

# Second Annual Report | 2015-2016

## LA RED DE PATHWAYS CHALLENGE

PATHWAYS TO PROSPERITY

América Latina y el Caribe

CHALLENGE.WEC.ORG



*Le Groupe-conseil baastel*  
*December 2016*



La Red de Pathways Challenge is an initiative affiliated  
with Pathways to Prosperity in the Americas.



# TABLE OF CONTENTS

1.	Introduction .....	1
1.1.	Background and Context .....	1
1.2.	Support provided to La Red .....	3
2.	Overview of the Network .....	5
2.1.	Key Stats .....	5
2.2.	List of Awardees .....	6
2.3.	Fund Allocations .....	8
3.	Progress and Results to Date .....	9
3.1.	Progress to Date .....	9
3.2.	Results Achieved against F Indicators .....	11
3.3.	Results Achieved by Pillar .....	13
3.4.	Results Achieved by the Network in terms of Partnerships and Visibility .....	17
4.	Case Studies .....	21
4.1.	The Pathways Network is DEVELOPING A MODERN WORKFORCE .....	21
4.2.	The Pathways Network is INCREASING THE COMPETITIVENESS OF MSMEs .....	24
4.3.	The Pathways Network is STIMULATING ENTREPRENEURSHIP .....	26
4.4.	The Pathways Network is FACILITATING CONNECTIONS, AMPLIFYING THE IMPACT OF INNOVATIVE SOLUTIONS .....	27
4.5.	The Pathways Network is WORKING WITH SOME OF THE BEST IN THE REGION .....	28
5.	Conclusion .....	30
5.1.	Next Steps .....	30

# ACRONYMS

<b>Acronym</b>	<b>Definition</b>
CCB	Cámara de Comercio de Bucaramanga (Colombia)
CPML-N	Centro de Producción Más Limpia de Nicaragua (Nicaragua)
CoNEP	Consejo Nacional de la Empresa Privada (Panama)
CoP	Community of Practice
DC	District of Columbia (US)
F Indicators	Standard Foreign Assistance Indicators
ILO	International Labour Organization
IMS	Integrated Management System
LAC	Latin America and the Caribbean
LPV	Las Páginas Verdes (Mexico)
LWR	Lutheran World Relief (Nicaragua)
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MSME	Micro, Small and Medium Enterprise
NBC-PUCV	Núcleo Biotecnología Curauma, Pontificia Universidad Católica de Valparaíso (Chile)
NGO	Non-governmental Organization
RBM	Results-based Management
ROI	Return on Investment
S-ROI	Sustainability Return on Investment
SME	Small and Medium Enterprise
TA	Technical Assistance
UN	United Nations
US	United States
USD	United States Dollars
USG	United States Government
VV	Vista Volcanes (Guatemala)
WEC	World Environment Center (USA)

# 1. INTRODUCTION

La Red de Pathways Challenge (also referred to as the Pathways Network or just “La Red” for short) has now concluded its second year, and with that is clear evidence of progress among the Network’s 30 initiatives in accelerating business development and promoting sustainable economic growth in Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC). The Pathways Network, funded by the United States (U.S.) Department of State (herein referred as ‘State’ for brevity), is increasingly demonstrating itself to be an effective means to source and reward impactful solutions that help small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in LAC grow and succeed. This Annual Report provides an overview of the Pathways Network’s progress to date, highlighting activities carried out and results achieved over the past year (October 2015 – September 2016).

This Report begins with background and contextual information on the Pathways Network. Section 2 provides an overview of the organizations and initiatives that collectively form La Red. Section 3 provides a macro-level view detailing the progress and results of the members’ initiatives over the past year. Case studies providing examples of La Red’s impact, including highlighting the two finalists that will conclude their projects in 2016, are showcased in Section 4. Finally, Section 5 provides concluding remarks.

## 1.1. Background and Context

Pathways to Prosperity in the Americas was launched in 2008 by leaders from Western Hemisphere countries as a high-level forum allowing leaders to exchange policy ideas that extend the benefits of the region’s free trade agreements. Since its inception, membership has grown to 16 member countries<sup>1</sup>, all of whom share a common vision of the need to identify and accelerate the adoption of effective policies and practices for promoting inclusive economic growth. Pathways member countries are committed to deepening cooperation under the following four pillars:



*Pillar I is focused on empowering micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs). With the objective of stimulating economic growth throughout the region. The activities that are being carried out under this Pillar seek to promote MSME’s market access, modernization, technological innovation, and access to credit and finance mechanisms.*

*Activities under Pillar II are directed towards the optimization of trade including topics such as infrastructure, interoperability, coordination of foreign trade agencies, efficiency, and transparency, with the aim of increasing the flow of trade within the region.*

*Through the sharing of best practices, Pillar III seeks to ameliorate access to job markets, economic opportunities, and working conditions, especially for women, youth, and vulnerable populations. In addition, Pillar III activities aim to promote dialogue amongst different government bodies, workers, and employers in order to avoid labor conflicts, consequently establishing a favorable investment climate.*

*The work that is being carried out under Pillar IV strives to improve and expand cleaner production practices, especially among MSMEs. It also seeks to promote the exchange of best practices in order to help farmers and MSMEs, among other sectors, increase market access for their sustainably produced products.*

<sup>1</sup> Pathways member countries currently include: Belize, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Peru, Trinidad and Tobago, Uruguay, and the US. Brazil has observer status. Source: US Department of State. (2014). *Pathways to Prosperity in the Americas*. [online].

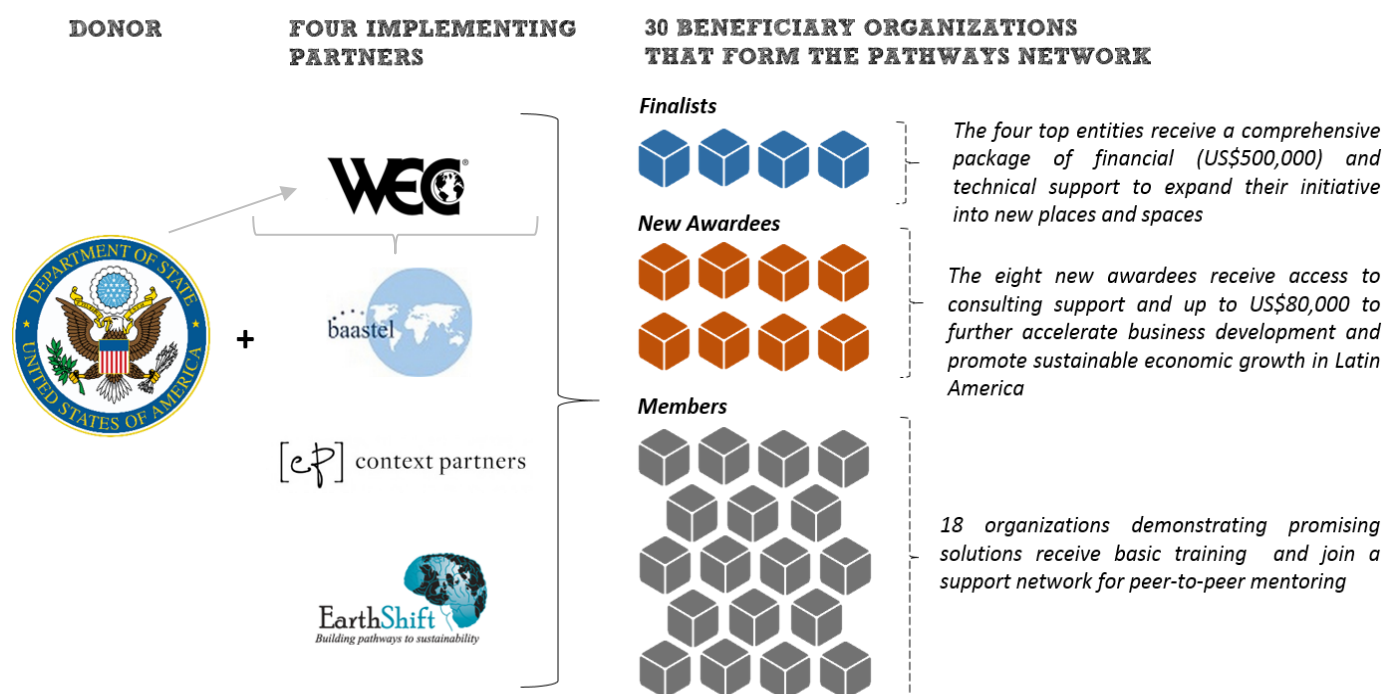
In preparation for the sixth Pathways to Prosperity in the Americas Initiative ministerial meeting held in Panama in October 2013, the Pathways partner countries established a framework through which to launch a series of public **competitions to solicit the most innovative and scalable ideas for generating inclusive economic growth under each of the four pillars**. Out of this framework, the Pathways to Prosperity Innovation Challenge (for brevity also referred to as the Innovation Challenge) was created.

