2019). Subnational health management and the advancement of health equity: A case study of Ethiopia. *Global Health Research and Policy*, 4, 12. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s41256-019-0105-3>
- Boadu, E. S. (2024). Evaluating Ghana's youth-centered food-security policies: A collaborative governance approach. *Sustainability*, 16(9), 3830. <https://doi.org/10.3390/su16093830>
- Chung, R. K., Margolin, A. M., & Vyakina, I. V. (2023). Theory and practice of ESG transformation of management systems. *Economic Policy*, 18(2), 80–103.
- Cisneros, P. (2019). What makes collaborative water governance partnerships resilient to policy change? *Ecology and Society*, 24(1), 29. <https://doi.org/10.5751/ES-10667-240129>

- Cleary, S. (2017). Reconceptualising transnational governance: Making global institutions fit for purpose. *Economics: The Open-Access, Open-Assessment E-Journal*, 11, 1–13.
<https://doi.org/10.5018/economics-ejournal.ja.2017-21>
- Creswell, J. W., & Creswell, J. D. (2017). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches*. Sage publications
- Delabre, I., Alexander, A., & Rodrigues, C. (2020). Strategies for tropical forest protection and sustainable supply chains: Challenges and opportunities for alignment with the UN Sustainable Development Goals. *Sustainability Science*, 15, 1637–1651.
<https://doi.org/10.1007/s11625-019-00747-z>
- Di Nauta, P., Iannuzzi, E., Milone, M., & Nigro, C. (2020). The impact of the sustainability principles on the strategic planning and reporting of universities: An exploratory study on a qualified Italian sample. *Sustainability*, 12(18), 7269. <https://doi.org/10.3390/su12187269>
- Durston J (2003) *What Is Community Social Capital?* Santiago, Chile: ECLAC. Online document available at:
<http://www.ieclac.cl/publicaciones/>
- Eco, U. (1995). *A Theory of Semiotics*. (5th ed.). Gedisa.
- Espinosa, C., & Rangel, G. (2022). What roles do civil society organizations play in monitoring and reviewing the Sustainable Development Goals? An exploration of cases from Ecuador, Colombia, and Argentina. *Tapuya: Latin American Science, Technology and Society*, 5(1), 2143669. <https://doi.org/10.1080/25729861.2022.2143669>
- Fortune, K., Becerra-Posada, F., Buss, P., Galvão, L. A. C., Contreras, A., Murphy, M., & Rogger, C. (2018). Health promotion and the agenda for sustainable development, WHO Region of the Americas. *Bulletin of the World Health Organization*, 96(9), 621–626.
<https://doi.org/10.2471/BLT.17.204404>
- Galvão, T. G., Bastos Lima, M. G., & Ramiro, R. (2023). Bottom-up regionality and the Sustainable Development Goals. *Revista Brasileira de Política Internacional*, 66(2), e021.
<https://doi.org/10.1590/0034-7329202300221>
- Glandon, D., Meghani, A., Jessani, N., Qiu, M., & Bennett, S. (2018). Identifying health policy and systems research priorities on multisectoral collaboration for health in low-income and middle-

income countries. *BMJ Global Health*, 3(e000970).
<https://doi.org/10.1136/bmjgh-2018-000970>

Grek, S. (2020). Prophets, saviours and saints: Symbolic governance and the rise of a transnational metrological field. *International Review of Education*, 66, 139–166. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11159-020-09844-z>

Guba, E. & Lincoln, Y. (1994). Competing paradigms in qualitative research. En N. K. Denzin & Y. S. Lincoln (Eds.), *Handbook of qualitative research* (pp. 163-194). Sage Publications.

Hernández, R., Fernández, C., & Baptista, P. (2014). *Research methodology* (6ª ed., pp. 102-256). McGraw-Hill.

Hilbrich, S., & Schwab, J. (2018). Towards a more accountable G20? Accountability mechanisms of the G20 and the new challenges posed to them by the 2030 Agenda. *International Organisations Research Journal*, 13(4), 7–38. <https://doi.org/10.17323/1996-7845-2018-04-01>

Hussein, H. et al. (2018). Monitoring transboundary water cooperation in SDG 6.5.2. *Sustainability*, 10(3640).
<https://doi.org/10.3390/su10103640>

Maniglio, F., & Barboza da Silva, R. (2021). Critical discourse análisis and the decolonial turn: ¿Why and for what purpose? *Critical Discourse Studies*, 18(1), 156-184.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/17405904.2020.1754871>

