Institutional working links

The most important working links of CIRIEC-Venezuela are related to the support set with the University of Los Andes (ULA). Unfortunately, the Oriente Technology Park Corporation (CPTO) has been dismantled by the authorities of the University of Oriente (UDO) and is now paralyzed by an internal audit which is likely to claim its formal liquidation. CIRIEC-Venezuela has thus faced the loss of a valuable institutional relationship.

However, the chair of “Social Economy” in the School of Social Sciences of the Centre of Sucre (Escuela de Ciencias Sociales del Núcleo de Sucre) of the same University has been maintained. Our existence continues to be recognized mainly in academics fields and – to a lesser extent – our works are related to social economy actors even if some colleagues have a close relationship with social economy organizations (especially cooperatives, credit unions and communal councils).

The major financial support received by CIRIEC-Venezuela comes from the ULA which also includes housing (of our headquarters) (supported by the Research Center for Integral Sustainable Development - CIDIS and Master Regional Development Course), a website (www.saber.ula.ve/ciriec), an institutional email account (ciriec@ula.ve) and the availability of access and support of our academic production registered in the Institutional Repository of the ULA, especially the website-hosting of our magazine CAYAPA (www.saber.ula.ve/cayapa).

In the frame of the invitation from Redalyc (Red de Revistas Científicas de América Latina y el Caribe, España y Portugal) to the editorial team of the Journal CAYAPA – with the condition of being member of this index and/or newspaper library and where could be read full texts of scientific articles of the most important Journals of Latin America, the Caribbean, Spain and Portugal - in August 2016 – CIRIEC-Venezuela has received from this Network training through the realization of the Course ““El nuevo modelo de Publicación Científica y Redalyc 3.0. Marcación XML-JATS”“.

It is important to mention several advantages that Journals take benefit from while being part of the standard category XML JATS which the Journal CAYAPA is part of:

- Provides higher visibility to each article on the web.
- Allows the indexing and retrieval of the complete text of a document.
- Provides automatic generation of various output formats (HTML, PDF, ePUB).
- Enables printing in the format of the magazine.
- Ensures digital preservation.
- Makes possible the use of multiplatform viewers and readers.
- Allows you to regain control of the process and editorial products.
In this respect, the editorial staff of our CAYAPA Journal – directed by REDALYC playing the role of ‘advisory body’ – is seeking to be in line with technological changes taking into account the benefits that these tools offer to both editorialists and readers of the Journal.

Furthermore, at the invitation of CIRIEC International, Benito Díaz, Ángel Higuerey and Mario Fagiolo joined the internet platform AGORA of the General Interest and the Social Economy. CIRIEC-Venezuela hopes that this tool could be opened up by 2016 to a larger number of members of CIRIEC-Venezuela for both registering in and submitting works.

**Situation of research projects in the national context**

During the period 2014-2016, an ideological alignment of research projects – especially in the field of Social Economy – was particularly requested. Therefore a double difficulty showed up to carry out the research in this field: 1) the lack of the necessary resources to complete the field work and 2) the negative answers received to access the necessary statistical information, if it does exist (and we are not sure about this); this information is not accessible to the public in general and even less to independent scientists.

Unfortunately, we will again have to point out the same information than the period 2012-2014 as the situation became more acute during the last period.

The failure in such academic projects is mainly due to lack of funding as a result of two main causes: On the one hand, the Venezuelan Government changed in 2011 the Law on Science, Technology and Innovation (LOCTI), which formerly could be accessed in order to get financial support for academic projects from all over the country, and now on it is only centralized at the national fund for the Ministry of Science, Technology and Innovation in Caracas city.

On the other hand the Venezuelan Government reduced the budget of public universities by 6% due to economic problems in the country and as a result the universities reduced their budget for research and scientific publications.

At the same time, the inflation rate started to grow up while the budget of public universities was frozen (“reconducido”), which became in the context for increasing discomfort and demonstrations leading up to several university strikes supported by several universities unions. In 2013 and 2014 several strong university strikes spread on public universities which ended with a new agreement signed covering all the university staff, however the research and scientific publications continue quite weakened.

As a result, various scientific publications have been postponed. Funding for print editions has been reduced by almost 90% and has encouraged the publication of scientific journals in public universities in electronic versions on the Internet only.
For this reason, CAYAPA has not been published in printed version just as other national scientific journals. In this respect, two international meetings (2015 and 2016) were organized in the presence of scientific journals’ publishers convened by the Editorial Fund Mario Briceño Iragorry at the University of Los Andes in Trujillo to discuss about proposals especially for research and training.