In early 2014, State, in partnership with the World Environment Center (WEC) formally launched the Innovation Challenge, which was being designed and populated through the work of Context Partners. The goal was to discover and reward local, high-impact solutions that help SMEs in LAC grow and succeed. Over 500 creative and innovative proposals from countries across the hemisphere were received. An independent jury of international experts, put together for this program, selected and awarded four finalists with technical assistance (TA) and funding of up to USD\$500,000 to scale their solutions to a new context or location. Those selected had a track record of local impact and collaboration with cross-sector partners.

In the fall of 2014, **through a grant expansion, the Innovation Challenge evolved into its current iteration, La Red de Pathways Challenge**. La Red was created by selecting the 30 organizations with the most innovative solutions received through the Innovation Challenge. These promising solutions had already been vetted and ranked through the Challenge process and were invited to join and receive TA as well as connect with the other members of La Red and external partners to form the Pathways Network. Together, these 30 organizations are able to collaboratively use this sustainable business network to build skills and explore shared challenges and opportunities for scaling solutions for businesses in LAC.

This year, eight of these 30 were granted funding up to USD\$80,000 to maintain, strengthen and grow their initiatives. A pictorial overview of La Red de Pathways Challenge as such is presented here in Figure 1.

**Figure 1. Overview of La Red de Pathways Challenge**



## 1.2. Support provided to La Red

As depicted above, WEC, as the prime, proposed their existing implementing partners to continue being funded to collaborate with the 30 organizations of La Red. Each partner contributes with their own area of specialization: WEC provides oversight and guidance to the projects and partners; Le Groupe-conseil baastel Itée (Baastel) provides expertise in monitoring and evaluation (M&E) and Results-based Management (RBM); Context Partners, a social innovation design firm, manages La Red; and EarthShift Global provides training and consulting services, and is undertaking the Sustainability Return on Investment (S-ROI) analysis for the four finalists. Each of these partners has designated activities, providing consistent support both in-country and remotely, all of which is coordinated by WEC's Washington DC and Latin American offices.

La Red was designed to lead its members through a step-by-step 'network journey', building capacity and connections to thereby improve their chances of success in scaling their solutions. Support is delivered online, through a network platform called Schoology as well as other virtual means, and in-person, through workshops and events in different locations. A full 'scaling kit' is operationalized, and includes courses, tools, experts, connections, visibility, investors, and funders. The following outlines specific steps of support provided by the partners to the members of La Red over the past year.

### **STEP 1: Join courses and find the support you need (Online)**



**Courses and Webinars:** Several courses and webinars have been delivered by experts, covering a wide variety of subjects from design thinking (webinar held in April 2016) to survey methods (training held in May 2016). Online trainings were also delivered by the participants themselves, for example on analysis of visit flows to websites and online marketing. At this point, extensive feedback is pointing to the fact that the participants are using this new knowledge, know-how and tools to improve their activities and business.

**One-on-One Consultancy:** One-on-one consultancy in developing M&E tools has been offered to members by Baastel. Further guidance has been offered by the other partners to members in accessing resources and specific expertise of relevance to them, as well as developing partnerships within and outside La Red. Of note is the support provided to the eight new sub-grantees, including the help they received in designing and adapting tools for data collection to inform their first progress report.

**Communities of Practice (CoP):** The CoPs online forums on Schoology provide members a space to exchange experiences and ideas. Members can facilitate their own CoPs around a topic of interest within their areas of expertise or invite external experts to share their knowledge.

### **STEP 2: Improve your knowledge, network and visibility**



**Networking Events:** A key event worth highlighting was the July 2016 Summit held in Washington DC, attended by 13 organizations of La Red. The 2-day event addressed a wide variety of subjects, including: lessons learned from scaled projects in Latin America, impact investment, success and failure stories about innovation, and existing global networks and organizations that support them. The event was perceived as very informative and valuable by the members, as demonstrated by the evaluation survey completed by participants after the event.

**Midterm Evaluation (MTE) of the Four Grantees:** The MTE of the four grantees conducted by Baastel provided an objective and external perspective on the results reached by the awarded projects and helped generate lessons learned for the project teams but also for the whole La Red to learn from these scaling experience.



### **STEP 3: Connect with investors and advisors**



**Networking Events:** The July 2016 Summit, noted in Step 2, proved successful in fostering network connections amongst La Red members as well as with numerous invited investors, partners and stakeholders, such as the invited participants: Village Capital, Wyss Foundation, WeConnect, ConnectAmericas, Agora Partnerships, Vital Voices, and ANDE. It also permitted the Pathways partners to present progress made by the whole La Red and each of the funded projects since the beginning, and allowed partners to spend considerable face to face time with the members to provide personalized support.

Following the Summit, a number of external stakeholders have showed interest in further collaborating with La Red and discussions are on-going with a number of them to develop specific approaches that will benefit the members.

It is worth noting as well that one of the La Red members introduced the team to one of their partners, ConnectAmericas, who was subsequently invited to participate in Summit, following which, another organization member of the Network was able to form a partnership with that organization dedicated to strengthen SMEs in LAC as well.

### **STEP 4: Securing funding**



This year, **eight new sub grantees were selected and awarded approximately USD\$80,000 each** to further accelerate business development and promote sustainable economic growth in Latin America. The criteria for selecting these new grantees were based on the member's participation in La Red's activities, their monitoring and reporting process, partnership interactions with other members, and the potential for impact of their proposed solutions.

In each of the above steps, the activities offered provide space (virtual and in-person) for the Pathways partners to offer the members with technical expertise, content, capacity building and support. The partners also facilitated interactions and relationship building between members and beyond so that they can engage in mutually beneficial partnerships as they strengthen their solutions and organizations. Over the next few years, and up until summer 2017 when La Red de Pathways Challenge is slated to end, the partners will continue to support member organizations in their journey to successfully scale-up.



## 2. OVERVIEW OF THE NETWORK

The 30 organizations and their respective initiatives that form the Pathways Network are diverse in nature and size and come from numerous countries across the Western Hemisphere. This section seeks to provide an overview La Red, showcasing its diversity and reach.



### 2.1. Key Stats



**The 30 organizations come from 11 different countries spanning the Americas.**



**50% are NGOs,  
34% are Businesses.**

**The remaining include: Academic Institutions (7%), Foundations (3%), Social Enterprises (3%), and Government Agencies (3%)**

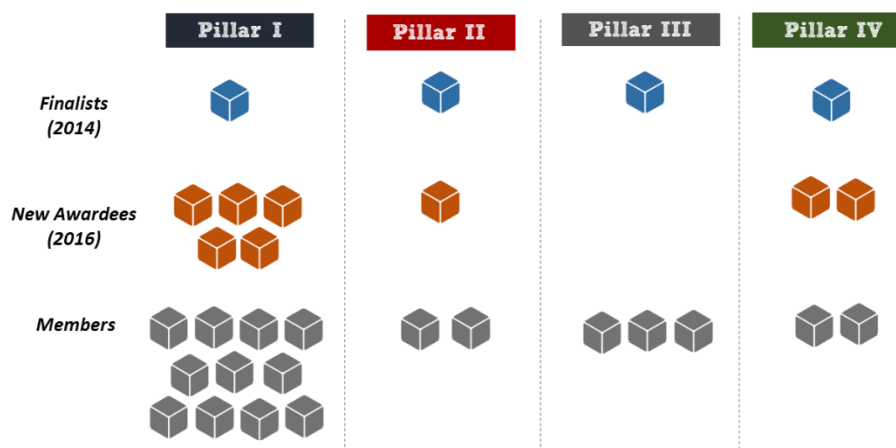


**The majority of projects fall primarily under Pillar I, with a relatively equal distribution among the three other pillars. It is worth noting that most of the projects can be considered under more than one of the Pillars.**



While the initial four finalists were selected to each represent a pillar, and the lessons learned from their solution aimed at identifying good practices and generating key results under each of the pillars more specifically, the rest of La Red was more loosely conformed. This is due directly to the nature of the 30 that were selected as the top choices from the Innovation Challenge applications. At that point in the selection process, those were chosen based solely on their level of innovation and impact, whereas the pillar screening took place after this stage. A breakdown of the members as distributed by pillar is provided in Figure 2. The uneven distribution of member organizations and solutions across the pillars will be important to take into account later on in Section 3, when cross-pillar trends in relation to measurements of progress and results are considered.

**Figure 2. Distribution of Members of the Pathways Network by Pillar**



## 2.2. List of Awardees

The following outlines the four finalists and the eight new awardees. A full list detailing all the member organizations and their project, can be found here: <http://www.lareddepathways.com/the-network>

### Four Finalists

#### **iCam Group (Pillar III)**

*Country of origin:* Mexico | *Country of scaling:* El Salvador and Panama

*Solution:* The “Integral Measurement System and Productivity Improvement for SMEs” (SIMAPRO) process builds skills for MSMEs’ productivity, while facilitating communication between workers and employers to improve social dialogue and labor conditions.

#### **Vista Volcanes (VV) (Pillar IV)**

*Country of origin:* Guatemala | *Country of scaling:* Guatemala, El Salvador and Nicaragua.