Nwauche, S., & Flanigan, S. T. (2022). Challenges to nonprofit organization participation in social and development policy planning in South Africa. *Nonprofit Policy Forum*, 13(2), 119–139.
<https://doi.org/10.1515/npf-2021-0049>

Raszkowski, A., & Bartniczka, B. (2019). On the road to sustainability: Implementation of the 2030 Agenda in Poland. *Sustainability*, 11(2), 366. <https://doi.org/10.3390/su11020366>

Schilling-Vacaflor, A. (2021). Integrating human rights and the environment in supply chain regulations. *Sustainability*, 13(9666).
<https://doi.org/10.3390/su13179666>

Shanthosh, J., Muvva, K., Woodward, M., Vijayarasa, R., & Palagyi, A. (2022). Assessing the reach, scope and outcomes of government action on women's health and human rights: A protocol for the

- development of an international women's rights dataset. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, 21, 1–10.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/16094069221114741>
- Supaat, K., Aziz, S., Hasan, S. Z., Ahmad Basri, N. E., & Mohd Shafie, S. H. (2024). Universities and sustainable development: Options to help 'walk the talk'. *Journal of Ecohumanism*, 3(8), 553–566.
<https://doi.org/10.62754/joe.v3i8.4751>
- Vanderslott, S. (2019). Moving from outsider to insider status through metrics: The inclusion of "neglected tropical diseases" into the Sustainable Development Goals. *Journal of Human Development and Capabilities*, 20(4), 418–435.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/19452829.2019.1574727>
- Van Dijk, T. (1999). *Ideology: A multidisciplinary approach*. Gedisa publishing.
- Wibeck, V., & Linnér, B.-O. (2021). Sensemaking analysis: A framework for multi-strategy and cross-country research. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, 20, 1–12.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/1609406921998907>
- Wiesner, C. (2022, October 28). Doing qualitative and interpretative research: reflecting principles and principled challenges. *Political Research Exchange*, 4(1).
<https://doi.org/10.1080/2474736x.2022.2127372>
- Wilson, D. C. (2023). Learning from the past to plan for the future: An historical review of the evolution of waste and resource management 1970–2020 and reflections on priorities 2020–2030. *Waste Management & Research*, 41(12), 1754–1813.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/0734242X231178025>
- Yamada, S. (2024). The synchronic and diachronic evolution of key themes around SDG 4. *International Review of Education*, 70, 651–671.
<https://doi.org/10.1007/s11159-024-10078-6>

Referencias

Ejemplo de LIBROS: (autores/as separados por “,” y el último por “y”)

Apellidos, A. A., Apellidos, B. B. y Apellidos, C. C. (Año). *Título del libro en cursiva*. Editorial.

Ejemplo de CAPÍTULO DE LIBRO: (autores/as separados por ., y el último por “y”)

Apellidos, N. y Apellidos, N. (Año). Título del capítulo. En Inicial nombre y Apellidos autor libro (eds.), *Título del libro en cursiva* (pp. xxx-xxx). Editorial.

Ejemplo de TESIS:

Apellidos, A. A. (Año). *Título*. (Tesis Doctoral). Nombre de la institución, Localización.

Ejemplo de REVISTAS: (autores/as separados por ., y el último por “y”)

Apellidos, A., Apellidos, B. y Apellidos, C. (Año). Título del artículo. *Título de la publicación, volumen(número)*, pp.-pp. <https://doi.org/10.xxxxxx> (si no hay DOI, se citará la url)

Ejemplo de PÁGINAS WEB: (autores/as separados por ., y el último por “y”) Apellidos, B. B., Apellidos, C. C. y Apellidos, D. D. (Año). *Título*. www.xxxxxx.xxx



CONTRIBUCIONES DE AUTORES/AS, FINANCIACIÓN Y AGRADECIMIENTOS

Contribuciones de los/as autores/as:

Conceptualización: Apellido Apellido, Nombre.

Software: Apellido Apellido, Nombre.

Validación: Apellido Apellido, Nombre.

Metodología: Apellido Apellido, Nombre y Apellido Apellido, Nombre.

Curación de datos: Apellido Apellido, Nombre.

Redacción-Preparación del borrador original: Apellido Apellido, Nombre.

Redacción-Re- visión y Edición: Apellido Apellido, Nombre.

Visualización: Apellido Apellido, Nombre.

Supervisión: Apellido Apellido, Nombre.

Administración de proyectos: Apellido Apellido, Nombre.

Todos los/as autores/as han leído y aceptado la versión publicada del manuscrito: Apellido Apellido, Nombre.

Financiación: Esta investigación recibió o no financiamiento externo.

Agradecimientos: si los hubiere.

Conflicto de intereses: si los hubiere.

