



AGRICULTURE, RURAL LIFE AND IICA

in the Summit of the Americas Process



Presented by the Director General at the Second Ministerial Meeting
on Agriculture and Rural Life in the Americas
Panama, November 11-12, 2003



Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture
Secretariat of the Ministerial Meeting



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Democracy and economic and social development are interdependent and mutually reinforcing as fundamental conditions to combat poverty and inequality. We will spare no effort to free our fellow citizens from the dehumanizing conditions of extreme poverty.

- We commit to further efforts to reach international development goals, especially the reduction by 50% by the year 2015 of the proportion of people living in extreme poverty.
- We commit ourselves to promote programs for the improvement of agriculture and rural life and agro-business as an essential contribution to poverty reduction and integral development.

*Summit of the Americas, 2001
Declaration of Quebec City*



Introduction

One of the purposes of this document is to keep the Ministers of Agriculture, their Ministerial Delegates and other agricultural leaders informed of the Summit of the Americas process, of the role of the ministerial meetings in that process, and of the opportunities offered by both. It is also intended to promote greater participation by the community of agriculture and rural life in the process, in order to increase the advantages gained from such opportunities and to consolidate the support received at the Third Summit of the Americas.

The report is divided into two chapters. The first deals with agriculture and rural life as components of the Summit process; the second looks at IICA's role as a partner institution in that process.



I. AGRICULTURE AND RURAL LIFE IN THE
SUMMIT OF THE AMERICAS PROCESS:
FROM QUEBEC 2001 TO MEXICO 2004

Our Governments,

Recognizing the fundamental importance of agriculture as a way of life for millions of rural families of the Hemisphere as well as the role it plays in the creation of prosperity as a strategic sector in our socio-economic system and taking note of the importance of developing its potential in a manner compatible with sustainable development that would ensure adequate treatment and attention to the rural sector, will:

- Promote dialogue involving government ministers, parliamentarians and civil society, in particular organizations linked to rural areas as well as the scientific and academic communities, with the objective of promoting medium and long-term national strategies toward sustainable improvement in agriculture and rural life;
- Instruct the Ministers of Agriculture to promote, in cooperation with the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA), joint action by all the actors of the agricultural sector to work towards the improvement of agricultural and rural life that enables the implementation of the Plans of Action of the Summits of the Americas...

*Summit of the Americas, 2001
Section 10, Plan of Action*

This chapter focuses on five issues: (i) the importance of the political recognition given to the role of agriculture and rural life; (ii) the relevance of the ministerial meetings in the Summit of the Americas process; (iii) the determination of the ministers of agriculture to take the lead in promoting greater participation by the members of the community of agriculture and rural life of the Americas in the process; (iv) the need to disseminate information on the progress achieved and the obstacles encountered in implementing the mandates; and, (v) paving the way for the new agricultural sector envisioned for 2015, and the role of the Second Ministerial Meeting in this effort.

1.1 The mandates on agriculture and rural life: The importance of hemispheric political support for agriculture and rural life

The important role played by agriculture in the integral development of the countries was recognized at the Third Summit of the Americas (April 2001) and represented a historic moment for the community of agriculture and rural

life of the Americas. The Heads of State and Government acknowledged that improving agriculture and rural life would help achieve greater prosperity, increase economic opportunities, foster social justice and develop human potential. This firmly establishes the position of agriculture and rural life within the broader context of the long-term objectives of the Summit process and the Millennium Development Goals set for 2015.

This recognition and the mandates calling for improvements in agriculture and rural life, set out mainly in section 10 of the Plan of Action of the Third Summit, created the possibility of further empowering agricultural leaders. This is of great importance for combining efforts, generating additional resources, and articulating joint actions among the different actors in agriculture at the national, regional and hemispheric levels.

The Summit process is ongoing process, the high point being the meetings of Heads of State and Government of the Americas, where leaders discuss progress made and obstacles encountered, and further decisions are made. It is imperative that the political support received be

consolidated at the upcoming Special Summit of the Americas, to be held in Mexico in 2004.

1.2 The Ministerial Meetings on Agriculture and Rural Life: Key opportunities for building hemisphere-wide consensus on the strategic course of action

The ministerial meetings held within context of the Summits process are part of the new institutional framework being built, and were recognized by the Heads of State and Government as essential to the implementation of their mandates. Since the Third Summit of the Americas, the ministers of agriculture have been called upon to participate in the Summit of the Americas process through the ministerial meetings on agriculture and rural life.