*Solution:* “Capilla Malla Inocua” changes the use of chemical supplies to protect crop development and create a network of sustainable, small entrepreneurs equipped with the tools to grow their business, shifting to organic agricultural best practices.

#### **Lutheran World Relief (LWR) (Pillar I)**

*Country of origin:* Nicaragua | *Country of scaling:* Nicaragua, El Salvador and Honduras

*Solution:* “Mobile Cocoa” builds a network of diverse stakeholders across sectors to improve cacao farmers’ understanding of production and international markets, while connecting them to resources.

#### **Núcleo Biotecnología Curauma, Pontificia Universidad Católica de Valparaíso (NBC-PUCV) (Pillar II)**

*Country of origin:* Chile | *Country of scaling:* Peru

*Solution:* “CompitemAS” provides SMEs tools to make decisions on technology and sustainability practices, as well as measure and monitor productivity, environmental and social impact.



## Eight New Awardees

### UpLatam/Techstars

*Country of origin:* Mexico

*Solution:* Leads an experiential training program for start-up SMEs with global potential. Their main objective is to increase the number of entrepreneurial communities in Latin America.

### Comunidades de la Tierra /Wakami

*Country of origin:* Guatemala

*Solution:* Links rural women entrepreneurs to value chains (international markets) through a customized network. With this grant, the organization expects to expand its Wakami rural businesses to contribute to a greater social and economic performance.

### Centro de Producción Más Limpia de Nicaragua (CPML-N)

*Country of origin:* Nicaragua

*Solution:* Supports Nicaraguan SMEs through technical assistance in cleaner production practices, and by linking technology and financing opportunities for businesses. Including expansion to El Salvador and Guatemala.

### Consejo Nacional de la Empresa Privada (CoNEP)

*Country of origin:* Panama

*Solution:* Provides technical support on Integrated Management System (IMS) implementation process that is focused on reducing costs as well as environmental and social risks while increasing competitiveness in SMEs.

### Las Páginas Verdes (LPV)

*Country of origin:* Mexico

*Solution:* Promotes sustainable consumption as an alternative to environmental care. With its grant, LPV will develop and implement workshops to train SMEs that support communities of green consumers.

### Chamber of Commerce of Bucaramanga (CCB)

*Country of origin:* Colombia

*Solution:* Operates an innovative mentoring model for empowering women entrepreneurs. With this sub-grant, CCB is already working in partnership with another member of La Red, Incubatec UFRO from Temuco-Chile, to transfer Incubatec's methodology to their program and further support and accelerate these entrepreneurs.

### AcuaCare

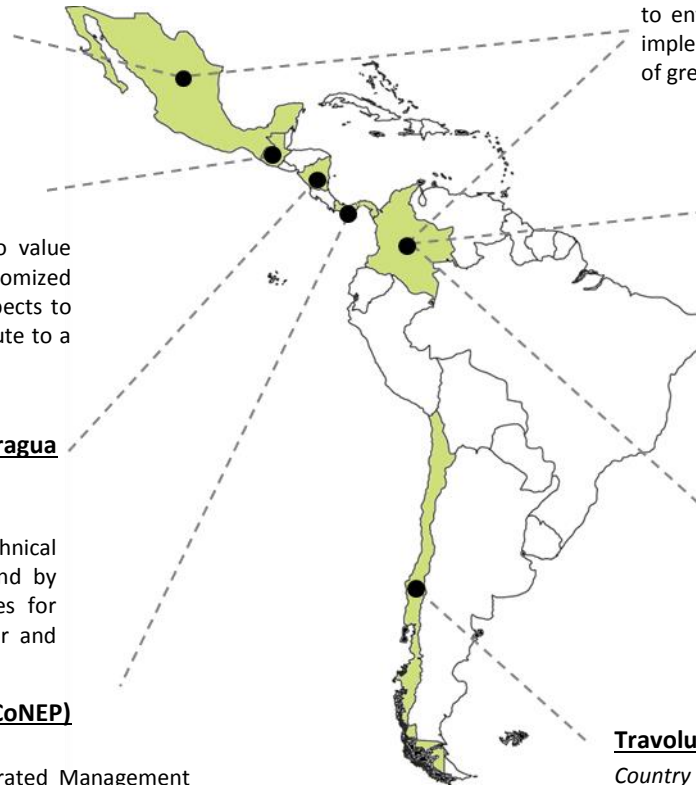
*Country of origin:* Colombia

*Solution:* Implements biological solutions for treating wastewater and sludge from wastewater treatment plants using microorganisms. The grant will allow them to provide workshops and technical assistance for SMEs on sustainable practices and biological wastewater treatment.

### Travolution

*Country of origin:* Chile

*Solution:* Supports rural entrepreneurs to coordinate, develop and generate local tourism models that respect cultural, social, and natural heritage while also increasing business and incomes for rural SMEs. Through this sub-grant, Travolution will develop the first Latin-American Community-Based Tourism Summit in Colombia.



## 2.3. Fund Allocations

Funds by State have been granted to La Red awardees at varying times as shown in Figure 3 below. The Pathways Network granted funds to the four finalists at the beginning of 2015. In monetary terms, the total allocated to the finalists represents USD\$2 million contributing to inclusive economic growth to citizens in LAC. As of September 30, 2016, 81% of project funds for the four finalists have been transferred to the relevant implementers to finance their project activities and indirect costs. Two of the four finalists will conclude their project in 2016. The remaining two are scheduled to complete their projects in May 2017. Detailed case studies on the projects that will officially close in 2016 are provided in Section 4.

In 2016, eight new awardees were selected and began to receive their funds. Cumulatively, these eight new projects represent approximately USD\$640,000 in additional support from State to the members of La Red directly. As of the end of September 2016, USD\$112,092 (~18%) of project funds for the eight new awardees have been transferred to the relevant implementers to finance their project activities and indirect costs.

Over the past year, State has provided USD\$943,904.74 to build and sustain the Pathways Network. As shown in Figure 4, cumulatively since inception, the total provided in this regard has totaled USD\$2,531,680.34, or 39% of the Total Award. By contrast, USD\$1,732,962, or 26.6% of the Total Award, has been disbursed directly to members through grants and awards.

Figure 3. Timeline of Granted Funds to the Members and Project Lifetimes

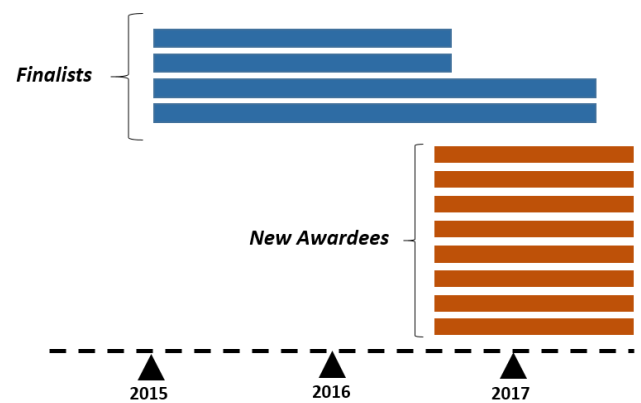
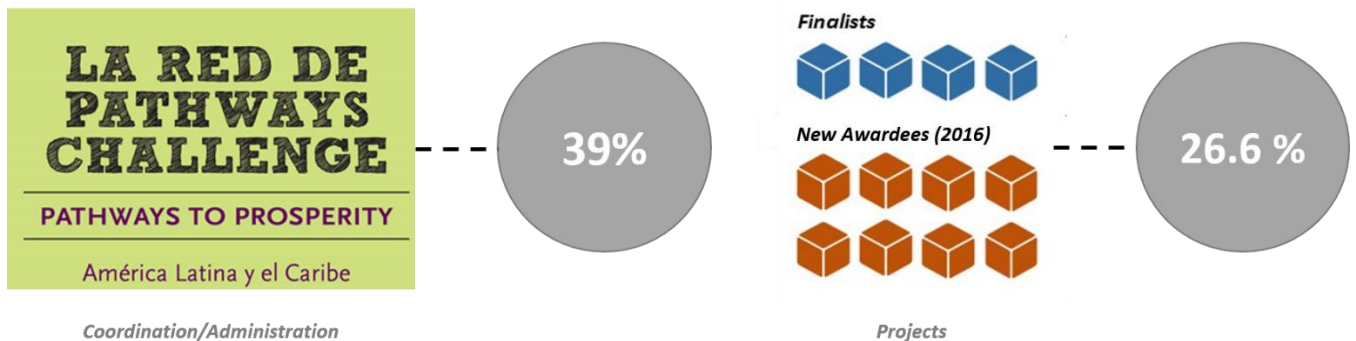


Figure 4. Funds Granted by State for the Pathways Network and the Members, from Inception until September 2016



# 3. PROGRESS AND RESULTS TO DATE<sup>2</sup>

## 3.1. Progress to Date

With support from the partners, the members of La Red were encouraged to collect data on the progress made in the implementation of their projects as well as on the results reached at specific points in time. These members were provided with a standardized reporting format designed to facilitate data collection<sup>3</sup> and, during project implementation, each member was asked, to the extent possible, to monitor the expected **achievements of objectives** as well as the **overall implementation progress** on a four-point scale (4-Satisfactory; 3- Moderately Satisfactory; 2- Moderately Unsatisfactory; 1- Unsatisfactory).<sup>4</sup> The two figures below present the results of the self-assessments from members concerning their progress towards achievement of objective (Figure 5) and implementation progress (Figure 6), broken down by category.