The current situation is so alarming that the Venezuelan Association for the Advancement of Science (ASOVAC) – due to lack of budget – will celebrate this year its annual convention in digital form – replacing the week of scientific meetings by a link through the Internet and leaving regional chapters the eventual organization of physical encounters between researchers of different disciplines. ASOVAC used to gather every year an average of 9,000 participants with academic works for over 50 years.

**Editing of CAYAPA, Venezuelan Journal of Social Economy**

With support from the University of Los Andes (ULA), we are maintaing the effort to keep up with the highest possible standards the biannual journal that – to date – has reached N°29, corresponding to the 1st semester of 2015. The edition N°30 of the second half of 2015 is being diagrammed at this moment ([www.saber.ula.ve/cayapa](http://www.saber.ula.ve/cayapa)).

In 2015, CAPAYA celebrated its 15th anniversary. However, we have not been able to organize an appropriate event to commemorate this Date regardless availability of the members of the Editorial Board to keep up to date the Journal which represents the most significant product of CIRIEC-Venezuela.

We would like to highlight that since 2015 we are receiving institutional support and participation in the Academic Network of the Editorial Fund Mario Briceño Iragorry at the University of Los Andes in Trujillo which is actively represented by Prof. Leonard Arguello, Secretary of the Editorial Committee of CAYAPA.

**Research in universities**

More than 90% of the public universities budget is devoted to pay current labour costs and less than 10% is allocated for funding research and scientific publications and dissemination of results. After the Government reduced the public universities budget by 6%, the funds for research and publications were reduced. So that the main limitation to undertake broader research national or sectorial is the lack of funding, nevertheless some colleagues have been able to get some small grants or allowances from their universities.

For instance, Prof. Mario Fagiolo is developing a doctoral thesis at the Centre for Development Studies (CENDES-UCV), Central University of Venezuela, on the subject of “The praxis of the third sector economy of Venezuela, as a contribution to the Theory of Social Economy from 1990 to present” which will be presented by the end of 2016.
In the first half of 2016, Prof. Mario Fagiolo, in the frame of the Chair of Social Economy – of which he is the Head at the School of Social Sciences of the Centre of Sucre (Escuela de Ciencias Sociales del Núcleo de Sucre) – succeeded in conducting a local study of seven (7) communities together with 7 groups of graduates in Social Work using the institutional analysis tool for development (IAD-FRAMEWORK) designed by the Nobel Prize in Economics (2009) Elinor Ostrom and her team. Currently, Prof. Mario Fagiolo is preparing a summary report of the work to be disseminated through de CAYAPA Journal and virtual platforms webhosting our works such as REDALYC and AGORA.

Prof. Dorkis Shephard is currently working for her doctoral thesis on communal coins at the University Simón Rodríguez (UNESR) which will be presented in 2016.

In addition, this same professor Dorkis Shephard is preparing – for the second half of 2016 – a proposal for a line of research on “Finances in financial organizations and institutions at the national and international level” in the field of postgraduate in financial administration of the “Decanato de Educación Avanzata” at the UNESR Centre of Caracas.

Furthermore, Prof. Emilio Chirinos and his colleagues from the Bolivarian University are working on a research project about how the local management of public services is perceived by the communal councils in Maracaibo city.

**Participation in AGORA – CIRIEC Kiosk project**

No doubt that this tool is very useful as it fosters exchanges between colleagues and disseminates results of scientific works. Currently, Benito Díaz, Angel Higuerey and Mario Fagiolo are registered on this website but we do wish that this tool could be accessible to more members of CIRIEC-Venezuela.

**Participation in the Working group ‘Social and Solidarity Economy (SEE): between interaction and co-construction’.** The team formed by Ángel Higuerey, Mario Fagiolo, Leonardo Argüello, Fernando Aponte and Benito Díaz, participated in the elaboration of a chapter of the book of this working group entitled "Venezuela: a look at ESS trends, Water for the people and related public policies" that has been accepted on July 22, 2015.

The comments and suggestions of the Working Group were very useful for preparing the report to be presented by Mario Fagiolo at the occasion of the 31st CIRIEC International Congress in Reims on “Results and challenges of public policies for SSE: the case of water”.