This made it necessary to develop a new mechanism that enables stakeholders in agriculture in the Americas to tap the opportunities created by the inclusion of the ministerial meetings on agriculture and rural as one of the ministerial

meetings (trade, labor, education, security, health) that, since the onset of the Summit of the Americas process, have served as the mechanisms for implementing the mandates of the Heads of State and Government.

At the 2001 Summit, the Heads of State and Government also recognized the need to encourage the participation of all stakeholders in agriculture. Accordingly, the ministerial meetings on agriculture and rural life afford an opportunity to achieve consensus on the future of agriculture and rural life (by 2015) and on the measures needed to make it a reality.

Viewed in this way, the Ministerial Meeting on Agriculture and Rural Life is the highest hemispheric-level political forum on agriculture, making it an important component of the new "institutional architecture" defined by the Summit of the Americas process. The ministerial meetings thus have an important role to play in overseeing implementation of the mandates and for providing inputs for future Summits so as to ensure achievement of the Millennium Development Goals by 2015.

The ministers of agriculture launched the 2003 ministerial process when they approved Resolution 379 "Implementation

of and Follow-up to the Summit of the Americas Mandates and the Declaration of Bavaro" at their meeting as the Inter-American Board of Agriculture (IABA) in August 2002. The resolution calls for preparation of a Plan of Action, led by the Ministers of Agriculture and their delegates, with support from IICA. According to section 10 of the Plan of Action of the Third Summit, this process is to involve all stakeholders in agriculture.

1.3 The response from the community of agriculture and rural life of the Americas: The ministers of agriculture take the lead in promoting greater participation of the stakeholders in agriculture

Considering the success of the 2001 ministerial process and in order to ensure continuity between the first and second ministerial meetings, the ministers of agriculture appointed their respective ministerial delegates, at the request of IICA's Director General. Working together and with IICA support,

the ministerial delegates were given the responsibility of preparing the AGRO 2003-2015 Plan of Action for implementing the presidential mandates and the agreements contained in the Ministerial Declaration of Bavaro. The basic inputs for their work were national proposals, prepared in some cases with the participation of members of the countries' community of agriculture and rural life, drawn up in workshops held to review and update the proposals prepared in 2001.

Pursuant to the mandates of the Third Summit and with the support of their delegates, the Ministers of Agriculture took the lead in 2001 in organizing consultations and discussions on the matter. Conducted at the national, regional and hemispheric levels, this work culminated with the First Ministerial Meeting on Agriculture and Rural Life held within the context of the Summit of the Americas Process, in Bavaro, Dominican Republic, in November 2001.

At that first meeting, the Ministers of Agriculture adopted the "Ministerial Declaration of Bavaro for the

Improvement of Agriculture and Rural Life in the Americas" and made significant progress in drafting the Strategic Guidelines for a Shared Agenda for the Community of Agriculture and Rural Life of the Americas. Both of these documents served as a starting point for the 2003 ministerial process.

1.4 Implementation and follow up to the mandates: Including information on the countries' efforts in the reports submitted as part of the Summits process

The countries are implementing actions and making progress to improve agriculture and rural life; they have also encountered obstacles and developed innovative actions to strengthen their resources for attaining development objectives. However, information on these efforts, accomplishments, constraints and successful experiences has not reached the mechanisms established to monitor the Summits process.

The governments are primarily responsible for implementing the mandates on agriculture and rural life and reporting on same to the Summit Implementation Review Group (SIRG), through their foreign ministries. The partner institutions of the Summit process, including IICA, also report to the SIRG. This group is composed of the ministers of foreign relations and their delegates (national Summits coordinators) and is the hemisphere-level body responsible for following up on the mandates and reporting to subsequent Summits.

At the June 2003 SIRG meeting, only 3 countries reported on activities undertaken to implement the mandates on agriculture and rural life. Clearly, this does not reflect the efforts of the countries, nor does it contribute to consolidating the position attained by agriculture and rural life on the hemispheric agenda.

In referring to the country reports, OAS Secretary General Cesar Gaviria said at the SIRG meeting: "... national reports on implementation are beginning to arrive from countries. These reports will need more work and to be truly useful.

Member States and partner institutions are encouraged to provide detailed information on an ongoing basis to the Secretariat. These reports are important, as they reflect a significant development for us in the Summit process and show where more work is needed."

This suggests the need to contribute to strengthening national follow-up and information processes for reporting on the progress being made to implement the mandates on agriculture and rural life.