Figure 5. Self-Assessment of Progress Towards Achievement of Objectives by Category, for YR2016

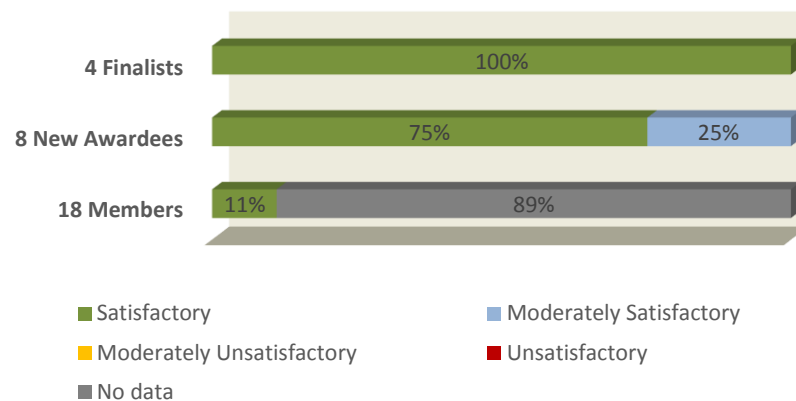
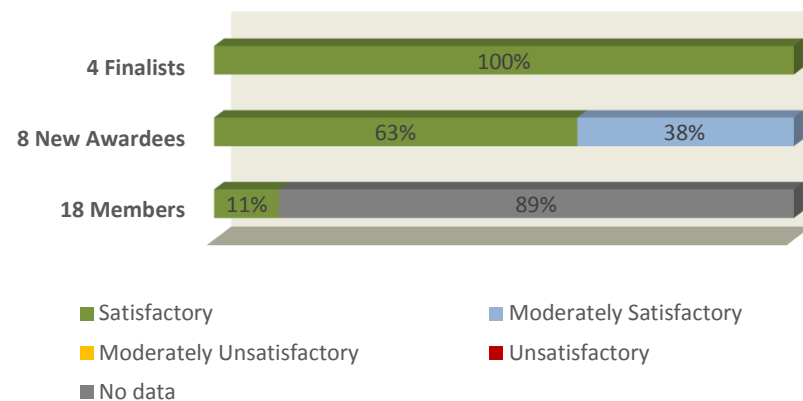


Figure 6. Self-Assessment of Implementation Progress by Category, for YR2016



<sup>2</sup> It is important to note, while reading this section and the next of the Annual Report, that the data presented here is self-reported by members. In addition, many of the members' projects are not funded directly by State; thus, Baastel has less control over what is being reported here and cannot, in many cases, ascertain all the data presented in this portion of the report.

<sup>3</sup> Please see La Red de Pathways' M&E Plan for more details on the monitoring process and the tools used.

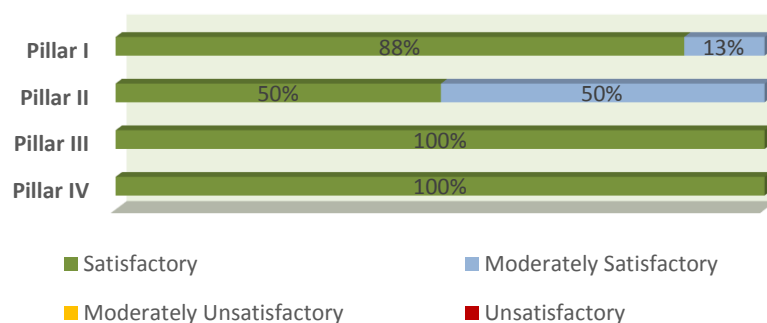
<sup>4</sup> Ratings are based on standardized benchmarking scales.

In understanding these charts, it is important to note that only the 12 awardees have a contractual obligation to report on their results and activities. The other La Red members, while highly encouraged to do so, have no such obligation.<sup>5</sup>

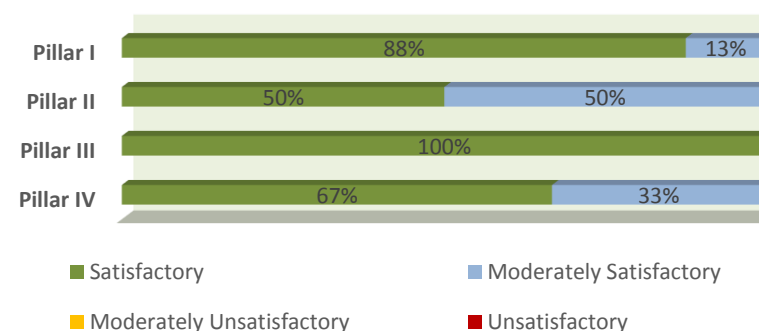
Aggregating the data of the individual projects to a portfolio-level allows Pathways Network partners to look holistically across the projects to understand the portfolio's strategic alignment and its potential to deliver expected results. In identifying trends, considering only those who provided data, it is encouraging to see that the overwhelming majority of projects have self-rated their progress as 'satisfactory,' with the remaining few reporting their progress as 'moderately satisfactory.' This positive advancement was similarly seen last year, where all four finalists reported their progress as 'satisfactory'.

In examining the data by pillar, again only considering those who provided data, it is evident that overall progress is positive and relatively even across each of the four pillars. The two figures below present the results of the self-assessments from *awarded* members concerning their progress towards achievement of objective (Figure 7) and implementation progress (Figure 8), broken down by pillar<sup>6</sup>.

**Figure 7. Self-Assessment of Progress Towards Achievement of Objectives by Pillar, for YR2016**



**Figure 8. Self-Assessment of Implementation Progress by Pillar, for YR2016**



The macro-level analysis provided here is helpful in managing investments and ensuring that thematic areas are covered in proportion to the contribution they make, and ensuring better targeting of resources for enhancing impact over time. With the data that has been provided, it is evident that the individual projects that make up La Red are progressing well. Of note, two of the four finalists will have successfully implemented their projects in full by the end of 2016. Additionally, the eight new awardees, despite only being awarded this year, have seen good progress. And, as will be detailed in the next two sub-sections, several are already reporting notable results.

<sup>5</sup> The partners are continuously looking for ways to incentivize and increase the reporting rate of the 18 members.

<sup>6</sup> There are six awardees in pillar I, two in pillar II, one in pillar III and three in pillar IV.



## 3.2. Results Achieved against F Indicators

Standard Foreign Assistance Indicators (F Indicators) are a standard set of indicators which allows for the consolidation of certain key results to provide a broad picture of what is being achieved with United States Government (USG) foreign assistance resources. **Considering only those members of La Red receiving grants from State** as part of their support to La Red, namely the four finalists and eight new awardees, the following presents the aggregated results against F Indicators with numbers as of October 2016. A breakdown of those results for the four finalists (who are the main contributors to those results) is provided to the side.

2,230  
MSMEs

from different countries in LAC are directly benefitting from USG enterprise assistance through the funded projects of La Red de Pathways Challenge. \* 4.7.3-6



As of October 2015, 113 SMEs had directly benefitted. **This is an increase of 2,117 SMEs over the past year.**

With the **iCam Group**, 41 beneficiary MSMEs have started the implementation of the SIMAPRO process, a methodology based on social dialogue and integrated measurement for improvement of productivity in organizations. Of the 41, **34 terminated the project in the Summer of 2016**:

- 14 MSMEs in El Salvador; 20 MSMEs in Panama

With **LWR**, **1,948 cacao MSMEs<sup>7</sup>** received information relevant to their business using the LWR technology. Of the total:

- 603 MSMEs are from Nicaragua; 456 MSMEs are from El Salvador; 889 MSMEs are from Honduras

With **NBC-PUCV**, **21 SMEs** in Peru have received the support of the ComputeMAS project team and have learned how to track their performance indicators for strategic decision making as well as implemented practices that impacted positively their productivity, as well as improved their social and environmental footprint.

With **VV**, **69 SMEs** have benefited from the VV growing technology. Of those:

- 59 SMEs are from Guatemala; 10 are from El Salvador

The **iCam Group** trained and contracted **29 consultants** in El Salvador and Panama to work for the project. Of those:

- 19 were men; 10 were women

Additionally, employees from the beneficiary SMEs - totally approximately **1,298 individuals** - among which close to half are women - now have improved working conditions in terms of physical and/or mental conditions as well as in some cases remuneration. Of those:

- 509 employees work in El Salvador; 789 employees work in Panama

With **LWR**, **181 promoters** were hired to provide technical assistance and training to the beneficiary SMEs. Of those:

- 82 are from Nicaragua; 59 are from El Salvador; 40 are from Honduras

With **NBC-PUCV**, the project contracted **10 individuals** in Peru to work for the project.

With **VV**, **120 individuals** now receive nominally the minimum salary, which means that from the projects implemented by VV, **these 120 family members** have new/better employment.

220



individuals

have gained new employment through these projects. \*4.6.3-2 As of October 2015, 40 individuals had gained new employment. **This is an increase of 180 individuals over the past year.**

1,638

individuals

can be considered as having gained better employment. \* 4.6.3-2 **This is an increase of ~6% over the past year.**

<sup>7</sup> In reading this number, it is important to consider that through this project, LWR is working mainly with smallholder farmers. In many cases, and mainly in El Salvador, the data points to families growing the cocoa trees, with some that only have a few cocoa trees. These smallholders are growing these trees to sell their products, hence the denomination of "micro enterprises" and their counting under this F indicator.





**1,240**  
**farmers**

are now applying new technologies and/or management practices to improve their crops. \*4.5.2-5

As of October 2015, this number was 94 farmers. *This is an increase of 1,146 farmers over the past year.*

With **LWR**, **1,171 cacao farmers** are now using LWR digital tools to access cocoa market information. Of those:

395 MSMEs are from Nicaragua  
397 MSMEs are from El Salvador  
379 MSMEs are from Honduras

With **VV**, **69 farmers** have adopted new technology. Of those:

59 are from Guatemala  
10 are from El Salvador

With **NBC-PUCV**, **20 beneficiary SMEs** in Peru now use more sustainable management practices.

With **VV**, **69 beneficiaries** that have adopted the new technologies have reduced their insecticide use shifting to organic practices. Of those:

59 are from Guatemala  
10 are from El Salvador



**89 beneficiary SMEs**

now use technologies or practices that better respond to environmental standards. \*4.5.2-42

As of October 2015, this number was 25 SMEs. *This is an increase of 64 SMEs over the past year.*



Annual economic savings of SMEs / Annual income level of SMEs

With the **iCam Group**, the average return on investment (ROI) for participating SMEs was measured. The average ROI per country is noted here:

**Panama = 33%**

**El Salvador = 114%**

The companies that NBC-PUCV worked with in Peru through the Compitemas project overall have:

**Reduced their Energy Consumption by = 18%**

**Realized Savings on Water Consumption of = 20%**

Overall, it is evident that the projects funded by State as part of La Red de Pathways Challenge are clearly contributing to priority areas of the USG in a significant way.

### 3.3. Results Achieved by Pillar

Each of the projects that form part of the Pathways Network feed into one or more of the four pillars. To provide a macro view of how La Red is progressing and contributing to the priority areas as a whole, this section aggregates the data from the individual organizations and present results achieved by pillar. To facilitate this, the pillars have been divided into sub-objectives to better capture progress made. *In contrast to the previous section, the numbers presented here include the projects that have received grants through the Pathways Network (that is, the four finalists and eight new awardees) as well as those projects who have not received grants but rather only technical assistance as their support (namely, the 18 members).*<sup>8</sup>



#### **Pillar I** Empowering Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises

*The projects of La Red members have contributed to empowering beneficiary SMEs by promoting their access to markets and/or financing mechanisms, and by strengthening the way they manage their business, either by supporting their modernization or by facilitating training and connections.*

**Over 10,000 MSMEs<sup>9</sup>**

have been supported through the projects of the organizations member of La Red de Pathways Challenge.

#### **Promote MSME's Market Access**

MSMEs have increased their market access by expanding Wakami's technology platforms, allowing businesses to better connect with final costumers and reach new geographic markets. Over the past year, **Wakami has near doubled the number of followers it has on social media.**

To date, they have **54,237 followers** on Facebook and **255 followers** on Twitter.

Through its platforms, LPV has successfully promoted growth of the base of green consumers, while also improving SME's knowledge of its consumers. To date, it has **34,718 people subscribed on its mailing list**, with **19,785 visits to the web page.**

With Fundación Parque Metropolitano La Libertad, one of the 18 member organizations of La Red who does not receive funds from La Red, **20 Costa Rican SMEs** in the digital and video animation sector have achieved a presence in international markets.

#### **Support MSME's Modernization, Technological Innovation**

LWR has created an app that has been downloaded by promoters and technicians onto **1,777 computers**, assisting **1,810 SMEs.**

LPV has offered **an informative platform** that has in part exposed SMEs that offer sustainable and green products so their potential consumers can learn about them, contributing to increased sales.

<sup>8</sup> La Red is made up of members that were already implementing high-impact initiatives before starting their participation in the network. Some of these organizations, despite not being granted funds from State as part of this program, are still developing their solutions and reporting to the partners about the results they achieve. The numbers provided in this section reflect this reality and encompass the work being done by members of the network, regardless of who is funding it.

<sup>9</sup> As mentioned above, this number integrates micro-enterprises which can be individuals and families who operate a business. Also, the data presented here is self-reported by members. Many of the members' projects are not funded directly by State; thus, Baastel has less control over what is being reported here and cannot, in many cases, ascertain all the data presented in this portion of the report.

### Strengthen Business Management/Competitive Development

Wakami has scaled up its value chain to include **94 new producers** with **3 new rural businesses**. Plus, it continues to support **399 producers** that are already part of the Wakami Value Chain.

As direct result of their workshops, **80% of Techstar start-ups** have reported an increase in their management skills.

CCB and Incubatec-Ufro started to collaboratively develop an **acceleration program** in response to local needs and create a pilot program with a group of Colombian entrepreneurs. **12 women entrepreneurs and 3 male** entrepreneurs have been selected to participate and grow their potential through the support received. Incubatec-Ufro on its own has further supported an additional **63 SMEs** through business support services.



## Pillar II

### Facilitating Trade and Regional Competitiveness

*To facilitate trade and regional competitiveness of the beneficiary SMEs in LAC, members' projects have provided their beneficiaries with training, technology and guidance material with a view to having some SMEs be certified or to comply with regulations. The projects also facilitated the development of partnerships between the SMEs and relevant institutions as well as promoted efficiency and transparency in the management of their trade operations.*

Through the support of CompiteMAS, Peruvian SMEs have increased their competitiveness in the international market

**10 SMEs** have increased their exports

**20 SMEs** are now using sustainable practices in their production processes

**52 new certifications** have been provided

### Promote compliance with public and private environmental requirements for the private sector

CompiteMAS SMEs have **reduced energy consumption by 18%** and had a **20% savings in water consumption**.

**25,000 tons of CO2/year**

have been reduced by beneficiary SMEs with CompiteMAS.

Acua Care developed a document to disseminate knowledge to Colombian SMEs regarding the legal obligations of the new Colombian environmental law and the tax benefits related to using sustainable technologies. Other information material created by the team include cleaner production practices available for SMEs to comply with the law.

### Increased efficiency and transparency in the management of trade operations through a better use of information technologies

CompiteMAS is promoting efficiency and transparency in the management of trade operations through its platform which is now operational in Peru.

The CompiteMAS platform has **190 users** in Peru. These users are reporting a **high level of satisfaction** in the use of the platform.

CONEP has signed agreements with **10 SMEs** in Panama to provide them with an Integrated Management System (IMS) that is focused on reducing costs as well as environmental and social risks while increasing their competitiveness.



## Pillar III

*Developing a Modern Workforce*

*Pillar III speaks to stimulating job creation/enhancement and eventually creating new employment. To reach these targets, events, official documents, training material as well as workshops were developed to start building the capacities of stakeholders, also with the intention of improving working environments.*

Through the SIMAPRO project, employees from **34 SMEs and 1,298 workers now have better employment.**

iCam Group is furthering its presence in Panama and El Salvador. In Panama, they are partnering with CoNEP and have started to train consultants to spread the benefit of this program to other regions. In El Salvador, they have signed agreement with a governmental agency to pursue the reach of the program to more employees in SMEs.

*Enhance working conditions, especially for women, youth, and vulnerable populations*

With the SIMAPRO,

**71% of the participating SMEs in El Salvador and 55% of SMEs in Panama**

have reported increased level of satisfaction in regards to their working environment.

**120 family members** in rural

Guatemala have found employment/have been provided with nominally the minimum salary through the 'Capilla Malla Inocua' project of VV.

**37 men and 32 women** (mostly

youth) participated in Techstars 'LATAM Summit 2016' in Chile as community leaders. During this event sponsored by State, they shared their experiences as entrepreneurs and discussed good practices; identify challenges and priorities for their cities; and increase the competitiveness of their own startups.

*Promote dialogue in order to build a good working environment*

Through the iCam Group project, **509 workers in El Salvador and 789 workers in Panama** have participated in feedback sessions, benefiting from greater dialogue.

The percentage of those workers participating in the feedback sessions that are women are **57% in El Salvador and 35% in Panama.**



## Pillar IV

### Sustainable Business Practices and Environmental Cooperation

*Pillar IV is centered on the role SMEs can play in safeguarding the environment. The idea is to support SMEs in integrating cleaner production practices in their day-to-day management and to better comply with environmental requirements and therefore diminish the negative impact they can have on the environment while also becoming more sustainable. The projects also endeavored to increase the visibility of products developed in a sustainable way.*

#### Improve and expand cleaner production practices, especially among MSMEs

Through the VV project,

### 59 SMEs in Guatemala and 10 SMEs in El Salvador

have been provided with a technological package to produce pesticide-free tomatoes. These beneficiaries have all applied the new technology and have reached a level of self-sustainability with regards to the project.