Given the mechanism established, it is important to strengthen the institutional linkages between the ministers of agriculture and their ministerial delegates, and the ministers of foreign affairs and their ministerial delegates, who are the national Summits coordinators that report to the SIRG. The IICA Representative in each country can help develop and consolidate this institutional link, to ensure that when the Heads of State and Government meet at the Summits of the Americas, they receive information on the progress made and obstacles encountered, and take

decisions that will contribute to more rapid improvements in agriculture and rural life in the Americas.

We believe that a substantive discussion of agriculture in a significant number of national reports to the SIRG will contribute to consolidating agriculture and rural life on the hemispheric agenda and to strengthening the position of the ministries of agriculture in their respective countries.

1.5 Paving the way for the Second Ministerial Meeting and the next Summit of the Americas: Constructing the agriculture and rural life of 2015

The Ministry of Agricultural Development of Panama, with support from IICA, is the organizer of the Second Ministerial Meeting on Agriculture and Rural Life within the context of the Summit of the Americas process (November 11-12, 2003).

The 2003 ministerial process is a continuation of the hemispheric dialogue begun in May 2001 to prepare for the First Ministerial Meeting, which culminated with the consensus reached on the "Declaration of Bavaro for the Improvement of Agriculture and Rural Life in the Americas," signed in November of that year.

The Ministerial Declaration expresses the will of the ministers of agriculture to translate into action what the Heads of State and Government said regarding the principles of "openness" and "transparency" that should govern the Summit of the Americas process, when they stated:

"... our steadfast commitment to the mandate issued at the Third Summit of the Americas calling for concerted action with all those involved in agriculture, aimed at the improvement of agriculture and rural life."

*First Ministerial Meeting on Agriculture and Rural Life, 2001
Paragraph 1, Ministerial Declaration of Bavaro*

The ministers also expressed their wish to give continuity to the process, by pointing out in their Declaration:

"We declare our intention to: Lead and facilitate the process of Implementing this Declaration, and reaching consensus on the strategic guidelines for a shared agenda, to be used by our countries in developing future national and regional plans of action."

*First Ministerial Meeting on Agriculture and Rural Life, 2001
Paragraph 18, Ministerial Declaration of Bavaro*

Accordingly, the Second Ministerial Meeting:

- adopts the decisions required to continue with the process to implement the mandates of the Third Summit and the Ministerial Declaration of Bavaro, within the defined horizon to achieve the Millennium Development Goals by 2015; and

- ▶ provides the next Summit of the Americas with the inputs needed to make those additional decisions required to ensure that the objectives defined at the Third Summit are achieved within the established time frame.

The countries, especially the ministers of agriculture and their delegates, must pay particular attention to the fact that the SIRG has identified three core topics for the Special Summit in Mexico in 2003: growth with equity, social development and democratic governance.

This will afford the ministers of agriculture, with support from their ministerial delegates, an excellent opportunity to consolidate the new position of agriculture and rural life by assuring that their colleagues (ministers of foreign affairs and national Summits coordinators) understand the key role that agriculture and rural life can play in the countries and, therefore, in the Americas, with regard to these topics.

The Products of the Second Ministerial Meeting

The products of the Second Ministerial Meeting are:

- ▶ **AGRO 2003-2015 Plan of Action.** In essence, this Plan defines a shared vision of agriculture and rural life in 2015 and a set of strategic actions that the ministers of agriculture have agreed upon and will adopt in their Second Ministerial Meeting, for implementing the mandates issued by the Heads of State and Government at their Third Summit Meeting, and the agreements contained in the Ministerial Declaration of Bavaro. These strategic actions will set the course to be followed to enable agriculture and rural life to advance towards the desired objectives in 2015.

- ▶ **The Ministerial Proposal on Agriculture and Rural Life for the next Summit of the Americas.** This document will discuss complementary decisions required from the Heads of State and Government to enable fulfillment of the AGRO 2003-2015 Plan of Action, and the consolidation of the position of agriculture and rural life in the Summit of the Americas process.
- ▶ **Strategy for implementing and following-up on the AGRO 2003-2015 Plan of Action.** This refers to the implementation process initiated by the countries, its continuation, and actions to follow up on the Plan of Action and the Ministerial Proposal.
- ▶ **A common hemispheric understanding of strategic issues arising from the ministerial dialogue.** A common understanding will be developed of strategic issues facing agriculture and rural life, to support efforts to implement the AGRO 2003-2015 Plan of Action. It will be based on the shared vision for 2015 and on the deliberations of the meeting.