With CPML-N, an awareness raising seminar with **27 participants** was conducted.

The seminar included discussions on the benefits of environmental protection and productive development resulting from the application of cleaner production methodologies.

#### Encourage public participation in environmental decision making and promote the exchange of best practices

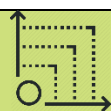
With VV, **65 SMEs in Guatemala, 17 SMEs from El Salvador, and 1 SME from Nicaragua** have been trained in 5 areas of crop management, contributing to a diffusion of best practices, innovations, and lessons learned for the sustainable management of protected crops.

With **CPML-N, a symposium** on cleaner production, energy efficiency and renewable energy was carried out. It included 20 suppliers of clean technologies, 8 keynote presentations, as well as representatives from private and public institutions. The symposium was held to create a space for changing experiences and best practices.

Travolution is working in close relationship with communities in Colombia for the organization of the first community based tourism Latin-American Encounter. Community based tourism is seen as a strategic opportunity for a sustainable development of local communities through tourism. The event is aimed at building awareness with the public but also decision-makers on the power of this sector for local sustainable development. It is also hoped that the event will help the generation of alliances, and the integration of initiatives through the exchanges of practices from all over the continent.

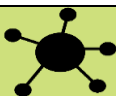
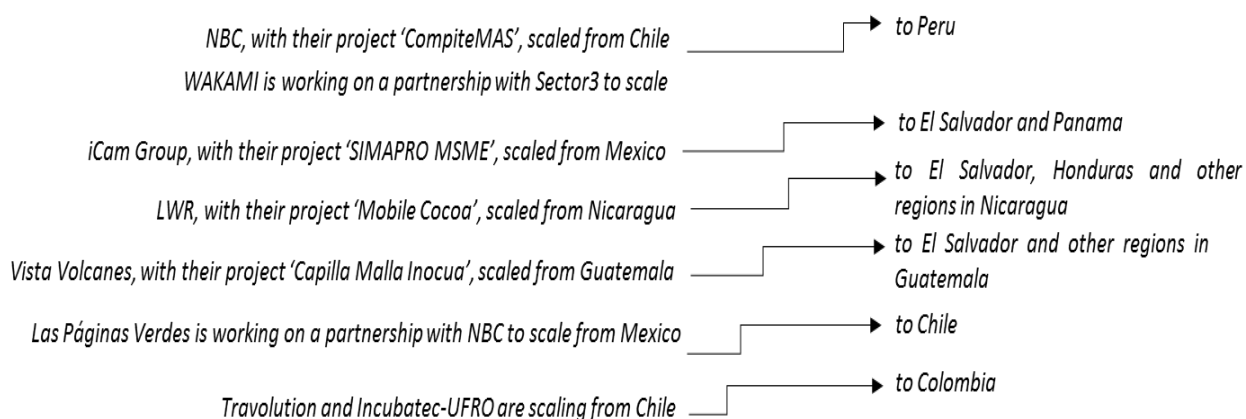
The NBC-PUCV delivered a training workshop to CoNEP's partners and key institutions they work with on measuring carbon footprint.

### 3.4. Results Achieved by the Network in terms of Partnerships and Visibility



## Scaling

**8 member organizations have succeeded in scaling their solution to another location**, mostly thanks to the support provided by La Red de Pathways.



## Finding the Right Connections

*Within the Network*

*Outside of the Network*

**22 member organizations are actively collaborating together** (peer-to-peer support), and at least **4 members signed collaboration agreement** to solidify their work together.

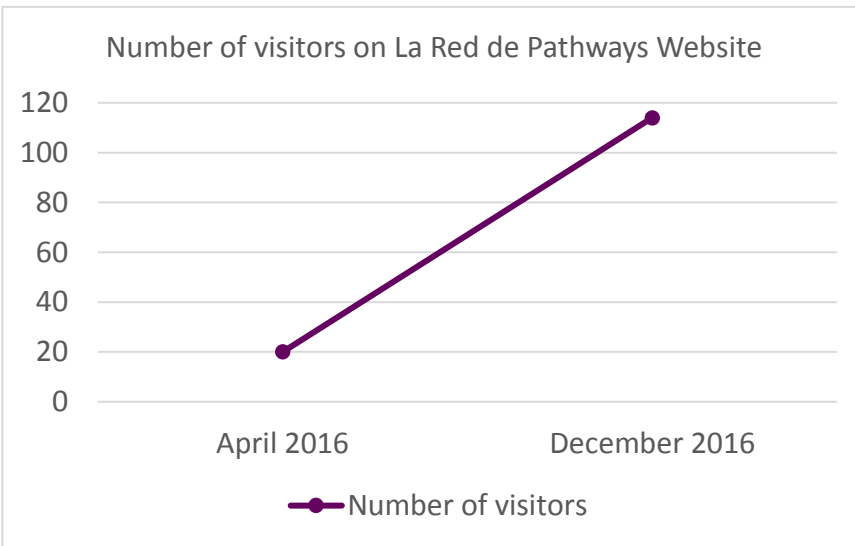
At least **6 different member organizations have reached concrete agreements with an external stakeholder** as a result of the support provided and the activities organized by La Red de Pathways.





## Website

The traffic on La Red de Pathways website [www.lareddepathways.com](http://www.lareddepathways.com) has **kept increasing** throughout 2016.



**Most users are from the US,** but

country from where visitors access the website also include: Chile, Peru, Colombia, Guatemala, El Salvador, Ecuador, Venezuela, Portugal, France and Canada.

## # Social Media



**322 persons and organizations** follow **La Red de Pathways** on Facebook.

### Reach

December 1 - December 7

1,069

People Reached ▲1,427%



### Post Engagements

December 1 - December 7

240

Post Engagement ▲71%



### Videos

December 1 - December 7

27

Total Video Views ▲1,250%



The Facebook page got **45 more likes** the week following the 2016 July Summit.



**@LaRedPathways** has **46 followers** on Twitter.



# Visibility

La Red de Pathways and its member organizations have been written about and showcased extensively in a variety of digital media formats – including online newspapers, magazines, academic publications. They have also been featured extensively in videos through Pathways related YouTube channels as well as through other media sources such as TV Programs, reaching audiences locally, regionally, and internationally. To highlight some examples:



## Videos and Media Coverage

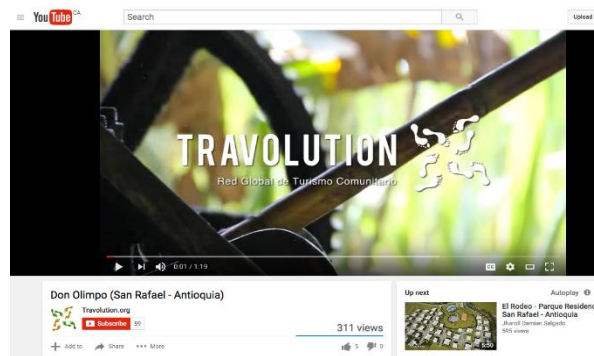
The ‘SIMAPRO MSME’ project has benefitted from extensive coverage in Salvadorian and Panamean press throughout its implementation in 2015-2016. Some of the articles and videos for this project can be accessed here:

<http://simaprolatam.org/publicaciones-1.html>

The TV Program “Nuestro ambiente” dedicated a segment of its show to present the experience ‘Compitemas Internacional’ in Peru. The TV program was broadcasted on UCV Televisión, a Chilean television network.



See some of these videos on La Red de Pathways Youtube Channel: La Red de Pathways Initiative



## Articles and Digital Media

On November 10, 2016, CPmL Nicaragua was **showcased in an article in a national online newspaper**, highlighting the support this organization has received through La Red de Pathways.



**Noticieroenfoque.com**

"Las noticias mas destacadas de Nicaragua y el Mundo"

INICIO ▾ INTERNACIONALES ▾ NACIONALES DEPARTAMENTALES ECONOMÍA POLÍTICA RELIGIÓN



**Más fondos para el desarrollo sostenible de las comunidades en Nicaragua, El Salvador y Guatemala.**

10 noviembre, 2016 • Enfoque Managua • 0 Comentarios

Unos 80 mil dólares han sido destinados para apoyar a las Mipymes turísticas en

## Lanzamiento: Colombia sede del primer Encuentro Latinoamericano de Turismo Comunitario

Date  
27 September 2016

07:00

Bogota  
Colombia

Colombia será sede del primer Encuentro Latinoamericano de Turismo Comunitario

Bogotá, 27 septiembre 2016. Más de 30 organizaciones comunitarias latinoamericanas, alrededor de 50 emprendimientos comunitarios de Colombia y agencias turísticas interesadas en generar alianzas para la comercialización de la oferta de turismo comunitario de América Latina en mercados internacionales, se darán cita del 23 al 26 de marzo de 2017 en el primer Encuentro Latinoamericano de Turismo Comunitario (ELTC), un espacio de intercambio de experiencias que busca consolidar y propiciar la construcción colectiva del turismo comunitario en la región.

In September of 2016, an article showcasing the event for which Travolution was awarded funds this year through La Red de Pathways was **published on the United Nations World Tourism Organization's website**, a website that averages views in the 10s of thousands every month.



### Sustainable Development Indicators: CompitemAS, A New Platform For Small And Medium Enterprises

Price **Free (open access)**  
Paper DOI **10.2495/SDP150321**  
Transaction **WIT Transactions on Ecology and the Environment**  
Volume **193**  
Pages **7**  
Page Range **377 - 383**  
Published **2015**  
Size **729 kb**

#### Author(s)

R. Chamy, E. Vivanco, I. Sánchez

#### Abstract

Portificia Universidad Católica de Valparaíso has been developing a National Project named "CompitemAS". One of the goals of that project is based on creating a set of sustainability indicators for Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) in Chile. Today this platform is being implemented in other countries in the region. At least 30 general indicators for social, environmental and production aspects in companies were created, as well as 30 more indicators regarding specific sustainability features in specific sectors were added. A table of contents has been developed for each indicator, in which

An article was written in an **academic publication** about CompitemAS, showcasing its work and its platform.



## Conferences



More than **200 persons** assisted to a conference organized by Acua Care in **Bogotá, Colombia** in October 2016 to discuss sustainability issues and present Acua Care's solution, which has been awarded funds this year through La Red de Pathways.



The 'CompitemAS Internacional' team, one of the four finalists, **talked about their experience in various international settings**, including in **Israel** in February-March 2016, in **Mexico** in March 2016 and again in **Panama** in November 2016.


## 4. CASE STUDIES

The data aggregated and presented in the previous section has provided a macro-level view of the progress the Pathways Network's portfolio of projects have cumulatively made throughout the region. This section seeks to provide detailed snapshots, closely considering selected projects to showcase concrete examples of the transformative impact of La Red. The first two case studies showcased here are the finalists who will conclude their projects in 2016. The last two case studies present some of the new eight awardees implementing initiatives with the additional funding provided by State this year. Finally, the last case study presents some of La Red members being acknowledged, outside of La Red, for their recognized success.

### 4.1. The Pathways Network is DEVELOPING A MODERN WORKFORCE

With the funds and support provided by the Pathways Network, the Mexican firm iCam Group has successfully scaled its SIMAPRO<sup>10</sup> methodology to El Salvador and Panama. SIMAPRO is a formal method used for measuring productivity, encouraging learning and giving feedback to employees that can be applied in any type of organization. Driven and supported by the International Labour Organization (ILO) of the United Nations (UN), it is based on **establishing participatory systems inside the beneficiary companies, facilitating communication and critical reflection, engaging staff in the organization and then implementing creative and innovative actions that meet productive and social objectives.**

The 'SIMAPRO MSME' project was successfully concluded in September 2016. As part of the closing events for this initiative, **34 MSMEs** (14 in El Salvador and 20 in Panama) presented the results achieved by their company. **Close to 1,300 employees<sup>11</sup>, of which almost half were female**, participated in the implementation of the SIMAPRO model. An essential part of the model is constituted by the identification of problems and opportunities by workers, and the implementation of improvements and solutions. Over the course of the project, **a grand total of 1,674<sup>12</sup> actions, with the aim of improving social, economic and/or environmental conditions, were implemented.** A few examples of these actions include:

Domain		Testimony from Panama - Ahue Vasquez Consultores	
Productivity / Efficiency		“The SIMAPRO program has been useful for our company because it has helped promote new initiatives to increase productivity and measure their results and economic impact. It has also helped improve the organizational climate and strengthen our team.”	
		- Andrés Ahues, Resp. of Communication and Projects, Ahue.	
		Examples of Actions Implemented - From Panama, Díaz & Guerrero	

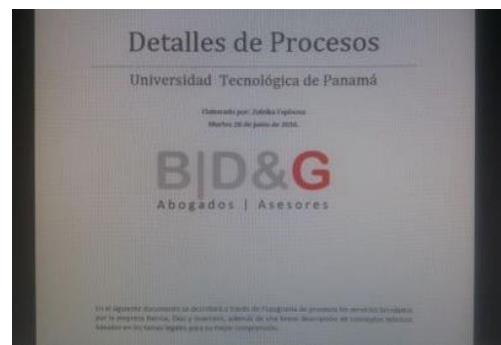
<sup>10</sup> SIMAPRO stands for Integral Measurement System and Productivity Improvement (Sistema Integral de Medición y Avance de la Productividad in Spanish).

<sup>11</sup> 789 (510M/279F) employees in Panama and 509 (215M/294F) in El Salvador as per the results reported by iCam in the presentation used during the final events in both scaling countries.

<sup>12</sup> 982 actions implemented in El Salvador and 692 in Panama.

With the participation from all staff, the company was able to develop and update its Strategic Plan.

The company also developed a 'Guide of Administrative Processes', which has helped standardize processes, ensure business continuity and is hoped to serve to reduce learning curve/training time for new employees, all resulting in gains in efficiency.



**Domain** *Testimony from Panama - Hotel Albrook*



"All of us were motivated when the project began. There was a value of commitment that has helped us achieve what we have. For me, the motivation of the staff is what is most important in the business."

- Alba Rudas Quintero, SIMAPRO Coordinator, Hotel Albrook

**Examples of Actions Implemented - From El Salvador, Casa Vida Nueva**

**Social**

Through the project, the employees increased their motivation and received greater recognition of their contribution towards the business.

The project also contributed to generating improvements to the work space (which could affect positively health and security of the employees) by improving the organization of the raw materials in their warehouse.



**Domain** *Testimony from Panama – Zona Libre de Colon*

**Environment**



"With SIMAPRO, we have had many achievements. For example, the air conditioning of our department was fixed, we also installed window tinting film to save energy. SIMAPRO has proved to be very good for us."

- Sandra Funes, Collaborator, Department of Cargo Transportation

**Examples of Actions Implemented - From El Salvador, Patronic, S.A. de C.V.**

Waste reduction: Actions were taken to reuse/recycle materials and reduce waste overall.

Workshops were also organized to create awareness among employees about the importance to contribute to the company's waste management program and support recycling.





Of note, the ‘SIMAPRO MSME’ project also made great strides in **strengthening local capacity** to continue to implement and expand the SIMAPRO model to other SMEs beyond the project’s life. Each of the participating businesses received support from one of **29 consultants (19 males and 10 females)** who were hired locally and trained to support the SMEs in building employee capacity and in developing a culture of continuous learning. Additionally, in El Salvador, **six university students were integrated into the project as junior consultants**, providing them with an opportunity to gain practical work experience, develop new skills, network with professionals in their field and earn money<sup>13</sup>.



*The El Salvador consultant team, including the junior consultants*

The ‘SIMAPRO MSME’ project succeeded in **creating a network of stakeholders** representing different sectors (including government, workers and businesses associations as well as education and training institutions) in both countries. La Red facilitates the exchange of information and experience between various entities and serves to incentivize the continuous implementation of the SIMAPRO model and promote its benefits to others. Although the funds provided through the Pathways Network have been fully administered, iCam has obtained additional funding from local partners as well as from a member from the Pathways Network.<sup>14</sup> This will allow it to build on its current success and continue to implement the project in the scaling countries.

<sup>13</sup> A small stipend of USD\$50 per month over a six-month implementation period was granted to them.

<sup>14</sup> In El Salvador, iCam Group counts with the support from INSAFORP, who provided ~USD\$70,000 to continue the implementation of the methodology during another six months. In Panama, they are furthering their intervention with the help of the CoNEP, one of the new awardees this year, training and integrating new consultants in the West region.

## 4.2. The Pathways Network is INCREASING THE COMPETITIVENESS OF MSMEs

To address critical challenges to competitiveness and meet the needs of SMEs, NBC-PUCV developed a free-access production-environmental information platform called CompiteMAS. The platform has been operational in Chile since 2013, and thanks to the financial and technical support of the Pathways Network, NBC-PUCV was able to successfully scale up its platform to Peru, where it has given support and assistance to **more than 50 MSMEs** from the manufacturing, agroindustry and tourism areas in Lima and Trujillo.

Now fully implemented, the project supported the participating MSMEs by improving their ability to make decisions about sustainability practices and facilitate the monitoring of their productivity as well as their environmental and social impact, all with the view to strengthen and increase their competitiveness. The MSMEs were provided with trainings, tools and strategies to help them better meet the requirements of regional and international markets, for example, through the incorporation of clean technologies, best available techniques and sustainability indicators. The project has made MSMEs more aware of cleaner production practices and has yielded interesting results, especially with customized recommendations. By developing a 'partnership' for the implementation of the recommendations made by the CompiteMAS team to their beneficiaries, many MSMEs were able to put into application new practices and/or technologies as seen in the images below.