Management of the Ministerial Delegates' Process

In accordance with paragraph 18 of the Ministerial Declaration of Bavaro, the Secretariat proposed building on the results of the 2001 ministerial process, drawing again on the "strategic guidelines for a shared agenda." To this end, the ministerial delegates were provided methodological and technical support documents prepared by the Secretariat, as well as the documents generated in the 2001 ministerial process, which can be viewed in the "Agriculture in Summits" section of IICA's web site.

In a number of countries, the ministerial delegates spearheaded a process of dialogue with national actors, with support from the IICA Representative. The results of this dialogue were used as inputs for the deliberations of the ministerial delegates, at their second hemispheric forum on agriculture and rural life (GRICA), to reach consensus on the AGRO 2003-2015 Plan of Action (September 16-17, 2003).



II. IICA AS A PARTNER INSTITUTION IN THE SUMMIT OF THE AMERICAS PROCESS

We underscore the need for ongoing dialogue and coordination in the inter-American system to ensure the effective and efficient implementation of Summit mandates. We welcome the engagement of the institutional partners (OAS, PAHO, IICA, IDB, ECLAC and the World Bank) in all stages of the Summit of the Americas process.

*Summit of the Americas, 2001
Follow Up Section, Plan of Action*

We call on the institutions associated with the Inter-American Summit process, the international financial institutions and the cooperating governments to coordinate their strategies and to support actions aimed at improving agriculture and rural life. In addition, we call on the international cooperation organizations that make up the Interagency Group on Rural Development in Latin America and the Caribbean to harmonize their technical and financial cooperation efforts in support of this Declaration and future national and regional plans of action that are consistent with same.

*First Ministerial Meeting on Agriculture and Rural Life, 2001
Paragraph 20, Ministerial Declaration of Bavaro*

This chapter complements the information in the first chapter, and explains IICA's role, by decision of the Heads of State and Government, as a partner institution in all stages of the Summit of the Americas process. This has meant: (i) providing strategic and operative alignment to support the Member States in implementing the mandates; (ii) supporting the ministers of agriculture by serving as Technical Secretariat of the Ministerial Meetings on Agriculture and Rural Life; (iii) identifying and creating opportunities to reflect on the agriculture of the future; (iv) participating in the mechanisms for monitoring the Summit process, to inform the Summit Implementation Review Group (SIRG) of the Institute's contributions to implementation of the mandates; and (v) coordinating actions with other international organizations involved in agriculture in the Americas

As a partner institution in the Summit process, and to fulfill the new mandates, the Institute aligned its operations as follows:

2.1 . Institutional modernization to respond to the mandates of Bavaro and Quebec: Strategic and operative alignment; organizational change

The Institute's new activities in this area have consisted mainly of: (i) developing a strategic direction as described in the 2002-2006 Medium Term Plan; (ii) undertaking a new style of technical cooperation (the Technical Cooperation Agendas); and (iii) adjusting the institutional structure.

Strategic direction - the 2002-2006 Medium Term Plan

Three main sets of factors shaped and now orient implementation of the Medium Term Plan (MTP), namely: (i) key trends in the national, regional and global economies that have profound implications for agriculture

and rural life in the Americas; (ii) the situation of agriculture in Latin America and the Caribbean; and (iii) the new mandates for IICA.

The MTP takes into account and internalizes in its mission, vision and strategic areas of action, the new mandates received from the Third Summit of the Americas, and those contained in the Ministerial Declaration of Bavaro. This has brought IICA's focus into line with the new mandates.

These new guidelines give IICA a greater role within the broadest framework of the three overall objectives established in the 2002-2006 Medium Term Plan, namely: promoting the sustainable development of agriculture, food security and prosperity in rural communities. These overall objectives are consistent with the mandates of the Summits, the Ministerial Declaration of Bavaro and other global development processes.

A new style of technical cooperation - the Technical Cooperation Agendas

IICA is supporting the countries' efforts to implement the mandates related to agriculture and rural life through "National Technical Cooperation Agendas" developed in each of its 34 member countries in the Americas. The agendas began implementation in the second semester of 2002 and were prepared through dialogue with national public and private authorities, in support of national development objectives defined by the countries. They specify IICA's cooperation actions primarily in the areas of sustainable rural development, trade, agribusiness development, technology and innovation, agricultural health and food safety, information, communication and education.

This year, IICA has begun the process to evaluate its efforts and render accounts to national authorities on the progress made in executing the National Agendas, through country reports

entitled "*The Contribution of IICA to Agriculture and the Development of Rural Communities.*" In this way, IICA is offering a new kind of accountability, in accordance with the presidents' call for openness and transparency.

This approach is based on five closely related elements:

- ▶ working with government authorities, the private sector, members of the academic community and other sectors of civil society to fulfill the governments' commitment to promote, through extensive dialogue with the actors in the agricultural sector, medium- and long-term strategies for the sustainable improvement of agriculture and rural life;
- ▶ drafting, in consultation with the actors in the agricultural sector, of an IICA National Technical Cooperation Agenda in each country that identifies the specific areas in which the Institute will contribute to national development strategies;
- ▶ implementing the National Agendas in collaboration with the public and private sectors and other actors of civil society, in keeping with the spirit of participation and consensus-building called for in the Summit mandates;
- ▶ defining a mechanism for consulting national authorities regarding implementation of the Agenda; and
- ▶ reporting to national authorities by preparing and disseminating an annual report, to facilitate participation, transparency and the sound management of public affairs. These points are emphasized in the Presidential mandates concerning the strengthening of democratic governance based on the principles of transparency and openness.

Adjustment of the institutional structure

As part of the aforementioned efforts to align the Institute's work with the Summit mandates, the structure of the Institute was changed to bring it into line with the new objectives. Four of the changes are particularly important. These are the creation and operation of:

- ▶ the Technical Cooperation Secretariat, to coordinate the process to generate, implement and monitor compliance with the National and Regional Technical Cooperation Agendas;
- ▶ the Directorate for Summits Follow-up under the Office of the Director General, to coordinate the technical support needed for preparing for and holding the ministerial meetings, monitoring their agreements, and linking same with the follow-up mechanisms of the Summit of the Americas process led by the Summit Executive Secretariat at the OAS General Secretariat;
- ▶ the Directorate of Strategic Partnerships in Washington, to facilitate coordination of actions and development of the "*working together*" approach; and
- ▶ the Directorate of Performance Management and Evaluation, to oversee institutional performance, with a focus on the achievement of results.

2.2 Support for the Ministerial Meetings: Contributing to consolidating the position of agriculture and rural life on the hemispheric agenda

Pursuant to the mandates of the Third Summit, Executive Committee Resolution 349 (June 2001) and IABA Resolution 379 (August 2002), IICA supports the countries in organizing

developing the Ministerial Meetings on Agriculture and Rural Life. Since June 2001, IICA has been serving as Secretariat of the Ministerial processes, that include the aforementioned meetings.

The work of the Secretariat in the 2003 ministerial process

Since last year, IICA has worked to design and implement a mechanism to facilitate dialogue and move forward in building hemispheric consensus, prior to the Second Ministerial Meeting. This process entailed:

- ▶ designation of the Ministerial Delegates: the ministers of agriculture designated their 34 delegates;
- ▶ organization of the ministerial meeting, in consultation with the ministers of agriculture;
- ▶ definition of the 2003 ministerial process, including the activities and expected products of the process leading up to the Second Ministerial Meeting;
- ▶ definition of the "working together" approach with the other institutional partners in the Summits process and other international organizations working in the hemisphere and region in support of the 2003 ministerial process. IICA worked with ECLAC, PAHO, FAO, IFPRI and CATIE to prepare preliminary documents in support of the work of the ministerial delegates. In addition, this year IICA held discussions on the matter with the IDB and the World Bank. Presentations on the matter with the IDB and the World Bank. Presentations on the Second Ministerial Meeting were made to the group of institutional partners of the Summits process, coordinated by the Summit Executive Secretariat at the OAS, and to the Summit Implementation Review Group (SIRG) of the national Summits coordinators (delegates of the foreign affairs ministers) of the 34 countries;
- ▶ development of the conceptual, methodological and operational underpinnings of the process;
- ▶ analysis of the Ministerial Declaration of Bavaro and of the Strategic Guidelines resulting from the 2001 ministerial

process, in order to spell out the vision implied in the Declaration and determine the thematic scope for strategic action;

- ▶ technical support provided to the ministerial delegates for preparing the AGRO 2003-2015 Plan of Action; and
- ▶ organization of the Second Meeting of Ministerial Delegates (GRICA) (September 16-17) and support to the delegates during same for reaching hemispheric consensus on the AGRO 2003-2015 Plan of Action.