**Without CompiteMAS**

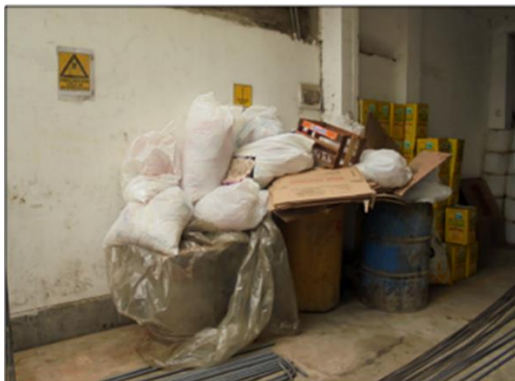


**With CompiteMAS**



*Improved and efficient lighting installed*

**Without CompiteMAS**



**With CompiteMAS**



*Improved waste management*

**Without CompiteMAS**



**With CompiteMAS**



*Improved natural lighting*

Capacity building workshops were implemented through the project, **reaching over 1,200 participants**, 69% of which were male and 31% of which were female.

An important result of this project lies in ***having contributed to changing attitudes around the opportunity to make a profit through cleaner and more environmentally friendly processes and technologies.***





## 4.3. The Pathways Network is STIMULATING ENTREPRENEURSHIP

Techstars, one of the new awardee of the Pathways Network, focuses its efforts on strengthening entrepreneurship communities around the world. Over the past year, through the support of the Pathways Network, Techstars successfully delivered its **LATAM Summit 2016 in Chile**. Community leaders gathered from all over the region to share experiences and best practices; identify challenges and priorities for their city; and increase the competitiveness of their own start-ups. In **total 37 men and 32 women participated as community leaders in the Summit**, all of whom were invited present. Specifically, the objectives of the Summit were to:

1. Increase competitiveness in Latin American Startups by providing immersive experiences that will expose the Latin American community to the global entrepreneurial scene.
2. Provide Community Leaders and Startups the unique opportunity of creating a network of contacts with the most important players in the entrepreneurship ecosystem in Latin America.
3. Deliver the opportunity of discussing and sharing regional challenges, successful stories, and strategies to implement under the theme of strengthening the entrepreneurial communities' future in LATAM.
4. Develop Community Leaders skills that will accelerate the pace of innovation by strengthening the entrepreneurial communities.
5. Increase management skills for the Latin American startups by providing workshops and conferences across the region.
6. Increase the number of startups involved in a limited-duration program of mentorship and education.

Prior to delivering the Summit itself, Techstars also carried out several workshops designed to build opportunities to increase management skills in select start-ups in the community. The workshops were delivered at various locations in six cities: Mexico City, Bogota, Buenos Aires, Lima, Sao Paulo and Santiago.

Overall, Techstars has demonstrated its ability to strengthen the efforts of community leaders, building their capacity to create nascent communities that support other entrepreneurs around the world.



## **4.4. The Pathways Network is FACILITATING CONNECTIONS, AMPLIFYING THE IMPACT OF INNOVATIVE SOLUTIONS**

A key element of the Pathways Network's design is to empower member organizations to scale their solutions through collaboration and exchange. As a result of their participation in activities and events of La Red, two members, IncubatecUFRO and CCB, have connected and developed an alliance that will allow them to capitalize on their collective years of experience to implement a new project.

In September 2016, representatives from the Colombian CCB visited the Chilean cities of Temuco and Santiago to see first-hand the work that IncubatecUFRO is doing. Regarding the visit, Claudina Uribe, the executive director of IncubatecUFRO noted that, "With this activity, Colombian executives will learn about the local and national aspects of the Chilean entrepreneurial ecosystem in all its diverse dimensions, of which have been published in several publications as one of the most active in Latin America."

Delegates from the visit observed the similarities between the realities of the Chilean and Colombian context, and the potential to build on demonstrated best-practices. Gustavo Gomez, Director of Innovation and Entrepreneurship of the Chamber of Commerce of Bucaramanga, noted, "What has been achieved in Temuco makes it a reference. It is a model to follow in the area of entrepreneurship, as a joint strategy between university and industry, and it has worked in the economic development of the region. It helps us establish clear guidelines to implement."

As one of the results of this international alliance, the CCB aims to create an incubator of its own in Colombia.



## 4.5. The Pathways Network is WORKING WITH SOME OF THE BEST IN THE REGION

With its network of 30 members, La Red de Pathways Challenge works closely with organizations who are accelerating business development and promoting sustainable economic growth in Latin America, further empowering them to scale their solutions in the region. The members that have been selected to form La Red de Pathways, individuals and companies propelling innovative solutions, bring with them regional and international recognition as some of the best in LAC. A select few and their respective accolades are highlighted here:



Maria Pacheco of WAKAMI is a finalist of Chivas Regal's 'The Venture' competition, a \$1Million annual fund and global search to reward those who are using business to create positive change. Last year, Maria and WAKAMI also won first prize from Premios VIVA Schmidheiny and the Stephan Schmidheiny Prize in Sustainability.



Juan Carlos Guaqueta, founder and CEO of AcuaCare, a company that generates sustainable solutions for wastewater treatment using earthworms, has been nominated for the 2016 Portfolio Awards within the environmental protection category. The award highlight the efforts of organizations and individuals who have carried out outstanding management and contribute decisively to the economic, social and academic improvement of Colombia. Last year, Juan Carlos Guaqueta was featured in *Gerente* magazine as one of the top 100 business leaders in Colombia, and chosen by the MIT Technology Review as one of the young innovators under 35 years old of Colombia to keep an eye on.



Aldo Aguirre has been profiled this year by *PRO Magazine Chihuahua* for his entrepreneurship work as the director of Startup, a Techstars initiative.



The Mexican Secretary of Economy made a video of Begoña Ortiz, CEO of Las Páginas Verdes, during the National Entrepreneur Week. See it here: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=e\\_zWLPyMXPA](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=e_zWLPyMXPA)



Maria Dolores Correa Laphan, CEO of iCam Group, was recognized by the American Ambassador during the Women's History Month (March 2015) as an example of a talented Mexican women driving innovation.

In both 2014 and 2015, the Chilean governmental Production Development Corporation (CORFO) recognized Incubatec-UFRO as the 'outstanding incubator of the year,' and as the 'incubator with the best performance at the national level'.



The National Tourism Service (Sernatur) - an entity that is part of the Chilean Ministry of Economy, Development and Tourism responsible for researching, planning, promoting, and coordinating tourism activities - has awarded Travolution with the Sustainable Tourism Merit Award.



During the 8<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Latin American Network of People Management Competency, held in October 2016 in Panama City, one of the participating companies in the 'SIMAPRO MSME' project, one of the four finalists, was voted as 'the best experience' by participants presents. Their experience implementing the SIMAPRO methodology was also recognized as the practice with the greatest contribution to competitiveness, productivity and social and environmental sustainability.



Two companies receiving support from the 'Compitemas Internacional' project, one of the four finalists, won the National Award for MSME 2015 for productive inclusion. The purpose of this award is to reward the MSMEs who have excelled in their activities and productive sectors as key contributors to the job market, and are examples of social and productive inclusion in Peru.



# 5. CONCLUSION

Over the past year, the Pathways Network has seen marked success. The advancement in the implementation of its portfolio of initiatives has been very positive, with some projects successfully concluding and others progressing well. From last years' report, the next major step was to select eight new solutions for scaling, providing USD \$80,000 grants to each of them. This was accomplished. Additionally, La Red has strengthened connections, catalyzing further progress. Over the past year, the network of organizations has become far more active. New connections have been made, with roles and responsibilities of the participants more clearly defined to enhance ownership over La Red. The participants are becoming more and more central and assuming active roles within La Red. These are concrete steps contributing to long-term sustainability, efforts the partners are actively supporting so as to ensure that La Red can last over time.

## 5.1. Next Steps

Efforts are currently underway to launch an Accelerator Strategy, which has the goal to further provide the necessary consulting services to equip La Red members with the knowledge, networks and capital they need to grow and succeed. The Accelerator Strategy has been reviewed and approved by State, and La Red partners are looking forward to implementing the new activities part of this strategy beginning in 2017. The next Annual Report will detail the related activities conducted and results reached.

Beyond that, for the remaining 10 months or so of the program, the idea will be to primarily continue the work of strengthening buy-in and fostering more ownership over La Red. Making sure the representatives keep in touch after the program ends is essential in the view of the partners. This is the main exit strategy. At present, the idea is that eventually another organization or even one specific participant, or a collection of participants, will take over the management of La Red. The participants have reported feeling a part of something bigger than the sum of the different projects. Many things are going on outside the involvement of the partners: this is great news. The idea now is to continue down that road. The partners are continuing to provide support in all areas. However, the partners are also increasingly encouraging La Red to find within itself answers to challenges and together identify solutions. The remaining portion of the program will support the strengthening of La Red in this sense, all the while making sure the projects achieve their goals and that the participants integrate relevant tools and knowledge.





LaReddePathways



@LaRedPathways



La Red de Pathways Initiative



[www.lareddepathways.com](http://www.lareddepathways.com)