IICA updated the online support system for hemispheric dialogue that it used in the 2001 ministerial process. This system served as a means for disseminating information and exchanging proposals among the representatives of the Member States in the process to prepare the AGRO 2003-2015 Plan of Action, and was created in response to Executive Committee Resolution 349 (Twenty-first Regular Meeting). Originally, it was used to facilitate hemispheric dialogue in the

2001 ministerial process to prepare the Ministerial Declaration of Bavaro, and made it possible to make substantial progress in drawing up the Strategic Guidelines presented at the First Ministerial Meeting.

2.3 Celebrating IICA's 60th anniversary: An opportunity to reflect on the agriculture of the future and on international cooperation

In connection with this event, the Permanent Council of the Organization of American States, by resolution CP/RES. 826 (1338/02), dated 25 September 2002, agreed:

- "To pay tribute to the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture on the occasion of its sixtieth anniversary.

- "To exhort the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture, to continue working with the countries of the hemisphere in support of their efforts to implement the mandates of the Summits of the Americas, as a development agency that promotes prosperity in rural communities, food security and the sustainable development of agriculture."

For this occasion, IICA decided to commemorate the 60th anniversary of its founding by inviting leaders of agriculture to discuss the future of agriculture and cooperation in relation to the Millennium Development Goals set for 2015.

The document "Reflections on the future of agriculture and cooperation: On the road to 2015," prepared by IICA, captures the spirit of the contributions of the ministers of agriculture and other agricultural leaders and of international organizations who participated in a panel discussion on agriculture and cooperation (from now to 2015). This document also provided as an input for the second ministerial meeting process.

2.4 IICA and the Summit follow-up mechanisms: Helping to build the new institutional architecture

Inclusion of IICA as a partner institution in the Summit of the Americas process provides opportunities for: (i) joint actions among strategic partners; (ii) creating an enabling environment for the development of agriculture and rural communities; and, (iii) demonstrating the progress made and obstacles encountered, developing new measures and participating on a timely basis in the Summit of the Americas process. These aspects are channeled mainly through the Summit monitoring mechanism, the SIRG.

As the community of agriculture and rural life seizes these opportunities, it will further consolidate its position. To this end, it must work to achieve the vision of agriculture and rural life in 2015, as envisaged by the leaders of the community in the AGRO 2003-2015 Plan of Action, in order to meet the development aspirations of the rural communities of the hemisphere.

As a partner institution in the Summit process, IICA is aware of these opportunities and is endeavoring to capitalize on them. IICA's participation in the follow-up mechanism has made it possible to: i) obtain relevant information on hemispheric processes and meetings and analyze where it is necessary to strengthen the representation of agriculture and rural life; ii) ensure that the voice of agriculture and rural life is heard in the meetings of the SIRG, and to report on progress made in fulfilling the presidential mandates; and iii) strengthen ties with partner institutions in search of initiatives for "*working together*."

In this connection, IICA is taking part in the activities of two important bodies:

- ▶ in the meetings of the Joint OAS-IDB-ECLAC-PAHO-IICA-World Bank Summit Working Group, which CABEI, the CAF and the CDB have now joined; and
- ▶ in the meetings of the Summit Implementation Review Group (SIRG), at the level of national coordinators / Ambassadors to

the OAS and, at the ministerial level, involving the ministers of foreign affairs.

2.5 "*Working together*" with other strategic partners: Building solutions for rural communities

The challenges involved in realizing the vision of a new agricultural sector and rural life by 2015 are so great that they exceed the capabilities of the individual members of the community of agriculture and rural life and, in particular, those of any given international development cooperation agencies. Rural communities have a right to expect and insist on greater prosperity but it is a well-known fact that the resources available for development are insufficient.

In keeping with the spirit of the Summit process, IICA is therefore strengthening its relations with the partner institutions in the process and with other strategic public and

private partners in the hemisphere, with a view to improving the coordination and complementarity of efforts.

At the national level, IICA is helping to develop a working relationship between the national Summits coordinator (ministries of foreign relations), the delegate from the ministry of agriculture and the IICA Representative in the country. This is intended to improve the flow of information to the SIRG regarding progress made in the countries to comply with the mandates on agriculture and rural life. At the hemispheric

level, IICA is promoting the "*working together*" approach to support the execution of the National Cooperation Agendas. Also at the hemispheric level, IICA has involved the institutional partners in producing inputs to support the work of the ministerial delegates.

The spirit of "*working together*" encourages IICA to promote new partnerships for development among public and private organizations, with a view to achieving the vision for agriculture and rural life in 2015 in the Americas.